



Katherine (Kate) Pierce **MSMIT, CHCIO, CHISL, CHD-E**

Biography

Early Life

Vermont native Kate Pierce was raised in a small, rural community in northeastern Vermont. After five years of service in the US Army Military Intelligence Division, she pursued a secondary education from Northern Vermont University, earning both a BA in Mathematics, and an AS in Computer Science in 2000.

Career

In 2001, Kate began her career at North Country Hospital as a Systems Analyst. Her first project was selecting, vetting, and implementing an Electronic Health Record system for the hospital's owned clinics. With a steady career progression over her 21-year tenure at North Country, she rose quickly to become the Chief Information Officer/ Chief Information Security Officer.

In October 2022, Kate joined Fortified Health Security - one of the leading healthcare-only cybersecurity managed services companies in the US. With a dual role as Virtual Information Security Officer (VISO) and Executive Director of Subsidy Programs, she has been able to broaden her focus to help facilitate security initiatives for small and rural facilities. In her VISO role she can stay connected with North Country Hospital, and with other small and rural facilities across the country to help them to address their cybersecurity needs. And in her capacity as Executive Director of Subsidy Programs Kate is an accomplished advocate that assists small and rural facilities to gain the resources they need to manage their cybersecurity defense programs.

Technical Education and Certifications

A lifelong learner, Kate completed her Masters in Managing Innovation and Information Technology in 2011 with her thesis on the topic of "Information Security in Healthcare." In 2015, Kate joined the College of Healthcare Information Management Professionals (CHIME) earning certifications as a Chief Healthcare Information Officer (CHCIO), a Chief Healthcare Information Security Leader (CHISL), and a Chief Healthcare Digital Executive (CHD-E).

Mission

Since Kate completed her Masters, the complexity of healthcare cybersecurity has grown exponentially, and cyberattacks have skyrocketed. So too, has the need for healthcare facilities to protect their information systems. Her passion for information technology initiatives that assist small hospitals in providing effective, safe patient care at an affordable price is only surpassed by her desire to ensure that these systems are protected from the ever-growing cyberattack landscape that healthcare organizations are currently facing.

Through her work with healthcare facilities across the country she brings a comprehensive viewpoint of the current cybersecurity landscape in healthcare, especially the viewpoint of small and rural organizations. With a background both as a CIO and a CISO, she understands the overall challenges facilities are currently facing which contribute to the current state of cyber security within this sector.

Kate is an active member of the Health Sector Coordinating Council Cybersecurity Working Groups sharing the small and rural HDO perspective with a variety of active working groups.