

Michigan dental insurance provider targets Florida

Orlando, Jacksonville and Miami are among selected sites for rollout.

BY DAVE STRUPP

| BUSINESS JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

A Michigan dental insurance provider is sinking its teeth into the Florida market with a new name and product.

Its plan: to offer low- to medium-priced dental benefit plans to small and midsize businesses in Orlando and two other Florida cities.

Renaissance Life & Health Insurance Co. has offered dental coverage in Florida for the past three years, but on a restricted basis to make the company's presence known and to set up a network of agents. The change of name to **Renaissance Dental** and new product focus were designed to attract more business, says Phil Wenk, president of Renaissance Holding Co.

"We've had some sales (in the past three years) but not as many as we would have liked," he says. "So we've basically redirected how we wanted to address the state."

Renaissance Dental will target the Orlando, Jacksonville and Miami areas before the company rolls out statewide and into southern Georgia over the next two years.

"We anticipate being in the small-group market," Wenk says. "As you get into the largest cities, you get lost in the shuffle, and we want this to be accessible to smaller groups so they can offer true benefits to their employees."

Renaissance's changes in the state include offering a value card that gives policy holders free access to vision, pharmacy and hearing discounts with EyeMed Vision Care, Caremark Inc. and Beltone Electronics Corp., respectively.

"We felt the value card would be a market differentiator for us," Wenk says. "It is to try and create as much

of a one-stop shop as we can."

Depending on the success of Renaissance Dental, Wenk says the company expects to add life insurance to its products over the next couple of years, which should be a helpful addition for employers who have little access to buy life insurance for employees.

Renaissance Dental will offer mid- to low-level prices for its benefits, says Jay Reabis, director of ancillary benefits for Renaissance Life & Health Insurance Company of America.

"Our target is to come in very competitively," Reabis says. "We are a relatively new carrier, so we have to sell ourselves at a very competitive price."

Wenk intends to sell at least \$1 million worth of dental benefits in the first year of the company's change in Florida, which should equal nearly 2,000 primary subscribers of the dental plan, he says.

"I anticipate over the next few years, we will try to double or triple that."

DAVE STRUPP is a staff writer for the Jacksonville Business Journal, a sister publication of OBJ.

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Renaissance Dental

Description: Dental coverage provider for small and midsize businesses

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