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Healthcare Group Of The Year: Bass Berry

By **Gianna Ferrarin**

Law360 (January 29, 2026, 4:00 PM EST) -- Bass Berry & Sims PLC's recent work advising Sycamore Partners on its \$23.7 billion acquisition of Walgreens Boots Alliance, taking the pharmacy retailer off the public market, has earned the firm a spot among the 2025 Law360 Healthcare Groups of the Year.

With the majority of the firm's attorneys based in the healthcare hub of Nashville, Tennessee, the industry is a primary area of focus for the firm, practice chair Angela Humphreys told Law360.

"The development of our practice has occurred over decades with the development of the healthcare industry in Nashville and its maturation and so, as a result of that, a substantial number of clients who we serve are in the healthcare industry — not only those based in Nashville, but all across the country," Humphreys said.

Over 300 attorneys at Bass Berry work on healthcare industry matters, with expertise spanning transactions, regulatory issues and enforcement and adjacent areas including antitrust, privacy and executive compensation, the firm said. Bass Berry serves as regulatory counsel to 35 publicly traded healthcare companies and over 200 healthcare businesses nationwide, according to the firm.

Bass Berry's recent accomplishments include serving as lead regulatory counsel for New York-based private equity firm Sycamore in its take-private deal with Walgreens.

That work was bolstered by Bass Berry's track record of working with specialty pharmacies and private equity firms, as well as its experience heading transactions, Humphreys said.

She highlighted the firm's work last year as lead counsel advising ambulatory surgery center network AmSurg in a definitive agreement to be acquired by nonprofit Catholic health system Ascension Health. The firm also served as lead counsel to Wellvana last year in its acquisition of CVS Health's Medicare Shared Savings Program business.

"Being able to understand how a particular regulatory issue impacts a buyer's business and economics following a transaction is important, and many of our senior lawyers in our healthcare practice have an M&A background," said Humphreys, who also co-chairs Bass Berry's healthcare private equity team.

In the case of Walgreens' retail pharmacy business, Humphreys said the transaction presented Sycamore



with the opportunity to implement operational improvements in step with other retail investments from its portfolio, which includes Staples and Hot Topic.

The firm also notched victories in its healthcare litigation work last year, including in a False Claims Act case that ended soon after it accused a relator's attorneys of submitting an expert witness report riddled with artificial intelligence-generated fabrications.

The case dated back to 2020 and involved allegations that Bass Berry's client — a group of Utah anesthesiologists and a medical practice — improperly billed the government for anesthesia services. The litigation ended in September following an unopposed request for intervention and dismissal by the government, which asserted there was "good cause" to end the litigation and did not make mention of the expert witness report.

Reflecting on the case, Humphreys said that, while AI has turned out to be a valuable tool in the practice of law, the technology is "no substitute" for a legitimate expert.

"By us paying attention and being attuned to that, we were able to vet that out for not only a successful result for our client but ultimate dismissal of the suit," Humphreys said.

The firm last year also reached a resolution in an FCA suit against the Tennessee and North Carolina-based hospital system Erlanger, which faced allegations concerning claims submitted for overlapping surgeries. The April settlement came after Tennessee and the federal government declined to intervene in the case in 2023 and the litigation proceeded to summary judgment briefing.

Looking ahead, Humphreys said Bass Berry's healthcare practice wants to add talented lawyers who can help the firm expand its life sciences work and its presence in the District of Columbia, where many of Bass Berry's healthcare regulatory experts are based.

Transactions of particular interest for the firm include those in the pharmaceutical sector, where she said the industry has seen private equity interest shift after cooling on physician practice management platforms and related areas.

"Most importantly, it starts with people," Humphreys said. "We are continuously looking to onboard great lawyers who fit with us culturally and have the type of experience that our clients want and need, particularly in the private equity space."

--Additional reporting by Dan McKay and Al Barbarino. Editing by Linda Voorhis.
