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The Answer to Ohio's "Sick" Care System

Patient-centered Medical Home—the nationally accepted, credible model

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio has a “sick” care system. Ohio needs a “well” care system—where every Ohioan has a medical home. The medical home model of care works for patients, physicians, other care providers and purchasers of healthcare.

This patient-centered medical home (PCMH) model of care starts with a patient having a personal relationship with a primary care physician, such as a family physician, where the physician takes care of the patient and coordinates all aspects of their healthcare in a system re-built around primary care.

But, the PCMH model goes beyond the patient's relationship with their physician. It also allows the patient to experience flexible scheduling of appointments, expanded office hours and new options for communication such as e-mail and telephone interaction.

“The future of our healthcare system should be a transformed system based on primary care. That is what every single country in the industrialized world has already discovered. When you look at those countries, you see very robust and well-designed systems. What we have is just the opposite,” said OAFP President Keith J. Lehman, M.D.

The joint principles of the PCMH model were developed and adopted by American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Physicians and American Osteopathic Association, which represent more than 333,000 physicians. These principles were also recently adopted by American Medical Association.

If every Ohioan had a PCMH they would have:

- A personal primary care physician and a medical office team that provides for their care
- Ease of making doctor's appointments with shorter waits and same day scheduling of appointments for those things that cannot wait
- Convenient consultations resulting from enhanced communication options (for example, e-mail and telephone interaction)
- Appointments and services that fit their schedule
- Access to health information technology
- Electronic health records and clinical information systems that eliminate duplicative services and tests

- Easy access to lab and test results
- A collaborative partnership with their physician to maintain good health and avoid sickness
- Patient education that allows them to make better informed decisions on recommended treatments and helps them follow their treatment plan successfully
- Health reminders and assistance with self-care and counseling.

For more information on the PCMH, visit the OAFP Web site at www.ohioafp.org/medicalhome.

Sources: www.ohioafp.org/medicalhome

Joint Principles of the Patient-centered Medical Home

Why Ohioans Deserve a Medical Home (a publication from Ohio Primary Care Coalition)

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians is a statewide professional association with more than 4,400 members, including practicing physicians, family medicine residents and medical students. The scope of family medicine encompasses all ages, both sexes and every disease entity. Family physicians provide comprehensive, continuing care to all members of the family.