

# IMMEDIATE CARE **Business**

Business Solutions for the Urgent Care Market

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## Urgent Care Start Up, 201 The Planning Continues

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urgent care close up

By Michelle Beaver

## Colo. Urgent Care Focuses On Quality

Opening an urgent care center is difficult, especially if it's the entrepreneur's first try. A new urgent care center in Aurora, Colo., however, makes it look easy. OnPoint Urgent Care opened July 13, 2009, and is owned and operated by MedVentures, PLLC, a holding company. So far, the roll out has been smooth.

The facility is 5,000 square feet, includes 10 treatment rooms, and occupies the anchor tenant position in a new multi-use facility. Sure, the business is attractive and the planning turned out well, but it wasn't always a picnic. Opening any business is fraught with difficulties, said Jeffrey Bushnell, DO, MBA, principal of MedVentures, which is based in Monument, Colo.

"We have been overcoming obstacles for nearly three years now and continue to do so daily," Bushnell said. "Probably the most difficult aspect for me was to make the commitment to open a practice in the first place. It's one thing to dream about it and quite another to put together a business plan and start baring your soul to anyone who can help you turn the dream into a reality. There are opportunities for failure at every step."

One major challenge was to secure affordable financing, especially since the group started circulating its business plan in one of the worst financial climates in U.S. history. Bushnell said that smaller local banks had already been "stung" by the real estate collapse and shied away, but that larger banks were interested due to the overall strength of the healthcare industry. The company eventually partnered with JP Morgan Chase.

"They loved our plan and had confidence following their analysis, that we will accomplish what we set out to," Bushnell said.

The business uses what Bushnell calls the most-advanced EMR system available, and has lab facilities, online check in, digital X-ray technology, and medication dispensing systems.

They also have form to meet the function. The waiting room has a fireplace, "upscale" comfortable seating, several television

areas, Wi-Fi access, two Apple computer stations, and a coffee bar. Plus, the design includes a glassed-in "KidZone" with several televisions and activities for toddlers through teens.

Bushnell thinks the upgrades will be worth the investment, but admits that planning and creating such a nice facility is not an easy feat.

"The design of our center was an exhausting year-long process," he said.

The goal of the design was to bring some of the natural beauty of Colorado indoors. "We accomplished this with generous use of wood, stone and slate throughout the facility, yet keeping with a clean and professional style expected in a physician's office," Bushnell said.

He and his colleagues are hoping that all these finishing touches will lead to a reputation as the most customer-service oriented center in the region.

"One of the most effective forms of neighborhood advertising is the personal referral. If we stand out not only because of our approach to the patient from an emergency medicine provider's perspective, but also because of the comfort and amenities we offer, we are going to get those referrals and create a base of patients that will return whenever they have an acute medical need," he said.

Bushnell is confident that the referral process will be helpful in the company's occupational medicine division. That part takes a little longer to implement, according to Bushnell.

"We hope that occupational medicine will play a very large role in our business," he said.

The current OnPoint Urgent Care is the only one, but that might not always be the case.

"We have only one site planned at this point, but, should the opportunity present itself, we would be prepared to immediately replicate an outstanding practice anywhere simply because we took the time putting the first one together the right way," Bushnell said. "We have an excellent team that has helped us build a solid infrastructure."

The daily team includes an emergency medicine physician, RN, an X-ray technician and a medical assistant. The staff is cross trained.

Hiring well to begin with is important, but checking on employees even after they've been with your business long term is important too. At OnPoint, employees will be rewarded if they do well on customer service score cards.

"We will continually evaluate the performance of every member of our staff and the functionality and comfort of our facility through an electronic survey system," Bushnell said. "This system will provide us with statistical analysis of a variety of measures that we will use to continually improve our service to the community."

No business is perfect, but OnPoint does seem on point, pardon the pun.



The front of OnPoint Urgent Care, which opened in spring of 2009 in Aurora, Colo.