

For More Information

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FAMILY VOICES
OF NORTH DAKOTA[®]

Medical Home

Consistent
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*A Grassroots Network of Families and Friends
Speaking on Behalf of Children with Special Health
Care Needs*

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What Is A Medical Home

Who is your child's primary health provider? What health professional knows your child's general health and specific diagnosis? When you are faced with a difficult decision about your child's health care who helps you feel comfortable about what you are doing? Where does your child go for routine medical care--camp physicals, earaches, immunizations, blood levels? After surgery, who follows your child back home? Who consults with the school IEP team about your child health status?

These are important questions about an important issue

Medical Home

Every child deserves consistent and high quality health care, especially when our health care systems are undergoing constant change. In fact, in this changing health care world, it is more important than ever that every family with a child with special health care needs finds health care stability. Every family should have a strong, respectful relationship with a provider who knows the child's diagnosis well, who views the family as a trusted partner, and who gives quality, ongoing, coordinated care and information about nonmedical services such as respite, WIC, Early Intervention and services important for children with special health care needs.

Collaboration

For several years, Family Voices and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have worked together to help families and professional health partners build Medical Homes for the 12.6 million children with special health care needs in this country.

A Medical Home IS NOT A PLACE, that is built of bricks and lumber. The core of a Medical Home is knowledgeable, loving health professionals, chosen by the family to take care of their child's health care needs, accessible twenty four hours a day, seven days a week.

This provider knows a child and their special condition, understands and respects his/her family, coordinates and works in partnership with parents, early interventionists, teachers, therapists, brothers and sisters, pediatric specialists, insurance companies, grandparents, nurses, care coordinators, child care workers, state health agencies, neighbors and friends.

When a child has a Medical Home, the family is confident that a known, respected expert is always there to provide quality health services and care coordination.

A Medical Home

A **Medical Home** can be found in a number of settings: in urban, suburban, and rural communities; in private practice, and in community clinics.

A **Medical Home** for a child with special health care needs can be provided by a pediatrician, family practitioner, pediatric specialist, perhaps a nurse practitioner or other primary care provider who has knowledge and skills to treat the child's special condition while also providing typical pediatric care.

As we families consider health care providers for our children with special health care needs, it is important to discuss the significance of a **Medical Home** with representatives of insurance plans, managed care organizations, Medicaid agencies, and others who make decisions that affect a child's health. We can explain how a Medical Home assures quality, efficient, family-centered care.

We can assure then that in the long run, a Medical Home can lessen the cost of caring for children with special health care needs while improving family satisfaction and outcomes for our children.

