



What's all the Fuss about Medical Home?

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Maybe you don't hear it as often as I do, but "Medical Home" is mentioned everywhere! Texas Dept. of Family and Child Protective Services will provide a Medical Home for all the kids in foster care. Managed Care Health Plans will provide Medical Waiver Programs through a Medical Home. The Dept. of State Health Services' Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) received funding to work with pediatric clinics to become Medical Homes and is now offering grants to physicians/clinics to enhance their practices to become Medical Homes.

So, what's the deal with Medical Home? I can give you the definition and the 7 components, but they've been in this newsletter before. **The real question is, "What does it mean to you and your child?"**

A true Medical Home can help your child get the medical care they need in a fashion that makes it easier for you. Yes, I said easier for YOU! Do you have your pediatrician's or primary doctor's home phone number? I know some parents who do. Why? Because their children are so fragile that when they need help, they can't wait for the ER doctor to get caught up to speed on their child – they need their primary doctor to meet them at the ER. Does your child's physician's office prepare ahead of time for your child's visit? I know some parents who also have this – there is one person in charge of preparing everyone at the office for the visit so it will go smoothly for the child. Does your child's physician or staff ask for your input on how they can make their services better? Okay, I don't know anyone that gets this but I do know that the clinics that worked with CSHCN did this when working toward providing a Medical Home. Other examples of a true Medical Home are:

- Specific arrangements for contacting you about test results are included in your child's file and the doctor or staff use them
- You are treated as a partner in making decisions for your child's treatment
- Your child has a written care plan that is reviewed at every visit
- Your child's doctor is willing to meet with specialists and you to address your child's needs
- Your child's doctor provides resources to you on parent to parent support or provides family support programs on a routine basis
- Your child's doctor offers to help your child move to an adult care doctor as well as with other transition issues
- Your child's doctor has a board that includes family members that reviews needs and makes suggestions for change – and this input is taken seriously
- Your child's doctor serves on boards for community agencies or school committees for children with disabilities or other health care needs

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