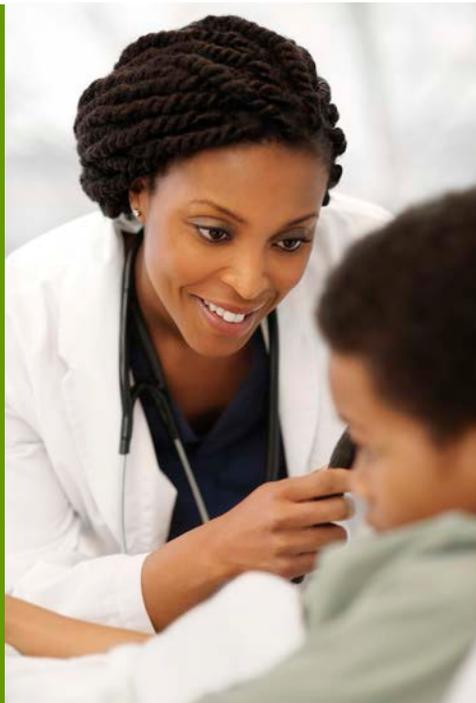


Health and Safety E-News for Caregivers and Teachers



Connecting with Medical Home

- Why is medical home important?
- What is the role of the early education and child care program in the medical home?
- How can medical homes work with child care programs?
- What is the role of the child care health consultant (CCHC) in the medical home?

What is a Medical Home? A medical home is a way of providing health care that facilitates partnership between children, physicians, and families. Early education and child care programs can play a key role in the medical home and in the lives of children and their families.

Why is medical home important?

By providing a medical home approach, the family feels they have a partnership with their health provider and their staff related to decisions about their child's care. A medical home can also improve the coordination of care for a child with special needs. The medical home can:

- help a family make a care plan for their child individual needs;
- make good use of limited resources;
- share their expertise and resources on health and safety practices for early

education and child care settings;

- provide an opportunity for early education and child care providers to ask specific health related concerns.

What is the role of early education and child care programs?

Because early education and child care programs frequently have a close relationship with the families of the children in their care, they can:

- help in keeping track of all services the child is receiving outside the child care center;

- help families obtain information about available resources;
- Ask parents to talk to their child's health provider about concerns. Early education and child care providers can get written permission from parents to exchange information with the child's medical home. This supports the child- and family-centered medical home and allows caregivers to talk directly with the medical home staff for clarification about a child's care or health needs (e.g., asthma, allergies, diabetes);
- share information back to the medical home (e.g., developmental screening, early intervention services).

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How can medical homes work with child care programs?

It is best for a child’s health and development when families, the medical home, and child care programs work together to make sure children are healthy and safe in out-of-home child care settings. The medical home team (pediatrician, nurses, care coordinators) can play their part by:

- communicating with early education and child care programs after obtaining permission from the family;
- work in partnership to ensure children are up-to-date on immunizations and health screenings, and can assist in the completion of child care program admission forms.

What is the role of the child care health consultant (CCHC) in the medical home?

A CCHC is a health care professional who has interest in and experience working with children, has knowledge of resources and regulations. They are comfortable linking health resources with early education and child care programs.

CCHCs can:

- conduct needs assessments and trainings for child care programs related to children’s health issues;
- provide telephone advice and referrals to community services for parents and providers;
- be a liaison between the child care program and medical home;
- promote communication among the medical home, child care program, and family;



- educate families and child care providers about medical home concepts and develop/implement health policies that are family-centered.

Caring for our Children (3rd Ed) STANDARD 9.2.3.6: Identification of Child’s Medical Home and Parental Consent for Information Exchange

As part of the enrollment of a child, the caregiver/teacher should ask the family to identify the child’s primary care provider, his or her medical home, and other specialty health care professionals. The parent/guardian should provide written consent to enable the caregiver/teacher to establish communication with those providers. The family should always be informed prior to the use of the permission unless it is an emergency.

Knowing who is treating the child and coordinating services with these sources of service is vital to the ability of the caregivers/teachers to offer appropriate care to the child. Every child deserves a medical home to provide the best care for the child and for their families.

Resources

Web sites

[Healthy Child Care America](#)

[Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition](#)

[National Center for Medical Home Implementation \(NCMHI\)](#)

[New Bright Futures/Child Care Health Partnership Parent Handouts](#)

These handouts program provide: tools for healthy, active living; tips by topic areas such as relationships and nutrition; and questions for parents to ask their health care professional. These tips are based in best practice, including *Caring for our Children* health and safety standards.