

## What is a Health Care Home?

**Do you sometimes feel that your health care visits can be confusing?** Many people visit a lot of doctors and feel lost in the system. Your health care home team will listen to your questions and help you find your way through the system.

A health care home is your central site for care. It is a place where your health care is coordinated if you see multiple providers, and it is a way of delivering care that should involve you more in your own care.

Health care home is a way of delivering health care. It is not a building, house, hospital or nursing home. Rather, it is a team approach to care that gives you access to all the services and support you need. That team includes you, your primary care provider\*, other health care providers and other staff at the clinic who can help your doctor. It may also include trusted family or friends who are involved in your health care.

Everyone benefits from coordinated, patient-centered care. However, a health care home is especially important for people with chronic diseases and special needs.

\*A primary care provider may be a personal doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant

*"In the past, I would see different doctors at every visit and have to explain my condition over and over again. Now I see the same doctor every time and he knows everything about me, even which specialists I've seen in the last few months and which tests I've had done. He communicates with all of them..."*

**Richard**



## Glossary

**Primary care provider:** a physician or doctor, a physician assistant, or an advanced practice nurse, such as a nurse practitioner or a clinical nurse specialist.

**Health care home team or care team:** a group of health care professionals who plan and deliver patient care in a coordinated way in collaboration with a patient. The care team includes at least one primary care provider, a care coordinator and may include other health professionals based on the patient's needs.

**Care coordination:** a team approach that engages the patient, the primary care provider, and other members of the care team to enhance the patient's well-being by organizing timely access to resources and necessary care that results in continuity of care and builds trust.

**Care plan:** an individualized written document, including an electronic document, to guide a patient's care.

For more information about health care homes in Minnesota, call **651.201.5421** or e-mail [health.healthcarehomes@state.mn.us](mailto:health.healthcarehomes@state.mn.us)

[www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/homes/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/homes/index.html)

### Clinic Contact Information:

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*Information in this brochure provided by the Minnesota Department of Health.*



*Zumbro Valley Health Center  
is a Minnesota certified  
health care home*

**HEALTH CARE  
HOMES IN  
MINNESOTA**

## In a Health Care Home

- You have an ongoing relationship with your primary care provider.
- Care is focused on you as a whole person, not just one part or problem.
- Your primary care provider partners with other specialists and connects you to other health care services, support networks and community services, if needed.
- You and your family (if you wish) are included in making decisions about your health care.
- As partners, you and your health care team work together to plan your care based on your needs.

*"My daughter, Camerynn, sees many different doctors. Before choosing a health care home, it was my job to remember and coordinate everything while also taking care of my child. Since being in a health care home, we have made a care plan that lists everything in one place. Now I can spend more time focusing on the appointment."*

*Ashley*



## Did you know?

People with a health care home have fewer hospitalizations and miss fewer days of work or school.\*

Chronic "unmanaged" diseases and unnecessary emergency room visits or hospitalizations account for more than 70 percent of the nation's health care expenses. Health care homes can reduce the total cost of care.

\*Especially for people with special health care needs

## What Are the Benefits?

- Your health care team or individual care coordinator will help you find specialty care or community services when needed and will make or update your care plan with you.
- Your primary care provider partners with you and other people on your care team to help manage your care.
- You receive coordinated care that is tailored to fit your needs.
- You receive improved ability to communicate and make appointments with your health care team.
- You are valued and treated as the central member of your health care team.
- You and your primary care provider share mutual respect and trust.
- Your cultural and religious beliefs are valued. When possible, your preferences for treatment and care are met.
- You are given information to help you learn more about your ongoing health concerns.
- Your primary care provider makes sure you understand the treatment choices.

## How Can I Get the Best Care?

*Become more involved with your health care:*

- Bring a list of your top questions or concerns to discuss at every visit.
- If you have a chronic health condition, ask for a care plan that you can use to communicate with other medical providers, nurses or other people involved in your care. A care plan should include information about your diagnoses, names of providers you see, other caregivers who help you, medicines you take, etc.
- Be open and honest about your health habits. Your primary care provider is here to help you, not judge you.
- Ask for something to be repeated if you do not understand it.
- Ask your primary care provider to write down the next steps.
- Ask about how to get care after hours if needed.
- Ask to meet the office staff who will be working with you (nurses, person who makes referrals, billing person, etc.)
- Let your health care home team know how they are doing.

*"I'm generally healthy, but sometimes I'm not sure whether I need to be seen or not. I just call my care coordinator, explain the symptoms I'm having and talk with her over the phone about what to do next. If she needs to talk with my doctor, she gets back to me the same day. It's reassuring to know that more than one person at the clinic knows my name and my history."*

*Melissa*

