

Regain Physical Therapy plans expansion

The Pittsford company posted growth of 83% for the first 7 months

By **KERRY FELTNER**

Nearing its second anniversary next month, Regain Physical Therapy PLLC, which markets itself as Regain Physical Therapy & Wellness, plans to expand.

The company's revenues grew 83 percent in the first seven months of 2014, compared with the same period in 2013.

The company has six employees and was formed because of the dream of owner Heather Nichting and her husband, Michael.

"So many people who would come to me and say, 'I really don't get what it is that you do,'" said Heather Nichting, a licensed physical therapist. "Friends would say, 'I've gone to PT; they're (the physical therapists) with me for five minutes and then they're treating other people.' That's why we stand out. We do one-on-one the entire time while somebody is here."

The business is in a 7,000-square-foot building on Monroe Avenue in Pittsford. It uses 4,500 square feet on a lower level for treatment rooms and a private massage area, and the top floor has additional treatment rooms and an exercise area. That space will permit expansion into personal training, nutrition and other wellness offerings, probably next year.

The business was launched Sept. 4, 2012. It treats patients of all ages, most of whom suffer from problems in joints such as hips, knees and shoulders.

Starting the business meant actually believing it could happen.

"We sat down and we started to put pen to paper and try to figure it out," said Michael Nichting, an employee of the firm who recently left a position at M&T Bank Corp. to help with the business side of the company. "And while we were at the kitchen table, I said, 'We have to take a picture of this,' because I call this picture the dream. (It) was before we had any building, any patients, and before you know it



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Though it can be common for physical therapists in certain practices to see multiple people an hour, Heather Nichting, owner of Regain Physical Therapy, believes that direct attention to patients trumps economics.

.... They say, 'If you can dream it, you can achieve it.'"

The Iowa natives moved to Rochester in the late 1990s because of a job offer for Michael. After working for 11 years in different facets of physical therapy, including as a director of rehab at Avon Nursing Facility and as a physical therapist for CP Rochester, Heather was ready to launch her own practice.

"I've had physical therapy and I've taken my kids to physical therapy in the past, and this is a different place," said Larry McKnight, a client. "This is not a knock on other physical therapy places, but quite often they do two or three people an hour. But Heather and (the other staff), they book one person for 45 minutes and they work with you."

After looking at many locations, the visibility and potential of the Monroe Avenue building made sense, the Nichtings said.

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One-on-one attention for patients is "how I've always treated," she said. "When I was in school, that's how you're trained. It's supposed to be a one-on-one; you're not trained where it's supposed to be three people at one time flying through, (but) that's a big money-maker and I get it."

Each year the business invests in education to keep up with trends in health care.

The business has been challenging and time-consuming but extremely rewarding, Heather said.

"It is the one-on-one here, to me, that is the most important aspect," she said. "From the moment that they come in to the moment that they leave, this is a happy place. We're compassionate, and we are listening to the patient. We do empathize with them; it's (about achieving) their goals."

Customers can tell those are priorities for the practice, McKnight said.

"Everyone in the place, you can tell they enjoy what they're doing, from the receptionist to all of the therapists," he said. "They enjoy their job, and it shows."

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