

What's a

Medical Home?

A *medical home* is not a building, house, or hospital, but rather an approach to providing health care services in a high-quality and cost-effective manner. Children and their families who have a *medical home* receive the care that they need from a pediatrician or physician (pediatric health care professional) whom they trust. The pediatric health care professionals and parents act as partners in a *medical home* to identify and access all the medical and non-medical services needed to help children and their families achieve their maximum potential.

The American Academy of Pediatrics believes that all children should have a *medical home* where care is accessible, family-centered, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, compassionate and culturally competent. Examples of these elements include:

Accessible

- Care is provided in the child's community
- All insurance, including Medicaid, is accepted and changes are accommodated

Family-Centered

- Recognition that the family is the principal caregiver and the center of strength and support for children
- Unbiased and complete information is shared on an ongoing basis

Continuous

- Same primary pediatric health care professionals are available from infancy through adolescence
- Assistance with transitions (to school, home, adult services) is provided

Comprehensive

- Health care is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Preventive, primary, and tertiary care needs are addressed

Coordinated

- Families are linked to support, educational, and community-based services
- Information is centralized

Compassionate

- Concern for well-being of child and family is expressed and demonstrated

Culturally-Competent

- Family's cultural background is recognized, valued, and respected

The ideal source of a child's *medical home* is a primary care pediatrician working in partnership with the child's parents. For children with special needs, it may be best for a pediatric subspecialist to coordinate care with the child's primary care pediatrician and parents to provide a *medical home*. For children who live in areas where it's not possible to meet with a pediatrician directly, the optimal medical home is provided by another pediatric health care professional who consults with a pediatrician as needed.



For more information

If you would like more information about providing medical homes to children with special needs, please complete and return this form and your name will be added to the mailing list for the *National Center of Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Needs*.

Name (please print)

Organization, if applicable

Street address

City, State, Zip

Office phone

Home phone

Office fax

Home fax

E-mail address

Comments/Specific Requests

The goal of the *National Center of Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Needs* is to promote optimal care for children with special health care needs (CSHCN). Through the *National Center*, pediatricians, parents, administrators, and other health care professionals have access to educational and advocacy materials that address barriers to medical homes for CSHCN; recommendations that benefit CSHCN at the national, state, and local level; guidelines for care of CSHCN; evaluation tools that assess outcomes of providing a medical home to CSHCN; and a national contact network of experts who care for CSHCN. Please feel free to make copies of this fact sheet for non-commercial, educational purposes, giving credit as follows: *This document was produced as an activity of the National Center of Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Needs, administered by the American Academy of Pediatrics with support from the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration (1 H02 MC 00073).*

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