

# The Patient-Centered Medical Home & You: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Patients and Families

## What is a Patient-Centered Medical Home?

A Medical Home is all about you and the care of your children. Caring about your child is the most important job of your Patient Centered Medical Home. In this personal model of health care, your child's primary care provider leads a team of health care professionals that collectively take responsibility for your child's care. They make sure your child gets the care they need in wellness and illness to heal their body, mind and spirit.

Your child's personal provider and an extended team of health professionals build a relationship in which they know you, your family situation, your child's medical history and health issues. In turn, you come to trust and rely on them for expert, evidence-based health care answers that are suited entirely to your child or to your family.

## How will a Medical Home lead to better care for my child?

There are many benefits to being in a Medical Home:

- Comprehensive care means your child's medical home helps you address any health issue at any given stage of your child's life
- Coordination of care occurs when any combination of services you and your provider decide your child may need are connected and ordered in a rational way, including the use of resources in your community
- Continuous care occurs over time and you can expect continuity in accurate, effective and timely communication from any member of the healthcare team
- Accessible care allows you to initiate the interaction your child may need for any health issue with a physician or other team member through your desired method (office visit, phone call, or electronically) and you can expect elimination of barriers to the access of care and instructions on obtaining care during and after hours.
- Proactive care ensures you and your child's provider will build a care plan to address the healthcare goals to keep your child well, plus be available for them when they get sick.
- Evidence based care means that your child's care team keeps up to date with the latest medical research and clinical practice guidelines and will work with you to personalize the care to fit your preferences and your goals.

## Who is my child's Medical Home Team?

Your child's team may include a doctor, nurse practitioner, licensed practice nurse, medical assistant or health educator, as well as other health professionals. These professionals work together to help your child get healthy, stay healthy, and get the care and services that are right for them. When needed, your child's personal doctor arranges for appropriate care with qualified specialists.

### **What does my Medical Home Team do for my child?**

The Medical Home team is your team. They provide your child with the care they need, when they need it and customize this care to meet your needs and expectations. We help you set appropriate health goals and work with you to meet them for your child. We will spend enough time with your child to ensure you understand what is needed to successfully meet goals and answer any questions you might have. We help you understand all your options for your child's care so you can decide what care is best for them. And we will always treat you with the respect you deserve as a full partner in your child's healthcare.

### **What type of services does my Medical Home provide for my child?**

We provide comprehensive, compassionate and continuous care for children and adolescents.

- Same day appointments
- Preventive care and physicals (health risk assessments, sports and school physicals)
- Chronic disease management (such as asthma, eczema, constipation, behavioral health, anxiety, depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and more)
- Acute care for illness and injuries
- Well child visits, screenings and vaccinations
- 24-hour phone access to your child's care team
- Online electronic access to your child's medical records
- Referrals to vetted specialists and mental health providers
- Management of multi-specialty care plans including mental health

### **What about Behavioral Health?**

We provide care coordination for developmental and behavioral health concerns.

- Referrals to The Village for Children and Families for Anxiety, Depression, ADHD, and other mental health concerns
- Referrals for Post-Partum Mood Disorders
- Referrals to Birth to Three for developmental concerns
- 211 referrals for any other concerns about your child and family
- Medical management of ADHD, Anxiety, and Depression

### **Will my Medical Home help me take care of my child?**

The care your child receives in a Medical Home goes beyond the office visit with their personal clinician.

- We want to make sure you develop a clear idea of how to care for your child.
- We want to help you set goals for your child's care and help you meet goals one step at a time
- We want to encourage you to fully participate in recommended preventive screenings and services
- We will recommend tools and education materials you can use to improve your child's condition and manage their health

- We will give you information about classes, support groups, or other types of services to help you learn more about a condition and stay healthy
- We will provide you with information about resources in your community to help you manage your child's health and their well-being
- We will provide you with resources and, if needed, appropriate referrals to behavioral health specialists to help you make and sustain healthy changes to lifestyle or to address mental health conditions for your child and other family members

### **How can my Medical Home help if my child needs to see specialists or go to a hospital?**

Your medical home team will coordinate care with any other health care providers. They will recommend quality specialists for you and your family and will work with those specialists or hospitals to continuously plan and manage your child's care.

With your consent, your medical home team will inform specialists or hospitals about any medical conditions, preferences and goals and will follow up to obtain information after the specialty visit or a hospital stay. We will also follow up with you to make sure your child gets the care they need and that you understand this plan of care.

### **Can my Medical Home help me when I have an emergency?**

If you have a medical emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

For other clinical problems or medical advice, call your Medical Home first. Depending on the nature of the problem, we may be able to save you an expensive and inconvenient trip to the emergency room for problems best addressed by your child's personal primary care provider. You can reach a Medical Home team member via telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and same day appointments are always available.

If you do go to the emergency room, please make sure you let the staff know who your child's primary care provider is and ask that they contact your Medical Home as soon as possible so we can help take better care of your family.

### **What can I do to help my Medical Home team take better care of my child?**

You are encouraged to actively participate in your child's care.

- Understand that you are a full partner in your child's health care
- Learn about medical conditions and what you can do to help your child stay as healthy as possible
- As best you can, follow the care plan that your medical team has agreed is important for your child's health

Do your best to communicate with your child's Medical Home team

- Tell us all about your child's health, medical history and the health history of your family
- Bring a list of questions to each appointment. Also, bring a list of any medicines, vitamins, or remedies your child uses.

- If you don't understand something the doctor or other member of your medical home team says, ask them to explain it in a different way
- If your child receives care from other health professionals, always tell your medical home team so they can help coordinate for the best care possible
- Talk openly with your care team about your experience in getting care from the medical home so they can keep making your child's care better.

### **How do I access my child's Medical Home?**

We offer convenient same-day and next-day appointments, after-hours phone access and weekend appointments.

Monday through Friday      8:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Weekends by appointment only

For clinical advice, appointments, and all other matters, please call (860) 721-7561. We respond in a timely manner to your phone calls or electronic messages sent through the Patient Portal.

For all urgent matters, please contact us by phone. For all non-urgent matters or general information, please call us during normal business hours.

### **How do I transfer my child's records to their Medical Home?**

We will need your consent to obtain medical records from your child's previous primary care provider or from specialists they have seen in the past. Consent forms to release patient information are available online on our website at [rockyhillpediatrics.com](http://rockyhillpediatrics.com) or by calling our office during business hours.

### **Can my child be in a Medical Home if they do not have health insurance?**

We accept many insurance plans and in some cases patients who pay with cash. Call us to discuss your situation. Once your child becomes a patient in our practice, we provide them with the same access and care regardless of their health insurance status.

Beginning January 1st, 2014 most people will be required by law to have health insurance. Depending on your financial situation, you may be eligible for government subsidies to buy private health insurance for your child, or you may be eligible to enroll in Medicaid.

For more information and useful tools to check your eligibility visit [Healthcare.gov](http://Healthcare.gov) or ask one of your care team members for assistance.