

Patient-Centered Medical Home

The Patient-Centered Medical Home* (“medical home”) is a model of care that puts the needs of the patient first. The medical home is the base from which health care services are coordinated to provide the most effective and efficient care to the patient. This includes the use of health information technology, the coordination of specialty and inpatient care, providing preventive services through health promotion, disease management and prevention, health maintenance, behavioral health services, patient education, and diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses.

The Medical Home Treats the Whole Person

At the center of the medical home is a personal physician who partners with the patient to coordinate and facilitate medical care. Each patient has an ongoing relationship with a personal physician trained to provide first contact, continuous and comprehensive care. The medical home is responsible for providing for all the patient’s health care needs or taking responsibility for appropriately arranging care with other qualified professionals. The personal physician leads a team of individuals who collectively take responsibility for the ongoing care of patients.

Patient-Centered Care Puts the Needs of the Patient First

The medical home puts the needs and desires of the patient first by creating an environment where patients have a relationship with a doctor who knows them, their medical history and their family. Practices advocate for their patients to support the attainment of optimal, patient-centered outcomes defined by the planning process driven by a compassionate partnership between physicians, patients, and the patient’s family. The medical home does not restrict patient access to services – rather it helps ensure that the right patient receives the right services at the right time.

Patient-Centered Care Places Emphasis on Quality and Safety

Quality and safety are the hallmarks of the medical home. Evidence based medicine, health information technology, and clinical decision support tools guide decision making to support patient care, performance measurement, patient education, and enhanced communication. Ensuring the coordination and comprehensive approach of the medical home model over time will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the health care system and ultimately improve health outcomes.

The Medical Home is a Better Health Care Delivery Model

Studies from across the globe have validated the medical home delivery model. Examples from the U.S. Veterans Administration (VA) medical care system transformation, Denmark and other areas indicate that patient-centric models of care result in lower hospitalization rates, lower rates of death for heart disease, cancer, and stroke, and reduced rates of medical errors – which has also shown to improve quality, increase patient satisfaction, and cost efficiency.

* The medical home is consistent with recommendations made by a number of professional societies such as the American College of Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Osteopathic Association