

Bradley Arant hires 9 health attorneys from Balch & Bingham

BY ANTRENISE COLE | STAFF

Bradley Arant Boulton Cummings LLP has added nine attorneys to its health care practice group from Balch & Bingham LLP, according to officials with the law firm.

Both firms are based in Birmingham.

The new lawyers add to Bradley Arant's team of 46 attorneys who counsel health care companies on litigation liability, reimbursement challenges, the increasing regulation and industry consolidation and other business circumstances.

Bradley Arant has focused on a strategic growth of its health care practice since the firm was formed through a merger in 2009.

Fourteen attorneys joined the health care practice group in the last year, and firm Chairman Beau Grenier said it will continue its aggressive growth plan in 2012.

"We will continue to look for opportunities to grow and expand this area of our practice with people who share our focus on providing the highest quality client work and service and who also

share our core values," he said.

The nine attorneys to join the group from Balch & Bingham's Birmingham office are partners Judd A. Harwood, Jack B. Levy, Colin H. Luke, Carey Bennett McRae, Daniel F. Murphy and Laura Schiele Robinson; counsel John Markus; and associates Jennifer Hoover Clark and Kristen A. Larremore.

All of the new attorneys will work in Bradley Arant's Birmingham office.

Grenier said the health care industry is facing challenges that it has never seen before, and his firm wants to be a leader in helping companies find solutions.

"The health care industry is undergoing a dynamic period of change that we expect to continue for some time, and we are committed to having the depth and expertise which is necessary to serve our clients during this important time for them," he said.

"We also want to be at the forefront of the stimulating legal work this will undoubtedly involve."

Alan Rogers, managing partner of



Grenier

Balch & Bingham, said there were some differences in direction that could not be resolved.

"There was a combination of political and strategic reasons why we had to part ways," he said. "The decision was not easy."

Eric Ford, a public health professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, said law firms are seeing a growing demand for legal services in the health care industry.

He said there's a lot of activity around mergers and acquisitions among medical groups and health care systems.

Also, doctor's offices are starting to consider incorporating in other ways beyond simple partnerships to shield themselves from some forms of litigation, as well as take advantage of different kinds of tax structures that are available under different scenarios.

In addition, many law firms are starting to give advice to hospitals on regulatory compliance efforts.

"There are any number of ways that law firms are coming into health care and often with very good reason," he said.