

# UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF A PATIENT- CENTERED MEDICAL HOME (PCMH)

*The FMC Team • February 12, 2024*

The patient-centered medical home (PCMH) is like having a central hub for all your healthcare needs. You have an exceptional doctor who leads a team of other healthcare workers. This team works together to take care of you in every way possible.

Patient-centered care means focusing on what's best for the patient and involving them in decisions about their health. It also means working with other healthcare professionals to give the best care possible. So, healthcare providers must grasp the ins and outs of PCMH before diving into significant changes.

Your chosen doctor is like the captain of your healthcare team. They ensure everyone on the team knows what's going on with your health. They're also responsible for ensuring you get all the care you need. This includes things like check-ups, treatments, and advice on staying healthy.

But the care doesn't stop there.

If you need help from other healthcare providers or community resources, your PCMH team can arrange that, too. Whether seeing a specialist for a specific health issue or connecting you with support services in your neighborhood, they help you

get the proper care at the right time. So, think of your PCMH as your healthcare home base, where you're at the center of attention and your team supports your every step.

## THE FIVE PILLARS OF A PATIENT-CENTERED MEDICAL HOME (PCMH)

The medical home idea seems like an excellent way to improve healthcare by changing how primary care is done. Instead of just being a physical place, it's more about how primary care is set up and done.

Many national groups give awards to healthcare providers who use the PCMH model well. But before healthcare providers make significant changes to how they care for patients, they must understand what PCMH is about.

The Joint Principles of the PCMH state that a successful patient-centered medical home has five main parts:

**Comprehensive Care:** *This is provided by looking at the patient as a whole person, not just focusing on one problem. It also means having a team to help with mental and physical health.*

**Patient-Centered:** *This is provided by building good relationships with patients and their families. Understanding their background, beliefs, and what they need from healthcare is essential.*

**Coordinated Care:** *This is delivered by ensuring everyone involved in a patient's care knows what's happening. This might involve sharing health information between different places where the patient gets care, like hospitals or clinics.*

**Accessible Services:** *These are distributed by having flexible hours, offering different ways to get care in emergencies, and using technology like video calls or apps to connect with patients.*

**Quality and Safety:** *This is created using the best methods and tools to ensure patients get safe, effective care that meets their needs.*

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