patient-centered medicalhome

Welcome to your medical home

Patient-centered is a way of saying that you, the patient, are the most important person in the health care system. You are at the center of your health care.

A medical home is an approach to providing total health care. With your medical home, you will join a team that includes health care professionals, trusted friends or family members (if you wish), and—most importantly—you.

You and your health care are at the center of your medical home team.

Your medical home can help you:

- **Get to know your team.**
  Your medical home team will know you and your family. They can help you manage your total health care. You can see the same team each time you visit, and they can help answer your health questions.

- **Work with other medical experts if needed.**
  For example, if you need to see a specialist, your team can keep in touch with the specialist to make sure you get the care you need.

- **Track your health information using computers and electronic records.**
  This way, your team will have all of your records in one place.

- **Reach your team when you need them.**
  Your team will have convenient office hours for your appointments. They may also offer you the option of using e-mail and the Internet to keep in touch with them.

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What can you do to help?

1. Be an active team player.

—Talk with your team about your health questions. Share the successes and the challenges you've had with health care in the past.

—Tell your team about other health care professionals who care for you.

—Tell your team how you feel about the care you are getting from them.

2. Take care of your health.

—Follow the health care plan you and your team have worked out. Make sure you understand how to follow the plan.

—Set goals you can reach. Once you begin to see results, you and your team can discuss adding new goals.

3. Talk openly with your team.

—If you are having trouble sticking with your care plan, tell your team about it.

—If you feel your care plan is not working, speak up. Tell your team what is not working so together you can make changes if needed.

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How can a medical home help you?

The health care system can be confusing. Many people visit a lot of doctors and feel lost in the system. The medical home team will listen to your questions and can help you find your way through the system.

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With a medical home, you and your team will work together. As an active member of the team, you will have a chance to explain the things that are really important to you.

- **Your team can answer your questions and help you better understand your health care needs.**
- **If you need to get help from other doctors, your team can support you every step of the way.**
- **Your medical home will have convenient office hours to help you get an appointment at a time that works for you.**

Together, you and your team can work out a plan just for you, including:

- **Personalized health care that meets your needs**
- **Tracking of your care**
- **More ways to keep in touch with your health care team**

Working with your team may improve the quality of your health care and shorten the time it takes to get that care.

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Get ready for your appointment. Use this handy checklist.

- Make a list of your health questions. Ask a friend or relative for help if you need it. Put the questions that are most important to you at the top of the list.
- Make a list of other health care providers you have visited. Write down their names, addresses, phone numbers, and the reasons you visited them.
- Take all of your medicines, in their original containers, to your appointment. Be sure to include prescription, over-the-counter, natural, and herbal medicines and vitamins.
- Take your insurance card or other insurance information with you to your appointment.
- If you wish, ask a family member or trusted friend to go to your appointment with you.

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During your appointment, use this handy checklist.

- Write down the names of your team members.
- Use your list of questions. Ask your most important questions first. Even if you cannot get all of your answers on the first visit, having a list will help you keep track of the answers.
- Talk with your team about what health issue to work on first.
- Be sure you know what you should do before you leave the office.
- Use your own words to repeat back the things you've discussed with your team. This way, both you and your team will know the information is clear.
- Ask your team about how to reach them after hours if you need to.

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Remember, the medical home can be a way for you to be *informed* about and *involved* in your health care decisions. The medical home can bring you, your family, and your health care team together to help you make the best choices about your health.

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For more information, visit pcpcc.net.

Patient-Centered Primary Care COLLABORATIVE

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