



Washington State Medical Home E-Update

News from the Washington State Medical Home Leadership Network

Fall 2012

Medical Home Recognition and Accreditation for Pediatric Practices and Providers in Washington State

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Why the Focus on Formal Medical Home Recognition/Accreditation?

The *Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model* is gaining increasing visibility as a means to improve the quality of care delivery, while making better use of clinical and financial resources.

The Affordable Care Act, Washington State legislative support of medical home pilot projects, and the growing interest by professional organizations, managed care organizations and insurers in quality improvement and creating medical homes for everyone lends urgency to pediatric medical home efforts.

Over the past 6 months, Washington State Medical Home Leadership Network (MHLN) teams and other primary care providers in Washington have asked MHLN Project staff increasing questions about medical home recognition and accreditation programs: *Is it worth the time and expense to move forward with formal medical home recognition? Which national accrediting program is most pediatric-friendly? Which is least expensive? Can my clinic proceed without an electronic medical record? Are there resources or colleagues who can help us?!*

We have created this Questions & Answers e-update to help Washington State primary care providers and staff who serve children, as well as their community and family partners, better understand current options in moving forward with formal medical home recognition and quality improvement. This e-update provides a general overview of medical home recognition and accreditation in Washington State, specific information for pediatric medical home models and a few key resources to get started.

We thank Tara Ashleman Corbridge, RN, an MPH candidate at the UW School of Public Health, for researching and writing this timely e-update for the MHLN and other children's health advocates.

--Katherine TeKolste, MD, Kate Orville, MPH and Amy Carlsen, RN, MHLN Project staff

Questions and Answers about Medical Home Recognition in Washington State

What Are Some Potential Advantages for Practices Serving Children to Pursue Formal PCMH Recognition/Accreditation?

- Improved quality of patient care delivery
- Improved patient outcomes
- Increased patient satisfaction
- Improved provider experiences
- Long-term cost savings
- Future potential for enhanced reimbursement

Selected Evidence for PCMH:

- [Cooley, C., McAllister, J., Sherrieb, & Kuhlthau, K. \(2009\). Improved outcomes associated with medical home implementation in pediatric primary care. *Pediatrics*, 124, 358-364.](#)
- Napier Rosenberg, C., Peele, P., Keyser, D., McAnallen, S. & Holder, D. (2012). Results from a patient-centered medical home pilot at UPMC health plan hold lessons for broader adoption of the model. *Health Affairs*, 31(11), 2423-2431. ([Pub Med summary](#))
- [Nielsen, M., Langner, V., Zema, C., Hacker, T. & Grundy, P. \(2012\). Benefits of implementing the primary care patient-centered medical home: a review of cost and quality results, 2012. *Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative*.](#)
- [Reid, R., Coleman, K., Johnson, E., Fishman, P., Hsu, C., Soman, M. et al. \(2010\). The Group Health medical home at year two: cost savings, higher patient satisfaction, and less burnout for providers. *Health Affairs*, 29\(5\), 835-843.](#)

Does Washington State Currently Provide Any Formal Direction or Reimbursement for Practices Pursuing PCMH Recognition or Accreditation?

- Some states have created their own formal medical home recognition standards while others are relying on national accreditation programs.
- Washington State has not developed any requirements in terms of accreditation and does not have any plans to do so in the near future. This allows practices and health care systems the ability to choose which program best fits their needs.

How is Recognition/Accreditation Being Used in Washington State Pilots and Demonstration Projects?

- **Medical Home Multi-payer pilot:** The Washington State legislature passed legislation ([ESSB 5491](#)) in 2009 directing the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) and the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to develop, launch, and evaluate at least one medical home multi-payer pilot. The resulting Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Multi-payer Reimbursement Pilot is a co-project of the HCA, DSHS and Puget Sound Health Alliance. The pilot launched on May 1, 2011, with eight practices (12 sites) serving about 25,000 patients and will run through December 2013. It provides enhanced reimbursement for care coordination, flexible access to care, tracking and monitoring chronic conditions, proactive outreach, and follow-up planning. The pilot's primary goal is improved outcomes, defined as reduced unnecessary emergency room use and preventable hospital admissions.
- Practices selected to participate were not required to be certified by any of the national

accreditation programs. However, preference was given to practices who could demonstrate medical home readiness based on level 1 National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recognition, participation in earlier state medical home learning collaborative or related activities. http://www.hca.wa.gov/medical_homes.html

- **Patient-Centered Medical Homes Collaborative:** The 2009-2011 PCMH Collaborative led by the Washington State Department of Health and the Washington Academy of Family Physicians supported over 32 family medicine practices in practice transformation. Participants were not required to obtain formal recognition but did perform an assessment using the Medical Home Index to determine level of readiness and provide a baseline for change. The project was pursuant to WA legislation passed in 2008 ([ESSHB 2549](#)) The Collaborative's Final Report is now available. <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/345-310-PCMHFinalReport.pdf>

What Options for Medical Home Recognition/Accreditation are Available and How Do They Consider and Incorporate Pediatric-specific Content?

The four current national recognition/accreditation programs are outlined below. To date, the majority of health plans, states, and larger practices have used the NCQA recognition program. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the National Center for Medical Home Implementation (NCMHI) do not recommend any of the medical home recognition programs over the others at this time. The AAP and NCMHI have participated in public comment opportunities for each of the accreditation programs to ensure pediatric-specific issues are considered where possible.

National Accreditation Programs:

- **[National Committee for Quality Assurance Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition:](#)**
 - ✦ **Mission/focus:** Their recognition program aims to improve the quality of health care with a commitment to access, affordability and accountability. There is an emphasis on practices' dedication to continuous quality improvement.
 - ✦ **Applicability to pediatrics:** The 2011 standards have been updated from the 2008 standards to be more applicable to pediatric practice (i.e., use of "patients/families" language, N/A as an option where standards are not applicable to pediatrics, pediatric-specific examples and explanations where appropriate, and integration of [Bright Futures](#) guidelines. The AAP has developed a [FAQs for Pediatric Practices](#) document to help clarify how NCQA standards may be interpreted or applied to pediatric practices.
 - ✦ **Survey type:** Online surveyor review
 - ✦ **Electronic Health Records (EHR):** Not required for level 1 recognition; required for levels 2 and 3
 - ✦ **Meaningful Use:** Aligns with Meaningful Use requirements and has a strong emphasis on health information technology (HIT)
 - ✦ **Search for WA Sites with Accreditation:** <http://recognition.ncqa.org/>
 - Clinicians who qualified under the 2008 Medical Home Standards can be found by searching for 'Physician Practice Connections—Patient Centered Medical Home' there were 631 primary care providers or clinics as of 11/9/12. Only one site is a pediatric clinic: Madigan AMC-Ft Lewis Pediatric Clinic; Congratulations to pediatrician Ellen Aduan and family physician Michelle Ang, of the Columbia Basin Health Association and team members in the Adams County MHLN team for

receiving recognition.

- Clinicians who have qualified under the new 2011 Medical Home standards can be found under 'Patient Centered Medical Home – 2011.' There were 75 providers/clinics as of 11/26/12, with one pediatric clinic: Naval Hospital Bremerton, Pediatric Clinic.

- **The Joint Commission Primary Care Medical Home Accreditation Program:**

- ✦ **Mission/focus:** The program is an add-on to their Ambulatory Care Accreditation with approximately 30 percent more requirements and focuses on quality of care and patient safety.
- ✦ **Applicability to pediatrics:** No information available
- ✦ **Survey type:** Surveyor on-site review
- ✦ **EHR:** Not required at this time
- ✦ **Meaningful use:** Some overlap with Meaningful Use requirements
- ✦ **Search for Sites with Accreditation:** Search by organization name or state. As of 11/26/12, only Columbia Valley Community Health in Wenatchee and two of its clinics are listed with the Primary Care Medical Home Certification add-on.
<http://www.qualitycheck.org/Consumer/SearchQCR.aspx>

- **Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care: Medical Home Certification or Accreditation:**

- ✦ **Mission/focus:** The focus is on patient safety, quality and value for ambulatory health care. Similar to The Joint Commission program, they require a base accreditation in addition to medical home standards. However, they also have a less burdensome certification option.
- ✦ **Applicability to pediatrics:** Their ambulatory care standards apply to all settings, although they do have some pediatric-specific requirements.
- ✦ **Survey type:** Peer-based on-site review
- ✦ **EHR:** Not required at this time
- ✦ **Meaningful Use:** Some overlap with Meaningful Use requirements

- **URAC (formerly known as the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission) Patient Centered Health Care Home Program:**

- ✦ **Mission/focus:** The focus is on patient-centeredness and care coordination. Their program was developed in response to a desire from providers for an alternative to the NCQA program.
- ✦ **Applicability to pediatrics:** There are no pediatric-specific standards as they do not believe they should be separated from the rest of the standards.
- ✦ **Survey type:** Surveyor on-site review
- ✦ **EHR:** Two levels of achievement are available – with and without EHR
- ✦ **Meaningful Use:** Aligns with Meaningful Use requirements

Comparison of the Major Medical Home Recognition Programs

[The patient-centered medical home guidelines: a tool to compare national programs. Medical Group Management Association \(2011\).](#)

This resource is a comparison chart of four medical home recognition programs (NCQA, AAAHC, Joint Commission, and URAC) to assess how each of them meets the Guidelines for Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition and Accreditation Programs. This comparison is aimed at helping organizations narrow their assessment of the various programs and focus on the most important elements.

Comparison of Measurement Tools

[Patient-centered medical home recognition tools: a comparison of ten surveys' content and operational details. Burton, R., Devers, K & Berenson, R. \(2012\) The Urban Institute, Health Policy Center.](#)

This report compares ten provider survey tools designed to measure the extent to which a practice is a “patient-centered medical home” (PCMH). These tools are primarily used for recognition purposes (i.e., to qualify for entry into a payment pilot or demonstration), as opposed to practice self-improvement, research/evaluation, or quality measurement. The report analysis compares these ten tools’ operational details (e.g., price, whether a site visit is required) and their content emphases (i.e., the different practice capabilities that the tools emphasize).

Joint Principles of Patient-Centered Medical Home

In 2007, [the Joint Principles of the Patient-Centered Medical Home](#) were released by four primary care physician societies-- the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the American College of Physicians (ACP) and the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). Since then, 19 additional physician and health care organizations have endorsed the joint principles.

The AAP, AAFP, ACP and AOA offer the following [“Guidelines for Patient-Centered Medical Home \(PCHM\) Recognition and Accreditation Programs”](#) to assist with the development and use of programs which determine whether a practice is providing care based on the PCHM model:

All Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition or Accreditation Programs should:

1. Incorporate the joint principles of the patient-centered medical home
2. Address the complete scope of primary care services
3. Ensure the incorporation of patient and family-centered care emphasizing engagement of patients, their families, and their caregivers
4. Engage multiple stakeholders in the development and implementation of the program
5. Align standards, elements, characteristics, and/or measures with meaningful use requirements
6. Identify essential standards, elements, and characteristics
7. Address the core concept of continuous improvement that is central to the PCMH model
8. Allow for innovative ideas
9. Care coordination within the medical neighborhood
10. Clearly identify PCMH recognition or accreditation requirements for training programs
11. Ensure transparency in program structure and scoring
12. Apply reasonable documentation/data collection requirements
13. Conduct evaluations of the program’s effectiveness and implement improvements over time

What Pediatric-focused Resources Are Available to Assist with Medical Home Recognition and Quality Improvement?

Each of the four recognition/accreditation programs offer support throughout the process and have web-based tools, webinars and consultants to assist with the process. Visit their websites for more information.

Current Resources:

The resources provided below are intended to serve as guides for general quality improvement and medical home recognition/accreditation. These tools should provide tangible advice and ideas for implementation within your practice.

- [National Center for Medical Home Implementation/American Academy of Pediatrics: Building Your Medical Home Toolkit](#): This is the primary source of guidance for implementation with a pediatric focus. It is a self-guided toolkit that provides opportunity for assessment in six main building blocks corresponding to NCQA's PCMH standards. In addition to assessments of your practice's current standards and practices, the toolkit links to tools and information for specific topics. The toolkit also provides a progress summary to track implementation. The information is pertinent to those seeking instruction in quality improvement but not necessarily ready for accreditation as well as those seeking to prepare for accreditation.
- [Education in Quality Improvement for Pediatric Practice \(EQIPP\): Medical Home for Pediatric Primary Care](#): A course developed by the AAP which provides instruction in quality improvement, using data to identify gaps in clinical activities central to a medical home, creating an improvement plan, implementing changes and measuring results. The course is based off of the Model for Improvement's 'plan, do, study, act' (PDSA) cycles.
- [Qualis Health/Commonwealth Fund/MacColl Center: Safety Net Medical Home Initiative](#): Implementation guides provide implementation strategies, tools and real world examples surrounding eight Change Concepts for Practice Transformation (i.e., empanelment, enhanced access, care coordination, etc.). This resource is not pediatric-specific but many of the concepts apply to all practices.
- [Patient Centered Primary Care Collaborative](#): The PCPCC is a coalition of major employers, consumer groups, and other stakeholders who have joined with organizations representing primary care physicians to develop and advance the patient centered medical home. PCPCC offers many resources to support medical home transformation. Website includes a brief video in English and Spanish explaining medical home to consumers.
- [Institute for Healthcare Improvement: Open School](#): Online courses providing guidance in quality improvement and leadership topics. Each section takes 15-30 minutes to complete. Free for students, medical residents and university faculty. Participants can earn up to 23 Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits. (Note: using a University of Washington email to log on provides free access - other college emails may do the same. There is a modest subscription fee for other health professionals.) Scholarships may be available based on need.
- [Health Resources and Services Administration's \(HRSA\)'s Patient-Centered Medical/Home \(PCMHH\) Initiative](#) supports and encourages all federally-qualified community health centers to achieve patient centered medical home recognition by 2015. Clinical services staff of the [WA Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers](#) (WACMHC) are available to

provide support for member clinic organizations navigating the application and recognition standards.

- [Other Medical Home Websites](#): a list of pediatric-focused and other websites with more in-depth information on patient-centered medical home topics identified by MHLN staff.

Soon to Be Available:

- **American Academy of Pediatrics: APEX:** APEX is a new toolkit for medical home accreditation that will build upon the current “Building Your Medical Home Toolkit” to assist practices in transformation to the medical home model. This will be a fee-based program and is expected to be available in spring 2013. It will provide in depth guidance for practices, giving tasks based on a practice assessment with sample screenshots of real NCQA submissions, sample reports and sample letters. The toolkit will apply to all types of practices and will link to the AAP for pediatric standards of care, when applicable. Based on type of practice, the toolkit will indicate when measures are not applicable (e.g. developmental screening for adults, heart disease measures for children). The roll out will focus first on NCQA accreditation, followed by The Joint Commission and AAAHC.
- **Washington State Department of Health, Practice Improvement Section: E-Learning Modules:** E-learning modules are interactive and self-paced lessons on change topics surrounding the patient-centered medical home. The modules are designed to be viewed either by an individual or as a team to facilitate discussion. While most of the modules will be adult-focused, many of the concepts will be applicable to the pediatric setting, and some pediatric-specific modules are being developed. These are anticipated to be made available in early 2013.
- **Washington State Department of Health, Practice Improvement Section: Targeted Support to Medical Home Efforts in Specific Communities.** DOH staff will be supporting medical home improvement efforts in the Thurston/Lewis/Mason area and in Whatcom in early 2013 and then expanding to additional communities.

This MHLN E-Update was written by Tara Ashleman Corbridge and edited by project staff.

About the Author:

Tara Corbridge is a master’s student in the Maternal and Child Public Health Leadership Training Program at the University of Washington, completing her practicum with the Washington State Medical Home Leadership Network. As a Registered Nurse and Masters in Public Health student, she is interested in the medical home model and its potential to improve primary care and overall health in the United States. She previously worked in a pediatric primary care clinic, which mainly served immigrant families and CSHCN and went through the NCQA medical home recognition process. The clinic staff made some really important changes and improvements to the way primary care was delivered and remain excited to see the improvements in long-term outcomes in patient’s health, costs and families’ satisfaction.

Sources:

AAP: Angela Tobin, MA, LSW and Sherry Fischer, MBA

URAC: Cynthia Cook, RN, BSN

AAAHC: Marsha Wallander, RN

NCQA: Paige Robinson

Washington State Dept of Health: Pat Justis, Manager, Washington Patient-Centered Health Home/Medical Home Quality Improvement and Nancy Olson

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MHLN Community Teams: www.medicalhome.org/leadership/teams.cfm

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