

# HealthTronics' new facility means 45 new jobs for area

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HealthTronics Inc., an Austin-based medical technology company, is set to open a manufacturing facility that company officials say will bring 45 jobs to Central Texas.

HealthTronics, publicly traded since 1999, develops medical services in the urology field.

The 45 new jobs include positions in manufacturing, engineering and customer service, and bring HealthTronics' work force to about 650 people worldwide, with 125 of those in Austin, said Scott Herz, HealthTronics' vice president of corporate development.

The announcement is the latest in a string from medical device companies that are expanding in or moving to Austin.

**Hanger Orthopedic Group Inc. is expected to start hiring next month for dozens of jobs in Austin. The company, now based in Bethesda, Md., is moving its headquarters here.**

**Pioneer Surgical Technology, based in Marquette, Mich., is opening an Austin sales and product development office for which it expects to hire about 30 people this year.**

St. Jude Medical is moving to larger offices in Southwest Austin and plans to add jobs as it grows here.

**Herz said HealthTronics' new Northwest Austin facility — which is about 15,000 square feet and is scheduled to open March 1 — came about because of the company's acquisition of Endocare Inc., which had been based in Irvine, Calif.**

Endocare made medical probes used during cryoablation procedures to aid in the treatment of various cancers, including prostate, liver and lung cancers. The new Austin facility is expected to manufacture 40,000 of the probes annually, the company said.

Ten of the new jobs were filled by former Endocare employees who moved to Austin from California, Herz said. The remaining 35 positions are to be filled in Austin, and 10 to 15 of those remain open, he said.

Herz said the new facility — and the marriage of HealthTronics and Endocare — "is very good for our shareholders."

Herz said it is also a positive step for patients who need their products. "This gives them a larger financial backer" in the field, he said.

When HealthTronics completed its acquisition of Endocare in 2009, "moving the (manufacturing) facility here was always the plan," Herz said.

"We were previously Endocare's largest customer ... and for quite some time, we viewed the businesses as being one business, that it made sense to bring them together," he said.

For the third quarter of 2009, the most recent quarter for which filings are available, HealthTronics reported revenue of \$47.3 million, up from \$44.8 million in the third quarter of 2008. The company had total revenue of \$165.9 million for 2008.

HealthTronics shares were unchanged Tuesday, closing at \$3.07 per share.

**Courtesy of JB Goodwin**