

# Daily Journal

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## TOP HEALTH CARE LAWYERS 2021

### RAJA SÉKARAN

Sékaran joined Nossaman as an associate in 1994, just in time to be initiated into health care law by firm partner and former state assemblyman John T. “Jack” Knox, the co-author of California’s basic regulatory framework for the field, the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975. The firm was then known as Nossaman Gunther Knox & Elliott.

“I was really fortunate in time and circumstance to get to work with Jack Knox,” Sékaran said. “He founded Nossaman’s health care practice, and his legislative work has been most impactful.”

Inspired to develop his expertise, Sékaran left Nossaman for a 20-year hiatus and he earned an LLM in health care law at Georgetown University Law Center, an ideal perch for watching Congress enact the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. HIPPA created an inspector general to serve as a watchdog over the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, and Sékaran worked there as senior counsel.

He then returned to the West Coast to become associate general counsel for regulatory affairs at Dignity Health and later had a similar role at DaVita Health Plan of California.

In 2017, it was back to Nossaman as the lead health care partner for Northern California. “They brought

me back to sustain and build up our managed care and compliance practice and to support our M&A practice,” Sékaran said. “I have always seen health care as a many-tentacled beast, and in the beginning I knew I was seeing only its extremities. I wanted to know how it all fit together.”

“Jack Knox had a very broad view of law and policy and good government, and he encouraged me to learn more,” he continued. “After I had done so, the firm encouraged me to come back to carry on the tradition.”

Sékaran represents health care delivery systems, private equity investors, hospitals, a major academic medical center, physicians, medical device companies, other providers and suppliers and trade associations. Among them: USC’s Keck School of Medicine, the CaliforniaChoice insurance purchasing exchange, the Imperial County Local Health Authority and Hill Physicians Medical Group.

In a major joint venture to improve health care outcomes, Sékaran is lead counsel for the Hospital Quality Institute, launched in 2019, that links the California Hospital Association with regional hospital associations throughout the state to gather and share a data analytics program on patient safety and best practices. “It is a tricky and potentially perilous thing, given concerns over IP, anti-



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NÖSSAMAN LLP  
SAN FRANCISCO  
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trust and privacy laws,” he said.

So far, so good. “It’s going well and it works well,” he said. “We are signing up entire hospital systems, which brings in more data. And we’ve not had any negative pushback, so I believe we have successfully structured it to avoid challenges.”

— John Roemer