

# Midwives and the Medical Home

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ACNM advocates for the use of CNMs® and CMs® as primary care providers as part of the solution to the health care workforce shortage, and as leading members of patient centered medical home teams. The “medical home” is a model of ongoing, coordinated holistic health care that centers on the patient. In our current health care system, care is often fragmented, provided by a variety of specialists, without integration, communication or a central organizational structure. Many Americans are without adequate health coverage, payment systems encourage inappropriate and overuse of resources, and there is a critical shortage of primary care providers. The medical home utilizes a centralized team of providers, coordinated around the needs of the individual patient, to improve access to safe, quality health care. ACNM promotes the use of the word “clinician” or “provider” in place of “physician” in all regulatory and legislative language around the concept of the patient centered medical home, and encourages changing the term “medical home” to “health care home.”

## History

In February of 2007, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP), the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#) (AAFP), the [American College of Physicians](#) (ACP), and the [American Osteopathic Association](#) (AOA) released seven joint principles of a “patient-centered medical home.” This concept is supported by the [Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative](#) (PCPCC), a coalition of over 300 major employers, consumer groups, patient quality organizations, health plans, labor unions, hospitals, physicians and others who agree that it is essential to support a better model of compensating providers. The [National Committee for Quality Assurance](#) (NCQA) has further defined the medical home and has developed related quality standards and reporting measures.

The joint principles state that every patient should have an ongoing relationship with a “personal physician” in a “physician directed medical practice” providing “whole person orientation” of care which is “coordinated and/or integrated.” The hallmarks of this care are reportable “quality and safety” measures, which should provide “enhanced access” to care and open communication with and among providers. Finally, the health care payment structure should appropriately recognize the added value provided to patients who have a patient-centered medical home. An addendum recognizing the participation of non-physician providers in the model was adopted in February of 2009 and endorsed by a number of nursing organizations. Additional information is located at: <http://www.pcpcc.net/content/joint-principles-patient-centered-medical-home>.

## Medical Home Demonstration Projects

A number of medical home demonstration projects are currently being implemented around the country, enjoying varying degrees of success in terms of patient access, reduced hospital admissions, savings and provider reimbursements. The [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#) (CMS) is focusing a nationwide demonstration project on adults with chronic conditions. There are currently no demonstration projects that examine women’s health care providers as medical homes. Legislation calling for the implementation of a women’s medical home demonstration project is currently under consideration in Congress. A summary of public

and public/private state medical home programs can be found at:  
[http://www.pcpc.net/files/HC\\_Summary\\_StateMedicalHomePrograms\\_081028.pdf](http://www.pcpc.net/files/HC_Summary_StateMedicalHomePrograms_081028.pdf)

### **ACNM Coalitions and Ongoing Activities**

In May of 2008, ACNM co-authored a letter to the Senate Finance Committee recommending that medical home demonstration projects include all health care providers who provide primary care services, and that the model is not used to funnel health services owned and operated by physicians for financial gain. As a member of the Patients' Access to Responsible Care Alliance (PARCA), ACNM co-authored a letter to then President-Elect Obama asking for expanded access to and affordability of quality health care services for non-physician providers. A copy of these letters can be found on the ACNM website at [http://www.midwife.org/health\\_care\\_reform.cfm](http://www.midwife.org/health_care_reform.cfm). ACNM continues to monitor the activities of the PCPCC, the NCQA and many other organizations and coalitions in an effort to further educate the public about the role midwives play in improving the safety, cost-effectiveness and quality of primary women's health care.

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The ACNM "QuickInfo" series was developed by the Department of Professional Practice & Health Policy to respond to common inquiries by summarizing ACNM resources regarding a particular topic, as well as listing selected literature and a variety of other resources. Your feedback is welcomed; contact our department at (240) 485-1844 or [pphp@acnm.org](mailto:pphp@acnm.org).