

A Medical Home—Not Just a Place

A medical home is not a building, house, clinic, or hospital, but rather a partnership between your family and your child's doctor or primary care provider and his or her staff. It is the ideal way to provide health care to all children, and especially those with special health care needs (see Healthy People 2010 goals <http://www.healthypeople.gov/document/HTML/Volume2/16MICH.htm>). According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a medical home is defined as primary care that is... (<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;110/1/184>)

- **Accessible:** Care provided in a clinic in your community where all insurance is accepted, including Medicaid. The practice should be close to public transportation and meet Americans With Disabilities Act requirements (see <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/reg3a.html#Anchor-Appendix-52467>). Most importantly, you and your child should be able to speak directly to the doctor when needed.
- **Continuous:** The same doctors are available from infancy through young adulthood. Help with transitions (medical and social) is available to you and your child.
- **Comprehensive:** Your child's and family's medical, educational, developmental, social, and other service needs are identified and addressed. Your child's doctor advocates for your family in getting the care needed and shares responsibility for the care that is given. You have access to medical consultations about your child after hours and on weekends.
- **Family Centered:** Your family knows your child's doctor and the relationship is based on mutual trust and respect. Your family feels supported in caring for your child. Your child's doctor shares clear and complete information

Health Resource and Services Administration
Maternal and Child Health Bureau

Definition of Special Health Care Needs

Children with special health care needs includes all children, who have or at increased risk for, chronic physical, developmental, behavioral and emotional conditions who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.

with your family and involves you in the decision making process.

- **Coordinated:** Your child's doctor helps coordinate care and information among multiple specialists and services.
- **Compassionate:** Concern for the well-being of your child and family is shown in all interactions (verbal and nonverbal).
- **Culturally Effective:** Your family's cultural and religious beliefs are respected. Written materials should be provided in your family's primary language and all efforts should be made to make sure that you and your child understand the results of visit and care plan, even if an interpreter is needed.

A "great" medical home declares itself to be a medical home, and

- Knows its patients and families.
- Partners with and learns from the children, youth and families it serves.
- Connects with other community-based organizations to improve care and to access other supportive services the family needs and prefers.
- Offers care that is high quality, safe, efficient while preventing unneeded or duplicate services.
- Advocates with and on behalf of the families it serves.