



## **Firm offers medical software assistance**

By Justin Boulmay

Some local medical practices might benefit from computer programs that store patient files electronically and enable stronger information sharing between offices.

Ten practices are eligible for \$250,000 worth of medical records software from the Center for Community Health Leadership, an initiative of Misys Healthcare Systems, which creates computer programs for hospitals and physicians.

"This is a pretty unique opportunity for Rocky Mount," said Leigh Burchell, director of the Center for Community Health Leadership. "There are not a lot of communities doing this thing."

Many offices do not pursue such opportunities because they are expensive to acquire. The offices that acquire help from the center still will have to make some type of financial contribution, Burchell said.

But such services can help to improve communication between offices and prevent situations such as two doctors recommending prescriptions to a patient that might negatively react to the other.

The files store other information – such as allergy information and what a patient has been tested for – to prevent them from being examined again without need.

Nash Health Care Systems has used Misys software since 1992, said David Hinkle, vice president and chief information officer of the system.

One example is the Misys CPR, which serves as the central clinical system. The program can store information such as a doctor's dictation, lab results and physical therapy.

"Virtually every department documents into this clinical medical record," he said.

The system also cooperates with local offices by allowing patients to come in for lab tests and sends the results to the physician in an electronic format, Hinkle said.

The federal government is pushing for ways to provide such services and alleviate the costs, he said.

"A physician is many times reluctant or not able to make that investment," he said.  
"There's different ways people are looking at to get these tools in physicians' hands in their offices."

Officials credit Nash Health Care for helping make this opportunity possible.

Burchell said the system has served as a leader in the community by implementing such programs. Hinkle also said the system's proximity to Misys' headquarters in Raleigh also helped.