



THE PLAIN DEALER

Mayfield Hts. Sears Dental operator sold

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Plain Dealer Reporter

The Mayfield Heights manager of Sears Dental and DentalCare offices in nine states has been acquired by two private-equity firms in New York City for undisclosed terms.

An affiliate of MSD Capital LP and North Peak Capital LLC, which was a minority investor in the transaction, acquired DentalCare Partners Inc. from two other private-equity firms -- Blue Point Capital in Cleveland and Beecken Petty O'Keefe & Co. in Chicago.

The transaction is likely to mean more growth for DentalCare, said Doug Brown, the dental practice manager's president and chief executive.

MSD Capital was formed in 1998 to manage the money of Dell Inc. founder Michael Dell and his family. Blue Point acquired an interest in DentalCare in 1996 before being spun out by Cleveland banking company KeyCorp in 2000.

The acquisition means "affiliating with two very progressive private-equity firms that have studied the dental industry," Brown said in a phone interview.

DentalCare manages 70 Sears Dental and DentalCare offices, generating annual revenue of more than \$100 million.

Shaker Heights dentist Edward Meckler started the first Sears Family Dental Center in 1981 at Randall Park Mall. Dr. Meckler is DentalCare's chairman.

No management changes are expected because of the acquisition, Brown said. "We've all reinvested our capital in the business, as well," he said.

But DentalCare, which has grown internally, adding revenue at double-digit rates each year without adding new units, now plans to grow outwardly, Brown said.

With its new investors, DentalCare plans to open eight to 12 units per year, he said. The company manages about 20 Sears Dental offices in Ohio.

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