

MVP: Ropes & Gray's Tim McCrystal

By Theresa Schliep

Law360 (November 15, 2024, 12:05 PM EST) -- Tim McCrystal, co-chair of Ropes & Gray LLP's healthcare practice, has guided clients through serious regulatory changes, including advising Vistria Portfolio Co. in its acquisition of Recco Home Care Services Inc. and representing Gentiva in the \$350 million sale of its personal care business, earning him a spot as one of the 2024 Law360 Healthcare MVPs.

His biggest accomplishment and challenge:

McCrystal said navigating legislative and regulatory changes across the country was likely his biggest challenge over the past year. But guiding clients through "some of the most complex and choppy waters" he's seen in a long time was his greatest accomplishment over the year, too, he said.

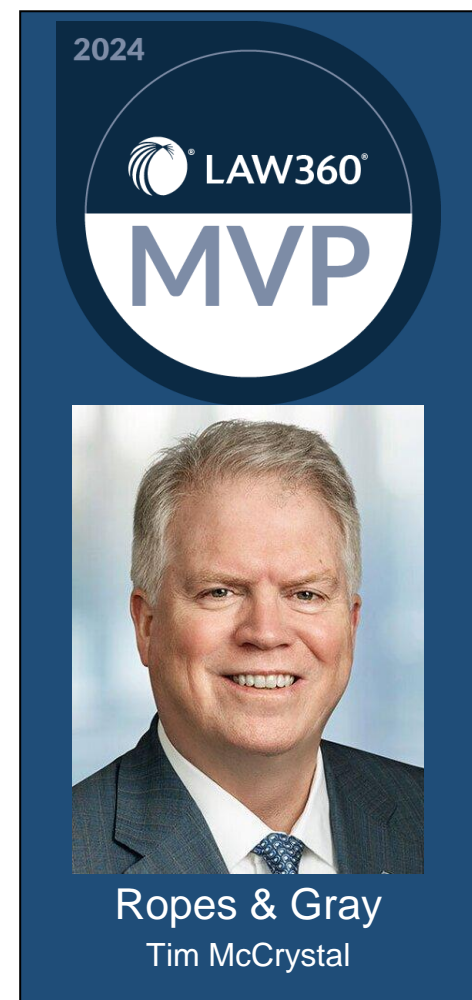
"We have had changes in the way services are being delivered, financial distress across the industry and strong government interest in healthcare," McCrystal said. "We had local transaction laws and regulations come into play, and we had a number of healthcare transactions against that backdrop."

States with intense healthcare transaction scrutiny include New York and Massachusetts, where McCrystal guided clients on complying with local laws and regulations, including Vistria and Help at Home in the acquisition of Recco, a New York licensed healthcare services agency.

Help at Home is a home care services provider. Home healthcare has become increasingly popular, with significant implications for Medicare and state Medicaid programs.

"The [New York] Medicaid program funds a number of home health and in-home personal services," McCrystal said. "The process for licensure and transition of ownership in New York has gone through changes, and it was very ambiguous for a while."

"We worked together as colleagues in New York to bring a series of home care transactions through the process, working closely with regulators," McCrystal added, noting that the work "was about bringing an



experienced healthcare team together to work with the state and the parties to the transaction to bring it through."

What he's most proud of:

McCrystal said he wouldn't identify one transaction over another as his proudest moment in the past year, but he said he's most proud to serve Ropes & Gray's healthcare clients.

"We believe in the mission and objectives of our clients," McCrystal said.

The transactions those clients undertake are often both challenging and daunting, but playing a role in those deals is an opportunity McCrystal and his team have "had to earn," he said.

"The fact that we work on complex — and in some cases, bet-the-farm transaction work — is what I'm very proud of," McCrystal said.

What motivates him:

For McCrystal, what keeps him going is his passion for healthcare, a supportive firm and colleagues, and great clients.

"I really love the healthcare industry," McCrystal said. "I've been very fortunate to be at a firm that's very supportive, and has great people around. I find myself working on things that are of great interest to me, with people who are tremendous lawyers, and with tremendous clients, as well."

Why he's a healthcare attorney:

McCrystal landed in healthcare because, between college and law school, he worked at a health insurer. That company helped employees understand the ins and outs of the industry, so working in healthcare as an attorney was a natural fit, he said.

"That's what led me to Ropes & Gray, and I've never looked back," McCrystal said.

It helps, too, that McCrystal believes in the mission and objective of his clients.

"I also wanted to do something constructive with my law degree," he said.

Unlike some healthcare attorneys, McCrystal represents all types of clients, including plans, providers, companies in the pharmaceutical industry and value-based care organizations. That type of "multifaceted practice" comes in handy when advising clients with different business lines or backgrounds, according to McCrystal.

"In the deals context, it helps get clients comfortable with each other," he said.

His advice for junior attorneys:

McCrystal has worked as an attorney for decades now, in a complicated and ever-changing industry. There's a lot to learn about the complexities of healthcare, he said, but his best advice for junior attorneys is simple: just dive in.

"I use the analogy of going for a swim off the dock: You have the choice of putting your ankle in the water and feeling what it's like, or sitting down on the dock and dangling your legs into the water," McCrystal said. "My advice is take four steps back, take a running start and jump all the way in."

--As told to Theresa Schliep. Editing by Melissa Treolo.

Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2024 MVP winners after reviewing nearly 900 submissions.

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