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## Merger creates state's largest TPA

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ChoiceNet and InterCare Health Plans Inc. have merged to form the state's largest third-party administrator of health care benefits.

Third-party administrators manage claims for employers that "self insure," meaning they pay directly for their employees' medical treatment.

According to Kathy Major, founder of ChoiceNet and president of the new company, called ChoiceNet/InterCare Health Plans Inc., many employers are finding it less expensive to self insure, in part because premiums for health insurance have risen so much in the past several years.

Self insurance also helps companies control their costs because they have the flexibility to customize health coverage to fit their employees.

For example, a company that is self insured may choose to cover alternative medicine like acupuncture, whereas insurance through a managed-care network often will not.

Major founded ChoiceNet last year after working at insurance provider PacifiCare Health Systems for more than 12 years. James Beardall and Roxanne Marotte co-founded InterCare 14 years ago and will serve on the new company's board of directors.

**'There are truly strengths that each company brings to the table. We'll pull the best together...'**

**Kathy Major**  
health plan president

"There are truly strengths that each company brings to the table," Major said. "We'll pull the best of both together and make sure we continue to focus on the best interests of our clients. What's already working will not be changed."

The merger of Colorado Springs-based ChoiceNet and Greenwood Village-headquartered InterCare will result in a company of more than 200 employees serving in excess of 350 businesses and 125,000 members.

Because many Colorado businesses have employees outside of the state, the company conducts business in all 50 states and four countries.

The two Colorado offices will be maintained, as will a sales office in Nevada. The merger was officially executed on April 1.