

Long Island Business NEWS

Where Business Gets Down to Business

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Healthy, Wealthy and Wise

By Alison Snyder

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Doctors discover there is strength in numbers

To practice medicine today, doctors have to have both clinical expertise and a dose of business know-how.

Unfortunately, business isn't part of the medical school curriculum.

"Health care has been overrun by major corporations whose primary interest is to profit from the industry," said Garden City neurosurgeon Louis Cornacchia. "As a result, patients and physicians are placed in a position where the health-care process is no longer the primary issue on the table."

Most funds originally earmarked toward patient care are diverted toward pharmaceutical and medical device companies, insurers and other big businesses connected to the health-care industry, he said. Health care for patients has deteriorated as a result, according to Cornacchia.

After years of research, feedback and some product development, he said he's found a solution to the problems that ail the health-care industry. His goal was to establish a technology-based way for physicians to join forces. With \$3 million in funding from private equity, Cornacchia founded Doctations.

Doctations developed an all-purpose product – Internet-based office management software, bundled with electronic medical record software and the platform for a practice to link up with other practices and form "large corporations" numbering between 500 and 1,500 physicians.

The technology, he said, is a mechanism for uniting independent physicians to work together and improve patient care.

Doctations, Cornacchia said, gives doctors the business model as well as the legal and business know-how to join together and create a self-governing and democratic corporation. Collectively, they can bargain for better reimbursements from insurers and discounts on medical supplies and products. The software manages the business side of their practices, freeing up more time for doctors to spend with patients, he said.

The company is at 27 employees and growing as it prepares to launch its first three "Web-integrated Physician Partnerships," or WiPPs, as they are called. A 70-physician WiPP is forming in Suffolk County, a 65-physician WiPP is developing in Nassau County, and other groups are forming in New Jersey and Brooklyn, he said. The company aims to have its first WiPP fully operational by the end of this year, with the others to follow soon after.

Cornacchia wants to take Doctations national in 2009. The company also aims to bring its business model to hospitals.

North Shore-LIJ expands spine center

The North Shore-LIJ Health System has added a new neurosurgery and spine center in Lynbrook to meet the demand for services from South Shore residents.

An extension of the health system's Harvey Cushing Institutes of Neuroscience, the Lynbrook facility will provide specialized surgical and nonsurgical treatments by a team of four top spine surgeons.

Neurosurgeons Mitchell Levine, Chris Overby, Peter Hollis and Mark Eisenberg will provide care at the Lynbrook center. They all joined the health system in 2006 with a similar office in Great Neck that specializes in treating patients with brain tumors and spinal disorders.