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## Baptist Healthcare opens on-site clinic for Appriss workers

Louisville-based technology firm Appriss Inc. has opened an on-site medical clinic for employees and their dependents.

At about 800 square feet, the clinic has two exam rooms and other furnishings of a traditional primary care practice. Dr. Brent Benton staffs the clinic, which is open five hours a day, three days a week.

Employees and their dependents are not charged for visits to the clinic.

The clinic, which opened this week, is part of a broader initiative by Baptist Healthcare Systems Inc. that aims to tailor health care needs to employers and help control their health care costs, said Elizabeth North, director of reimbursement for Baptist Healthcare's operations in the Louisville Market.

### Responding to demand

During the past two years, Baptist Healthcare has received calls with increasing frequency from employers facing rising insurance premiums and pharmacy costs that wanted to contract directly with the health care provider for services.

As a result, the Baptist Health Network was developed to cater to Louisville-area employers' specific wellness needs.

"This was something that the employers asked us to do," North said. "We've been looking for a solution for some time for employers in the area who were seeking to contract directly for health care for their employees."

### Saving money

Appriss has signed a two-year contract to pay agreed-upon rates for various services. Officials declined to disclose the rates. The company also paid to build the on-site clinic, said Rick Cartor, vice president of human resources for Appriss. He declined to disclose the investment.

Cartor said the company became self-insured a little over two years ago.

"We realized that we were spending a great deal of money on health care insurance and, even when we drove our costs down, our rates didn't go down," he said.

The company's insurance broker, BB&T Insurance Services, helped make the arrangement with Baptist Health Network, Cartor said. And the company stands to save hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Appriss, which has 320 employees, spent nearly \$200,000 on primary care visits last year, Cartor said. This year, the company was projected to spend \$250,000 on primary care visits to external providers.

If 30 percent to 35 percent of those projected visits occur at the in-house clinic, that will cover what Appriss is paying Baptist Health Network to operate the clinic, Cartor said.

And for every additional 5 percent of employees who use the clinic, Appriss will save another 5 percent on primary care costs.

The clinic also will dispense medications. Cartor said the company has projected to spend as much as \$350,000 this year on prescription medications. If all employees use generic drugs and obtain them through the clinic, that cost could be cut by more than half.



**Dr. Brent Benton, of Baptist Medical Associates, spoke with patient Arthur Buchanan in an examination room at Appriss Inc.**

**RON BATH**  
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### Looking for others

Baptist Healthcare is targeting other self-insured employers.

Appriss is the first to sign an agreement for the plan, but North said the health care provider is in talks with eight others.

She declined to identify any of them but said Baptist Healthcare officials are targeting January 2011 to launch the program with the next employer.

Arrangements with other employers might look different from the contract with Appriss, she said. Others might not want an on-site clinic, but they still could participate in the program.

Program participants could see any of the 1,800 or so physicians in the Louisville area that are employed by Baptist Healthcare or have active privileges at the company's Louisville-area facilities.

The initial focus for the program is in the Louisville market, North said, but the plan is to eventually expand across the state.

Projections still are being developed as to how many employers might participate in the program, North said.

"We're meeting with a number of employers right now," she said. "People are looking for something different."