

# COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

## EXCLUSIVE REPORTS

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### OhioHealth gears up for office staff shift

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Business First

The sale of one building and demolition of an office complex are part of OhioHealth's plan to consolidate more of its administrative functions at the former Doctors Hospital North site.

The moves could result in more than 200 employees being transferred to the facility, OhioHealth officials said.

No staff cutbacks are expected, said Steve Bush, OhioHealth's vice president of corporate finance.

"We feel we can improve communications and operations by having our corporate people in one building rather than dispersed throughout the city," he said.

Now named the Victorian Village Health Center, the four-story building sits off Dennison Avenue in Victorian Village. It was one of the facilities that OhioHealth acquired when it bought Doctors North and Doctors West in 1998.

The center houses OhioHealth administrative offices as well as an urgent-care center, sleep disorders unit, laboratory and medical imaging services. About 250 people work there.

Bush said more than 70 employees in accounting and information technology recently moved in when OhioHealth closed its offices at the Villa, a former convent on Columbus' west side. The hospital system acquired the property from the Catholic Diocese of Columbus in the late 1980s.

OhioHealth is in contract to sell the site, which sits off Hague Avenue, for about \$2 million to the Mosaica charter school.

Plans are also being developed to demolish four buildings in the Whetstone Center near Riverside Methodist Hospital, Bush said. Some 200 workers there will move to the Victorian Village site over the next 10 months to 12 months and possibly to some offices in the Dublin area.

They work in billing, marketing, communications, legal services, corporate accounting, internal auditing and for OhioHealth's foundation.

The Whetstone office buildings are east of Olentangy River Road across from the McConnell Heart Health Center. The Whetstone Center shares the site with the John J. Gerlach Center for Senior Health, a three-building complex that will remain.

#### Clearing way for parking

Once the buildings are down, the Whetstone property will be used for parking, Bush said. The site may have room for more than 500 vehicles, easing some of the parking problems at the busy Riverside campus.

The property also has potential for development as a clinical site, Bush said.

Costs for the demolition and parking lot are still to be determined.

Bush said OhioHealth is also gearing up to move about 20 administrative workers to Victorian Village from Kenny Road offices its WorkHealth affiliate leases. The occupational medicine program's clinical sites in Columbus, Grove City, Hilliard and on the northeast side will remain in operation.

Even after all the moves, Bush said, about a quarter of the former Doctors North building will be vacant. About half of it is unoccupied now.

Driven by steep financial losses, OhioHealth converted Doctors North from an inpatient hospital to an outpatient facility and administrative offices in 2002.

Last April, OhioHealth closed the Victorian Village Health Center's outpatient surgery unit due to a declining number of surgeries. But the other outpatient services, including urgent care, were retained as part of a commitment to serve the poor and uninsured in Victorian Village and surrounding neighborhoods.

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