

Ram Raju, MD, MBA, FACS, FACHE
President and CEO

*OIG No. 2014-0823
EITS & EPIC Implementation
June 12, 2015*

Office of the President Summary

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigated several complaints regarding the use of consultants and temporary agency employees and potential conflicts of interest by these consultants/temporary staff, as well as mismanagement of the Epic implementation due to the over-reliance on consultants and temporary staff.

OIG Report and Findings

The OIG reviewed HHC records, including personnel and finance records, email and electronic databases, and public websites. They conducted over 30 interviews with current and former HHC employees and consultants and reviewed records provided by Epic.

The OIG found that Audra Elliot, as an HHC employee, hired several employees of her former employer to work as consultants at HHC. These included Loretta Gallagher, who she then permitted to hire and supervise Ms. Gallagher's sister as an HHC consultant. In addition, Ms. Gallagher's daughters had positions proctoring Epic certification exams for HHC employees. One of her daughters proctored exams taken by her aunt and her friends, all of whom were HHC consultants. The OIG concluded that consultants of Ms. Elliot's former employer received more favorable treatment than other consultants, including questionable approval of timesheets for Ms. Gallagher and that Ms. Gallagher had improperly forwarded HHC information to her personal e-mail account..

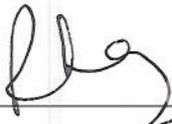
The OIG further found lapses in the background investigation of consultants and with compliance with the contract provision which requires a vendor to conduct a criminal history background prior to assigning an individual to work at HHC. The OIG was critical of the ambiguity as to whether HHC would be paying for Epic training and certification for consultants leading to excessive training costs being incurred by HHC. The OIG was also critical of the use of consultants at a premium over the salaries of HHC employees and suggested an over-reliance upon consultants.

The OIG's investigation also included allegations as to Julie Smith, who was engaged as a consultant but who represented herself to be an HHC employee. She was not forthcoming in her Employment Application when an attempt was made to convert her to an HHC employee, and she failed to cooperate with the OIG.

As noted by the OIG, the alleged improprieties occurred while Bert Robles, HHC Chief Information Officer, oversaw the EPIC implementation activities.¹

Disposition by the Office of the President

1. The OIG recommends that Audra Elliot be terminated; the President concurs and has so acted.
2. The OIG recommends that Loretta Gallagher, a consultant, be terminated; the President concurs. Ms. Gallagher, and her firm, Gallagher and Associates, have been terminated.
3. The OIG recommends that management and supervision of consultants/temporary employees in EITS be strengthened. The President concurs. New procedures for assuring timely background checks, for subjecting consultants to conflict of interest prohibitions, and for monitoring time-keeping are all being implemented.



Ram Raja, MD
President and CEO

August 31, 2015

¹ The employment of Mr. Robles terminated in February, 2015.