

Medical network now being extended

PREVENTICARE would make a "slight" profit this month, the general manager of the computerised medical service, Mr Brian Wickens, said yesterday.

He said the organisation's severe cash-flow problems had been remedied and he now felt it was on a sound financial footing.

Preventicare provides

diagnostic tests and computerised medical history-taking for general practitioners.

It recently cut back its EDP staff from eight to two — and returned an IBM 360/40 computer in what it called a "scaling down" of computer activities.

It has continued to use the IBM Call-360 time-sharing service, and last month agreed to the appointment of a provisional liquidator to straighten out its financial affairs.

Mr Wickens confirmed that the two remaining EDP staff, including the

data processing manager, Mr John Maher, had resigned.

However, after some initial pruning, the number of terminals in doctors' surgeries had been stabilised, and a cautious expansion of the Preventicare network had begun, particularly in the Canberra and Yass districts.

"During our difficulties our doctors have reacted tremendously and stuck by us," he said.

Mr Wickens, who joined Preventicare in April and whose appointment as general manager was recently confirmed by the provisional liquidator, said he felt there was a great need for an organisation such as Preventicare that would bring the benefits of computers without causing a loss of contact between a patient and his doctor.

He said that when Preventicare was back on a more profitable footing a great deal would be ploughed back into improved service and research.