

Solving Primary Care Shortages Through Physician-Led, Team-Based Care



Some say the best way to solve the primary care shortage is with independent practicing nurse practitioners. But, a nurse practitioner is not a physician and is not a substitute for a physician.

Family physicians as care team leaders

Family physicians complete 21,700 hours of education and clinical training during 11 years. This advanced training gives family physicians:

- The knowledge and experience to order and interpret tests within the context of the patient's overall health condition.
- The ability to make the right diagnosis even when symptoms are not clear.
- The know how to develop and implement medical treatment plans that address multiple organ systems and that integrate medication.

Nurse practitioners complete 5,350 hours of education and clinical training during five to seven years. The training of a nurse practitioner focuses on ongoing treatment after diagnosis by a doctor.

Nurse practitioners are an integral part of physician-led care teams, but they do not have the same education or clinical experience as physicians.

Family physicians complete and experience at least four times more clinical training than APNs.

What do patients say?

- Quality and safety are top concerns for patients.
- Patients highly value the additional education and training that physicians receive.
- Surveys show that that 90% of patient respondents feel a physician's additional years of medical education and training are vital to optimal patient care.

Optimal patient-centered medical homes feature physician-led, care teams

The best way to resolve the primary care shortage is by providing physician-led, team-based care within the patient-centered medical home model. Every patient would have a personal physician who leads a team composed of nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, subspecialists and other health care professionals. Physician-led primary care teams ensure that patients receive care from the right professional, at the right time, and in the right place.

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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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