

## Your Child's Medical Home

- Who is your child's primary health provider?
- What health professional knows your child's general health and specific diagnosis the best?
- When you are faced with a difficult decision about your child's health care who helps you feel comfortable about what you are doing?
- Where does your child go for routine medical care—camp physicals, ear-aches, immunizations, blood levels?
- After surgery, who follows consults with the school IEP team about your child health status?

These are important questions about an important issue.

### A Medical Home.

Every child deserves consistent and high quality health care, especially when our health care systems are undergoing constant change. In fact, in this changing healthcare world, it's more important than ever that every family with a child with special health care needs find health care stability. Every family should have a strong, respectful relationship with a provider who knows the child's diagnose well, who views the family as a trusted partner, and who gives quality, ongoing, coordinated care and information about non-medical services such as respite, early Intervention and services important for children with special health care needs.

## Where is your Child's Medical Home?

A MEDICAL HOME is the kind of care we all want and deserve – it is the way your child's pediatric healthcare team approaches providing care for your child.

**Medical Home is a concept, not a place that is a partnership with a child and family; therefore a family feels recognized, known, respected, and supported.**

A MEDICAL HOME means that:

- Your pediatric team knows your child's health history
- Listens to your concerns and needs, as well as your child's
- Works in partnership with you to make sure that the medical and non-medical needs of your child and family are met
- Creates a trusting, collaborative relationship with you and your child
- Treats your child with compassion and an understanding of his/her strengths
- Develops a care plan with you and your child when needed
- Respects and honors your culture and traditions
- You and your child are comfortable sharing concerns and questions with your pediatric team and other health care providers
- Routinely communicates your child's needs and family priorities to your pediatric team who promote communication and coordination between your family and other health care providers, as well as

educational and community services when necessary.

provider who has knowledge and skills to treat the child's special condition while also providing typical pediatric care.

## What You Need To Know

Families caring for children with special health care needs can look to their child's primary care doctor and office staff for help in planning their child's care and finding the services they need at home and in the community. When a child has many health care needs, the family may require help finding resources, setting priorities and coordinating care with a variety of providers. An on-going relationship with a pediatrician, family physician or pediatric nurse practitioner can provide a home base to look at the needs of the whole child and family, and a place to:

- Have the "big picture" needs of your child and family considered
- Make sure that your child has the proper immunizations
- Talk about normal child development concerns
- Get help with school-related issues
- Find out about resources in the community for your child
- Houses all of the Child's medical records in one place

We know that a Medical Home is **NOT A PLACE**, that it's not built of bricks and lumber. The core of a Medical Home is a knowledgeable, loving health professional, chosen by the family to take care of their child's health care needs, accessible twenty four hours a day seven days a week.

When a child has a Medical Home, the family is confident that a known, respected expert is always there to provide quality health services and care coordination.

A Medical Home for a child with special health care needs can be provided by a pediatrician, family practitioner, pediatric specialist, perhaps a nurse practitioner or other primary care

**The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)** describes the medical home as a model of delivering primary care that is accessible, continuous, comprehensive, family-centered, coordinated, compassionate, and culturally effective.

We can assure then that in the long run, a Medical Home can lessen the cost of caring for children with special health care needs while improving family satisfaction and outcomes for our children.

### Websites of Interest

American Academy of Pediatrics. The National Center of Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Needs.

<http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org/>

Center for Medical Home Improvement. Building a Medical Home Improvement Strategies in Primary Care for Children with Special Health Care Needs.

<http://www.medicalhomeimprovement.org/>

Family Voices. Homepage for the national advocacy organization.

<http://www.familyvoices.org>

National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality.

[http://www.nichq.org/areas\\_of\\_focus/medical\\_home\\_topic.html](http://www.nichq.org/areas_of_focus/medical_home_topic.html)

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