

Family Medicine: The specialty that cares for all people



Ohio needs a healthy, productive workforce. Family physicians provide high quality, cost effective care through the patient-centered medical home.

What do family physicians do?

- Family physicians treat people of both genders and all ages with a focus on prevention, wellness and overall care coordination.
- Family physicians are trained to lead health care teams. They make complex diagnoses and develop comprehensive treatment plans for the whole patient.
- Patients who receive care regularly from a family physician encounter fewer emergency room visits, fewer hospital admissions/readmissions, and have shorter hospital stays.
- More than 43% of family physicians are available to patients through extended evening and weekend office hours. Physician availability and flexibility are core principles of the patient centered medical home model.
- Family physicians are the main source of primary health care for Medicare and Medicaid patients. Sixty percent of those aged 65 and older identify a family doctor as their usual source of care.

What is family medicine?

- A medical specialty solidly grounded in science and technology, family medicine provides evidence-based, comprehensive first contact care and continuing care for patients.
- Family medicine includes: health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, counseling, patient education, and diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illness.
- Family physicians advocate for the patient within the health care system helping the patient receive cost-effective care through coordination of health care services.
- Family physicians complete a long and rigorous training program that includes 4 years of undergraduate training, 4 years of medical school and 3 years of additional training in an accredited family medicine residency.
- After residency, the family physician must pass a comprehensive exam to become board-certified by the American Board of Family Medicine. In order to maintain board-certification, family physicians must complete rigorous requirements that include continuing medical education, pass a re-certification examination every seven to ten years and demonstrate continued competencies annually.
- Family physicians are career-long learners who continuously update themselves on advances and developments in medicine.



Why is family medicine so important?

In communities with increased emphasis on primary care, people are healthier and costs are lower. The opposite is true in communities with more specialist physicians – costs are higher, outcomes are worse.

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Mission:

The mission of the OAFP is to improve the health of patients by advocating for and advancing the specialty of family medicine and providing valuable solutions to the diverse needs of members.



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