



# Patient-centered, Physician-directed Medical Home

## TransforMED® Update

Annie S. Kessler – Dayton, Ohio  
kessleas@notes.udayton.edu

*At the time of writing, Kessler was the communications intern for the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians. She is a junior at University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, studying public relations and business management.*

It has now been two years since American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) launched its TransforMED® national demonstration project. Launched in June 2006, this program is testing practice redesign in 36 practices across the United States—two practices of which are located right here in Ohio.

Henry County Family Physicians Inc., Napoleon, Ohio was chosen as a test group for the rural, medium-size category, while Kollman Clinic Inc., Dover, Ohio, is representing the suburban, small-size practice.

TransforMED is an \$8 million practice redesign initiative of AAFP. The aim of the project was to determine whether this model of care could deliver on its promise to improve patient care, patient satisfaction, physician performance and physician satisfaction.

Practices were encouraged to achieve goals of a personal medical home, patient-centered care, a continuous care relationship and whole person orientation by implementing innovations such as open access scheduling, online appointments, electronic health records (EHR), group visits and electronic visits.

When Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP) last checked in with the Kollman Clinic and Henry County Family Physicians one year ago, both practices were experiencing a great deal of “change fatigue,” though progress was being made.

After speaking with Mark DeMichiei, M.D., of Henry County Family Physicians, and Robin Kollman, M.D., of Kollman Clinic, both expressed positive feelings towards TransforMED; however, the feelings were slightly more positive from the larger practice of Henry County Family Physicians.

Henry County Family Physicians implemented e-Clinical Works as the program of choice for its EHR. DeMichiei did not state any drawbacks to this system; rather he was very pleased with the outcome. He explained, with the EHR there is better documentation, it is “infinitely more efficient,” and in callbacks and medication refills there are much fewer mistakes. At the smaller practice of Kollman Clinic, the learning curve was hard and becoming productive again was a difficult process. Both practices found it challenging to maintain eye contact when the

EHR was first implemented, seeing as it was new equipment that all of the physicians were trying to get acquainted with, while at the same time trying to assist the patient.

DeMichiei agrees that there was a lot of change fatigue at the beginning. He explained that practices need to decide, from the beginning, the rate of change and the amount of change. It is costly, it is stressful and takes a lot longer to get there than originally thought.

“It takes about 18 months to be comfortable with the new technology and system of working,” DeMichiei said.

Kollman also expressed that two years into it they are still learning to utilize all of the extras that an EHR brings.

Both practices are also seeing many benefits for patients by using the TransforMED model of treatment. Kollman says patients are more up-to-date with their immunizations, consultants of the patients have better records from the physicians, patients understand and are more a part of their care for chronic disease, and patients get into the office within reason if need be. DeMichiei’s practice has also seen that patients are pleased with more accessible hours that the physicians are now available. Plus, DeMichiei mentioned that he has noticed his patients are happy with the Web portal, they find it convenient and pleasing to have their prescriptions faxed in for them and the concept of having their labs handed to them during their appointment, thus allowing them to see their results in print.

At Henry County Family Physicians, DeMichiei lead the practice with research and the drive to implement the TransforMED system, informing the other physicians of what he was hoping to put into practice and gathering their support along the way. Kollman Clinic, seeing as they are a smaller practice, started with a shared leadership style, and he sees it as too difficult for just one person to handle with all of the changes that must take place.

Two years later, both practices have yet to incorporate all of the AAFP-recommended aspects of TransforMED.

Kollman explained that for them it took a good year to really implement and learn the basics of the EHR. “To do other change during that time would be difficult. A small practice is

limited with personal resources it has to commit to change. I think we, as a practice, after one year, realized this and the next year implemented what change we could. We have yet to accomplish all of the changes that TransforMED suggested; we decided to try and implement what we thought we needed and also made modifications at times to fit our practice style. Some of the changes may not have been the most efficient, but worked for us.”

The Kollman Clinic is looking to incorporate more aspects of the TransforMED system in the coming year.

As for Henry County Family Physicians, they are also in the process of incorporating more

aspects of the model into practice right now, deciding what other components would be most beneficial to incorporate in the near future. It is implementing things more slowly.

“TransforMED cannot all be done at once; it must be implemented slowly because there are so many parts to it. As an office, you must decide what you want to implement and what you do not.”

Both Kollman and DeMichiei are pleased with the system and believe the other physicians in their practice are as well.

“We still have to do more not because it is what TransforMED says, but because it is good medicine

and will provide better care to patients,” Kollman said.

DeMichiei agrees that TransforMED is good for patients; while also benefiting physicians as well.

“There is no reason not to do it,” said DeMichiei. “It decreases the cost of healthcare and brings in so much more money for the physicians.”

DeMichiei concluded that he would not want to go back to a pre-TransforMED practice; however, he also would not want to re-live the stress of the last two years to implement everything again.

## Check out the NEW Medical Home Section on the OAFP Web Site...

[www.ohioafp.org/medicalhome!!!](http://www.ohioafp.org/medicalhome!!!)

### *Features Include:*

- Definition of a patient-centered, physician-directed medical home
- Details on the seven core features and benefits of a medical home
- Sample talking points and letters to use with legislators and media
- Resources and informational Web sites for more information
- Press releases and Family Health Focus articles focused on the medical home concept
- Coverage in Ohio news publications about the medical home concept



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