

# Farmers exits malpractice

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Farmers Insurance Group said last week it will stop selling medical malpractice insurance, narrowing an already tight market for physicians in some of the 18 states that it serves.

Farmers Insurance has "suffered significant underwriting losses" recently and plans to refocus on its core lines of home, business, auto and life insurance, said Michelle Levy, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles-based insurance group.

In 2002, Farmers Insurance lost more than \$100 million on its malpractice policies; losses this year were following a similar trend, she said.

Roughly one-third of the Farmers Insurance malpractice premiums are in California. It also writes in Connecticut.

Farmers Insurance is owned by the Swiss insurance giant, Zurich Financial Services. □