

Medical Home

The partnership between you and your child's health care provider

What is a Primary Care Medical Home?

A primary care medical home is more than just a building or place to receive health care. A medical home is the partnership between you and your child's doctor or medical provider that supports both excellent health care and family satisfaction.

It includes:

- Planning for your care with your child's health care team.
- Communicating before, during and after office visits.
- Coordinating care with specialists and other health professionals.
- Sharing of health education, family supports and community resources.
- Avoiding unnecessary emergency room visits.
- Preparing for future health needs and transitions to other health care providers.
- Promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Things to Consider When Choosing a Primary Care Medical Home

- Will your health insurance cover this provider?
- Is the office location convenient?
- Can you easily make an appointment?
- If you have questions, can you call or email?
- Is it easy to talk with your child's primary care provider?
- If your child has a chronic condition, will your primary care provider help to develop a care plan?

How Can I Get the Most Out of My Appointment?

Your child's doctor is an important part of your child's health. Your primary care medical home can help you in ways you may not have thought about. As your medical home, your child's doctor and staff can provide answers about physical, mental and behavioral health, coordination of care from specialists, health insurance, information about community resources, and more. Talk to your doctor about all of your child's needs because when you visit your child's doctor, it's important to feel at home.

Before the Appointment:

- Write down questions and concerns to discuss at your appointment.
- If you know you will need extra time for your child's visit, tell the office when you schedule the appointment.
- If your child sees specialists, ask them to send their reports to your child's doctor (medical home).
- Bring the medicines your child takes to the appointment.
- Bring your child's insurance card, immunization record and your list of questions.

During the Appointment:

- Relax, ask questions, and take notes.
- Partner with your child's primary care provider by asking them to help you set health goals, develop and explain a treatment plan and put it in writing.
- Ask when you should schedule your child's next appointment.
- Ask about prescription refills.
- It always feels good when someone says thank you, so if your medical home partners do something you appreciate, let them know.

After the Appointment:

- If your child has lab work or tests done, ask when and how to get the results.
- Schedule your child's next appointment.
- Ask your child's specialist(s) to send paperwork to your primary care medical home.
- Make a notebook or folder that holds your child's health information. Include doctors' names, other care givers, hospital visits and medicines.
- If your child gets sick, do you know how to reach someone after regular office hours?
- If your child has a chronic condition, you need to schedule regular checkups with your child's primary care provider, even when your child is feeling well.

Where to Learn More:

- *Partnering with your Doctor, the Medical Home Approach:* <https://midwestgenetics.org/wp-content/uploads/Partnering-with-your-Doctor-The-Medical-Home-Approach.pdf> from the Midwest Genetics Network Region 4.
- *Well Visit Planner:* <https://wellvisitplanner.org/> helps parents customize the well-child visit to their family's needs by helping them identify and prioritize their health risks and concerns before their well-child appointment.
- *Powerful Partnerships:* https://nichq.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Powerful-Partnerships_0.pdf for a handbook on how families and providers can work together to improve care

Family Support Organizations:

- *Indiana Family to Family:* <https://www.inf2f.org/>, info@inf2f.org for information, education, training, outreach, and peer support for families of children and youth with special healthcare needs and the professionals who serve them
- *IN*SOURCE:* <https://insource.org/> for school concerns

Professional Organizations:

- *American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):* <https://www.aap.org/en/practice-management/medical-home> to learn more about Medical Home
- *American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP):* www.familydoctor.org to learn more about Medical Home
- *Bright Futures:* <https://www.aap.org/en/practice-management/bright-futures> for health promotion and prevention

Other Resources:

- To find a National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) practice in Indiana, visit: <https://reportcards.ncqa.org/practices?filter-state=Indiana&dropdown-state=Indiana&pg=1>

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