

Medical Home

NEWS

The NCQA Overhauls Its Medical Home Certification Process

Intent Is To Make It More User-Friendly

By Ron Shinkman

The holy grail for certifying patient-centered medical homes has made its process significantly easier.

The Washington, D.C.-based National Center for Quality Assurance (NCQA) has been certifying medical practices as patient-centered medical homes for much of the past decade. But as the number of medical homes has proliferated in recent years, it has decided to make the process more streamlined, interactive and less expensive. Altogether, NCQA has issued the certification to more than 12,000 medical practices and more than 61,000 individual physicians nationwide, by far the largest certification program it operates.

“We used feedback from practices, policy makers, payers and other stakeholders to redesign PCMH recognition,” said Michael S. Barr, M.D., NCQA’s executive vice president of quality measurement and research. “This improved process makes the PCMH program more manageable for practices and concentrates on performance and quality improvement.”

In an extensive interview with *Medical Home News*, Barr noted that the NCQA needed to also address the delineation of various medical practices that provide more specialized primary care, such as pediatricians and osteopaths, and create brighter lines between levels of certification.

“It was hard to tell the difference between the level one and level two practice versus a practice that had never been recognized,” Barr said. “When you compare them to the null, you may really not see much of a difference.” Barr did note that the delineations for a level three medical home remained fairly clear.

(continued on page 3)

In This Issue

- 1 The NCQA Overhauls Its Medical Home Certification Process
- 1 The Medical Home Must Be Cognizant Of Its Entire Neighborhood
- 2 Editor’s Corner: Ken Dolkart, M.D., reflects on the GOP’s Replacement For the ACA.
- 9 Roundtable
- 10 Industry News
- 11 Subscribers’ Corner
- 12 Catching Up With ... Carlo Tornatore, M.D.

The Medical Home Must Be Cognizant Of Its Entire Neighborhood

Urgent Care, Retail Clinics Are Reshaping The Primary Care Landscape

By Toni Claire Hogencamp, M.D. and Amanda Montalbano, M.D.

Over the last two decades, changes in healthcare economics have necessitated renewed interest in the patient centered medical home (PCMH).

While the medical home is important for families, it can be difficult to meet the needs of all patients, all the time, within the 9-to-5 timeframe of a traditional office. Balancing patient needs for all stages of life-acute care, chronic care, preventive services, and end of life care-remains a challenge for the medical home. The inherent episodic and unpredictable nature of acute care poses challenges to be managed during business hours while competing with well-exams and chronic care coordination. Further, care delivery disruptors including retail-based care, urgent care, and telemedicine have posed new challenges, adding a level of convenience with which most medical homes now need to compete.

(continued on page 6)