

THE JOURNAL RECORD

Medical screening company expands to Oklahoma

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The Journal Record

Posted: 12:07 AM Friday, February 19, 2010



Traci Caldarone, medical assistant with Health Yes!, performs a bone density test with ultrasound during a medical screening event at the Oklahoma City Fire Department Local 157 Union Hall on Thursday. (Maïke Sabolich)

OKLAHOMA CITY - A Texas-based medical screening company has expanded to Oklahoma, where it plans to carve out a niche in the preventive services business.

HealthYes! will offer about 20 screenings a month in the state, rotating its equipment to various sites where people can receive testing of their cardiovascular, bone and circulatory health. Company co-founder and CEO Dale W. Wood said he's providing a service that's not easily secured without spending thousands of dollars.

"What we provide is something the medical community doesn't," Wood said. "The medical community is extremely good at solving medical problems, but what they're not focused on is helping give you information that can prevent things from happening, or maybe looking inside your body to see if something is already going on. We fit in between the consumer and the physician. We empower the consumer to ... find out more information about what's going on inside their bodies, then taking that report to their primary care physician so they can give them better care."

Wood said the typical HealthYes! client is about 40 years old, health-conscious and already has a primary care physician. The screening they want is available at hospitals, but not at a reasonable cost, Wood said, nor does insurance usually cover preventive tests.

"You can't walk into a primary care physician's office and ask for these screenings because they don't have all the equipment I have," Wood said. "You can walk into a hospital and get the services we provide, but it typically will cost you \$2,000 to \$3,000 to do what I do for \$200. It's that way because that's all I do - I don't have the extreme overhead costs."

Screening packages cost from \$139 to \$199. Most customers pay in cash, but they receive insurance billing codes if they want to file their own claims, Wood said. When they receive their report, they are encouraged to give it to their primary care physician, especially if it reveals a problem. The company also is building an online tool in which people can forward the report, in its security-compliant state, to their doctors, he said.

HealthYes! has five full-time employees in Oklahoma - two sales representatives and three technicians conducting the screenings. For analysis of the screenings, the company contracts with physicians on a per-client basis, Wood said. The physician reading screenings for Oklahoma customers is in Pennsylvania but has a license in Oklahoma. Wood said he's also hoping to bring a local cardiologist on board.

Wood said his reception with physicians depends on their exposure to medical screening companies. He said he hopes to build good relationships with doctors by providing detailed reports with insight into patients' conditions. He encourages his customers to give the reports to their primary care physicians because that relationship, which is often long-term, is where the best health care decisions are made, he said.

In time, he said he hopes physicians provide him an additional revenue stream by sending patients his way for affordable screening.

Wood said he also plans to move into the corporate wellness market and make partnerships with large companies for discounted screenings.

For information about HealthYes! and upcoming screenings, visit www.healthyes.com.