

Influential Women Profiles Lillian Elisa Nieves: Senior Director Of Revenue Cycle Liaison Team At Columbia University

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Leveraging More Than Two Decades of Healthcare Operations, Revenue Cycle Expertise, and Collaborative Leadership to Strengthen Access, Alignment, and Patient-Centered Outcomes

Fort Lee, New Jersey — Lillian Elisa Nieves is a senior healthcare executive and revenue cycle leader with more than 20 years of experience spanning patient access, hospital and physician operations, finance, and enterprise revenue cycle management. She currently serves as Senior Director of the Revenue Cycle Liaison Team at Columbia University Irving Medical Center, where she leads a team of 12 director-level revenue cycle liaisons and helps strengthen the strategic relationship between the Clinical Revenue Office and the clinical departments they support.



In her current role, Lillian serves as an important bridge between clinical and administrative functions within a complex academic medical system. She focuses on fostering collaboration, alignment, and operational transparency while helping clinical departments and revenue cycle teams work together toward stronger outcomes. Her leadership approach is grounded in the understanding that revenue cycle performance is closely connected to patient access, clinical operations, communication, and the ability of teams across an organization to work toward shared objectives.

Before joining Columbia University Irving Medical Center, Lillian led a large-scale contact center at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, where she focused on improving patient access to care across primary and specialty services. Her responsibilities encompassed scheduling, referrals, authorizations, and the coordination of patient needs for individuals seeking entry into the

health system.

Through this work, Lillian played an important role in reducing barriers to care and strengthening the patient experience while supporting efficient access to high-quality clinical services. Her earlier career also includes progressive leadership roles at organizations such as Einstein Healthcare Network (now Jefferson Health) and Lehigh Valley Health Network, where she managed physician practices, service lines, and patient access operations across multi-site healthcare environments.

Throughout her career, Lillian has been intentional and methodical in building a diverse operational foundation. Rather than limiting herself to one area of healthcare, she deliberately pursued opportunities across patient access, operations, finance, and revenue cycle. She believes that leaders should understand the full ecosystem they are responsible for, and that gaining experience across multiple functions provides the perspective necessary to lead with insight, credibility, and strategic depth. Limiting oneself to one type of role, in her view, limits growth as well as the ability to lead with insight, credibility, and strategic depth. This philosophy continues to guide how Lillian leads teams, builds partnerships, and drives organizational outcomes.

Lillian holds a Master of Science in Health Care Administration and Management from Saint Joseph's University and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Muhlenberg College. She is also a Certified Revenue Cycle Representative through the Healthcare Financial Management Association.

A Leadership Philosophy Grounded in Collaboration

What has contributed most to Lillian's success is a leadership approach grounded in collaboration. She believes meaningful progress happens when teams and key stakeholders are engaged early, aligned on the vision, and invested in the outcome.

For Lillian, securing buy-in is essential, whether she is driving a new initiative or improving an existing process. She understands that meaningful organizational change is much more likely to succeed when people feel included, respected, and part of the solution.

Networking and building relationships across departments have been equally important throughout her career. Healthcare is interconnected, and Lillian believes the best outcomes come from understanding how each function contributes to the whole. She approaches every partnership with humility, recognizing that there is always more to learn.

Expanding her skills, broadening her perspective, and seeking opportunities to work alongside people with shared goals have helped Lillian become a more effective and empathetic leader. Her approach emphasizes not only operational performance but also the relationships that allow organizations to achieve sustainable results.

Preparing for the Career You Want

One of the greatest pieces of advice that has shaped Lillian's career came from a former supervisor, now a vice president at Mount Sinai. The guidance was to prepare for the job she wants, not the one she has.

That principle has remained with Lillian throughout her professional journey. It serves as a reminder to position herself for the next level, remain open to learning, and stay humble enough to recognize what she does not yet know.

Lillian believes people can too easily talk themselves out of opportunities because they do not check every box on a job description. Her experience has taught her not to second-guess potential. If someone does not have a skill yet, they can build it. If they do not have the experience, they can gain it. Self-doubt should not close the door on a role someone is capable of growing into.

Another lesson that deeply influenced Lillian came when that same supervisor took a chance on her for a contact center leadership position, an area in which she had never previously worked. Her supervisor recognized that technical skills could be taught, while leadership was something Lillian already possessed.

Together, they grew that department from 60 employees to approximately 120, demonstrating what can happen when someone is given an opportunity and trusted to lead.

The experience reinforced several principles that Lillian now practices and shares with others: collaboration matters, relationships matter, humility matters, and growth matters. She encourages professionals to engage stakeholders early, build meaningful networks, remain open to learning, and diversify their experience rather than becoming confined to one area of expertise.

For Lillian, staying curious, staying open, and preparing for the future are essential elements of professional growth.

Supporting Women in an Evolving Healthcare Environment

Lillian believes women entering healthcare leadership must embrace the reality that the industry is constantly evolving. Policies change, payer requirements adjust, technology advances, and patient expectations continue to grow.

To succeed in this environment, she believes leaders must be adaptable and flexible. They must be willing to step back, reassess circumstances, and give themselves the space to learn.

Lillian also emphasizes the importance of staying educated and well-versed in the policies, regulations, and operational frameworks that influence effective patient care. Just as clinicians must remain current on clinical evidence to support accurate diagnoses and treatment plans,

administrative leaders must understand insurance structures, reimbursement models, and the operational dynamics that shape the patient experience.

This knowledge directly influences how effectively healthcare leaders can support patients, advocate for them, and help them navigate the financial side of care.

Understanding how insurance plans work, how benefits are designed, and how to partner with patients to make care feel accessible and affordable is an increasingly important component of modern healthcare leadership. For Lillian, staying informed allows administrative leaders to create systems that are not only operationally sound but also compassionate and patient-centered.

Her philosophy is straightforward: stay curious, stay current, and stay flexible.

Navigating the Challenges Facing Healthcare

Healthcare organizations today face mounting pressures across cost, workforce, operations, and equity. Rising out-of-pocket expenses and drug prices are making care increasingly difficult for many patients to afford, potentially leading individuals to delay or skip treatment.

At the same time, staffing shortages and burnout among nurses and clinical teams continue to place pressure on healthcare organizations, affecting capacity and contributing to turnover.

Administrative burdens, including payer denials and complex prior authorization requirements, can slow care delivery and disrupt revenue cycle performance. Fragmented IT systems can further contribute to inefficiencies by limiting coordination across the continuum of care.

Cybersecurity threats also present growing concerns, with healthcare organizations facing risks that can jeopardize patient information and operational stability. These challenges are compounded by persistent health inequities, an aging population requiring increasingly complex care, and a growing mental health crisis that continues to place significant demands on available resources.

Together, these forces create an environment that requires adaptability, innovation, and strong cross-functional leadership. Lillian believes healthcare leaders must be capable of understanding these interconnected challenges while remaining focused on sustainable, patient-centered care.

Leading With Integrity, Empathy, and Self-Awareness

Integrity is one of the most important values guiding Lillian both professionally and personally. She views integrity as the foundation of trust, collaboration, and meaningful relationships.

She believes in supporting others, investing in their development, and creating environments where people feel empowered to grow. Her leadership style is also strongly informed by self-

awareness. Lillian remains committed to recognizing her own areas of opportunity, staying open to learning, and seeking the skills and insights needed to be effective in every role she takes on.

She also believes in the importance of self-care and understanding one's own worth. No one can do everything, and Lillian recognizes that doing one's best is enough.

Her commitment to personal development is reflected in the deliberate way she has built her career. Over more than 20 years, she has pursued diverse experience across patient access, operations, finance, and revenue cycle, understanding that well-rounded leaders are better equipped to step into executive roles with strong grounding, sound judgment, and a deep understanding of complex healthcare systems.

Today, Lillian Elisa Nieves continues to bring that broad perspective to her leadership at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Through collaboration, continuous learning, and a commitment to operational excellence, she works to strengthen the connection between clinical and administrative teams while keeping the patient experience at the center of healthcare delivery.

Her career reflects the value of preparing for the opportunities ahead, developing a comprehensive understanding of the systems one leads, and recognizing that effective leadership is ultimately built through people, relationships, integrity, and a willingness to keep growing.

Learn More about Lillian Elisa Nieves:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/lillian-nieves>

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