

South Florida BUSINESS JOURNAL

DESIGN STAR:

Christopher Lowell
teams up with
Office Depot to offer
furniture lines

P4



Insurance bill veto is a step backwards, some experts say

BY OSCAR PEDRO MUSIBAY

Gov. Charlie Crist's veto of a property insurance bill that would have reformed some industry practices means Florida businesses will see more of the same problems that have driven insurers to insolvency, critics say.

On June 1, Crist vetoed Senate Bill 2044, opening the door to more abuse by some public adjusters who still re-open claims dating back to 2004, said Scott Johnson, executive VP of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents. "I hope I'm wrong, but I think it means the current sys-

SEE **INSURANCE** | 29

Green movement turns to cost cutting

Green, the environmental friendly effort, is being closely tied to green, the money-saving movement, according to panel of experts gathered by the *South Florida Business Journal*.



While going green might have initially seemed an eco-friendly gesture, our panelists give examples of how it's increasingly turning into a cost-effective, competitive advantage effort, whether it's sales or public relations. Office Depot sells more than \$2 billion a year in products that are varying degrees of green.

Don't pay attention and your business risks falling behind, the panelists said. One even said going green is a tool to recruit and retain the right talent, which addresses the high cost of turnover.

Green is flourishing in buildings, whether it's the new EcoPlex in West Palm Beach or the LEED-certified American Airlines Arena in Miami. Tenants save thousands of gallons of water, trim their kilowatt-hours and have space that some experts say can enhance worker productivity.

Our special report begins on Page 9.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MARK FREERKS

WHAT WILL HE GET?

Rothstein's abuse of legal system looms large in sentencing

BY PAUL BRINKMANN

He ran the largest fraud in Florida history, laundered money and lied to clients, colleagues and investors.

But, when it comes to sentencing Scott Rothstein for his crimes, legal experts agree that his biggest problem is his gross abuse of the legal system. The 47-year-old Ponzi schemer is facing up to 100 years in prison.

There are mitigating factors: Rothstein's help in bringing down alleged mobsters will be noted, experts say.

But, any benefit provided by his cooperation may be outweighed by the inescap-

able fact that he spent years undermining the state and federal justice system.

"The same judicial system that he decimated will now pass judgment on him," said Charles Intriago, a former prosecutor who founded the Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists. "If I was a federal prosecutor, I'd be saying those things on behalf of the United States of America."

The pinnacle of Rothstein's abuse of the legal system came when he forged the signatures of two federal judges while trying to fleece one of his best-known clients, Ed

SEE **ROTHSTEIN** | 29

THIS WEEK in the SFBJ



SPILLOVER EFFECT

Fishing guides and other eco-tourism businesses are distressed over the spread of oil in the Gulf of Mexico. Some say it's starting to have an impact on booking inquiries. P2



PATIENT APPROACH

Metropolitan Health Networks is the first medical practice in Florida to get a key certification that's vital for health-care reform to succeed. Dr. Jose Guethon, president and COO of MetCare, tells why it's important. P8



TOWERING IDEA

The top of one of the media towers planned for downtown Miami would be about 45 stories above the street. A tax credit expert says an expired commitment letter from a bank doesn't indicate financing problems. P13

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Network with the SFBJ publisher, editors, reporters and sales team at a breakfast on July 15 hosted by Sabadell United Bank. Call (954) 949-7587 for details.



Two medical groups poised to cash in on health care reform law

BY BRIAN BANDELL

Two South Florida medical groups have gotten a jumpstart on a new model for primary care that's touted under federal health care reform.

A patient-centered medical home (PCMH) is designed to improve quality and reduce costs by letting the primary care physician play quarterback – managing a patient's care in coordination with other doctors and caregivers. Instead of getting paid for every office visit and test, the physicians are given a monthly bundled payment for each patient

in their care. If the patient does not use all the services under that payment, the physician's practice keeps the difference.

West Palm Beach-based Metropolitan Health Networks (MetCare) was the first medical practice in Florida to get certification as a Level 3 PCMH from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). That organization sets national standards that are recognized by the federal government in order to participate in programs.

A crucial component of a PCMH is patient follow-up, MetCare President and COO Dr. Jose Guethon said. MetCare (AMEX: MDF),

which deals exclusively with Medicare Advantage seniors in its 10 clinics, has nurses call patients after visits to see how they are feeling and make sure they are following the prescribed treatments.

Since seniors often see many doctors, primary care physicians consult with patients about the recommendations they're getting, and help them decide how to follow them or if some could be unnecessary, Guethon said. The primary care physicians also discuss the treatments with the patients' other doctors.

In a one-year pilot study with Humana, MetCare found that hospital admissions

were down, diagnostic imaging expenses decreased and pharmacy expenses increased at half the rate as patients not in a PCMH.

ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS UTILIZED

Having such coordination requires a strong record-keeping system – most likely an electronic record to move information faster. Guethon said electronic prescribing and a disease registry module are a must, but the cost is prohibitive for many primary care physicians. Given the bundled payment model, though, he said the expense could be worth it.

The bundled payment creates an added incentive to manage the patient's care well, said Mayda Antun, CEO of Miami-based CAC Florida Medical Centers. CAC has used PCMH practices since opening 40 years ago, and its 10 centers are seeking NCQA certification.

CAC's clinics have primary care physicians, doctors in 13 specialties, nutritionists and pharmacists. Nurses follow up on doctor visits and hospital stays to help Medicare patients follow disease management plans, Antun said.

CAC recently started shared appointments, where five or six diabetic patients meet with physicians together.

"They can learn from each other about diet tips and things such as how to care for their feet," Antun said.

CAC plans to add electronic medical records in the next year.

While health insurance companies are seeing positive clinical and financial outcomes from PCMH facilities, they are hesitant to tout the model to patients because there aren't enough qualified clinics, Guethon said.

The wider adoption of health care information technology should make PCMH a more attractive model, said attorney Maria T. Currier, a partner with Holland & Knight in Miami and the chairwoman of its national health care and life science practice. Clients are asking about setting up a bundled payment model to justify the investment in technology.

When setting up a PCMH, it's important to avoid kickback conflicts because providers can't have an interest in the services that handle patient referrals, Currier said. Another issue is splitting the bundled payment among the providers.

"It's difficult to navigate the health care system because all settings are operated independently," she said. "We're looking to coordinate care, and someone should get paid for doing that."



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MARK FREERKS

Dr. Jose Guethon's MetCare is the first practice in Florida to get a key certification.