

SERVING THE GREATER CINCINNATI AREA

BUSINESS COURIER

AUGUST 5, 2011
Vol. 28 No. 14 \$3.00

Home Helpers wants to open 75 franchises in 2011

Revenues increased 22% at home-care firm last year

BY JAMES RITCHIE
jritchie@bizjournals.com

Emma Dickison is happy that her company got its start in 1997 because that has allowed the firm to build the scale Home Helpers will need as the industry reaches its peak over the next two decades.

Dickison's company, which also has a Canadian division and an in-home emergency monitoring business, is owned by Cincinnati-based Strategic Franchising Systems. It is on track to open 75 additional locations in 2011.

Home Helpers has 43 employees at its Montgomery headquarters and operates on a franchise model. The franchises provide services including meal preparation, bathing and errands. Home Helpers has doubled in revenue over the last four years and now has offices in more than 600 markets. Sales increased 22 percent last year, Dickison said.

Demographics are a key factor in the growth, she said. The firm serves not only the elderly, but expectant mothers with high-risk pregnancies, people recovering from accidents and those with chronic illnesses.

"The upper end of the baby boomer group definitely needs support, and some of their parents need care," she said.

She anticipates continued double-digit revenue growth, despite non-medical home care being a highly competitive, fragmented business. More than 100 agencies operate in Cincinnati alone, she said.

Jim Brown, vice president of franchise development for Dayton-based home-care firm Comfort Keepers said there's room for everyone. He has 630 locations owned by 365 franchisees, including five franchisees in Greater Cincinnati.

Company
has offices
in **600**
markets.

"The biggest challenge in our industry is finding caregivers," Brown said.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the number of home-care aides, including both medical and nonmedical caregivers, to approach 2.6 million by 2018, up 50 percent from 2008. The oldest of the baby boomers turned 65 this year and, according to the Pew Research Center,

10,000 more will reach that milestone every day for the next 19 years.

Home Helpers franchises cost between \$51,000 and \$92,000, Dickison said, and can be home-based to start.