

Business First of Louisville - June 9, 2008

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# BUSINESS FIRST

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## **IQS canvassing Midwest with reimbursement reports**

Business First of Louisville - by [Ben Adkins](#) Business First Staff Writer

The Center for Healthcare Reimbursement, a division of Louisville-based **IQS Research**, began collecting data last summer about reimbursement rates that health care providers receive from major insurance providers in several markets across the Midwest.

The intent was to compile the data into reports and publish them, offering customers an opportunity to compare reimbursement rates for certain specialties across multiple benefits providers.

Since launching the initiative, the center has published reports for specialties in Kansas City, Mo. and Kan., Cincinnati and Nashville, Tenn.

And last month, the company released reports on obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics and family practice/internal medicine for the Louisville market. (See related item at left.)

### **Company satisfied with report sales**

Shawn Herbig, president of IQS Research, declined to disclose specific sales figures but said he is satisfied with sales so far.

Most of the reports sold have been purchased by accountants, health management companies and other consultants, he said.

Herbig said some groups, such as medical societies and physician groups, have been quick to support the reports and promote them within their respective circles.

"Once we get to the thought leaders, it kind of becomes like dominoes," he said.

Lelan K. Woodmansee, executive director of the Greater Louisville Medical Society, said his organization long has hoped to have information such as that provided by IQS to be available to its members.

He believes the information could help physician practices negotiate reimbursement rates with insurance providers.

"We're really encouraging our members to participate with (IQS) in their data collection and to

use them as a service," Woodmansee said.

### **Product expansion expected to drive sales**

In the coming weeks, the center will send newsletters to medical practices in Louisville and other markets to announce the availability of the reports, and Herbig said he expects that effort to further drive sales.

He also expects broader product offerings to boost sales.

During the next two months, the center plans to release reports for St. Louis, Chicago, Minneapolis and other regional markets.

Herbig said the center plans to have released a total of 42 reports by the end of August -- one report for each of three different specialties in the 14 most populous markets in the Midwest.

The long-term objective is to release reports for the top 100 markets in the United States, Herbig said.

The reports are available in paper form or by electronic download. An online client portal also is in the works, Herbig said, which will allow users to view more detailed information about multiple markets and specialties.

Herbig said the portal most likely would be available on an annual subscription basis, and the company hopes to launch the portal later this year.

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### **Physician reimbursement rates 'OK' for Louisville**

The Center for Healthcare Reimbursement, a division of Louisville-based IQS Research, recently rolled out reports listing reimbursement rates for several health care specialties in the Louisville area.

Shawn Herbig, president of IQS Research, said reimbursement rates for Louisville-area physicians fared "OK" when compared with rates for the same specialties in other markets.

For example, Louisville-area providers in the category of family practice/internal medicine were reimbursed at an average rate of 102 percent of Medicare reimbursements. Kansas City providers in the same category received reimbursement rates of 110 percent of Medicare.

Louisville-area physicians in the obstetrics and gynecology category and the pediatrics category were reimbursed at average rates of 110 percent of Medicare and 104 percent of Medicare, respectively, Herbig said. The data is based on reimbursement information from 95 physicians, concerning four insurance providers.

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### **IQS adds employees**

A year ago, IQS Research had a total of nine employees, but only four of those were full-time workers. Now the company has eight full-time employees and another two who work part time, along with an intern.

One of the new hires is Cynthia Frentz, vice president of operations for the company. Other employees are committed to data collection, data analysis, sales and other tasks.

Herbig said he expects to hire four more full-time employees by the end of 2008 and between six and 10 employees for each of the next four years.

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