



Health Information and Education Center
How to Choose the Right Primary Provider

Choosing the right provider for your child is a very important decision. Today, many people have primary care physicians who serve most of their needs and can refer them to specialists when necessary. Primary care providers generally include internists, family practitioners, and pediatricians. How do you select a primary care physician, and know whether the specialists he or she suggests are the right doctors for you?

Here are some things to consider when making those decisions:

- ♥ Ask friends and relatives for recommendations. If you are moving and changing physicians, ask your current physician if they can refer someone in your new community.
- ♥ Check with area hospitals as many of them offer referral services.
- ♥ Ask your insurance company if they have a panel of physicians from which you could select.
- ♥ Review your health insurance plan to determine if a physician you are considering using is part of your and your child's health insurance network or if the plan will cover "out of network" physician referrals. Is the hospital you use part of the network in your insurance?

Issues to consider when making your decision:

- ♥ How many people children with special health care needs the practice serves.
- ♥ What their policy is to accommodate people with disabilities, i.e. reduced wait times, or quiet waiting areas.
- ♥ Has he/she worked with children with my child's disability or special health care need before?
- ♥ Is the provider located close to my home?
- ♥ Are the office and exam rooms easily accessible or are there barriers for yourself and child
- ♥ Does the provider speak my language or sign? If not, what is available for interpreter services?
- ♥ Will it be difficult to obtain referrals for your child if necessary?
- ♥ How does the office operate? Check into office hours, locations, payment requirements, emergency, after hours and telephone availability.

♥ Good communication is a vital component for your child with special health care needs. Only you can decide what is best for you and your family.

If you have questions Contact FVND PO Box 163, Edgeley ND 58433

fvnd@drtel.net, 888-522-9654

Supported with funding from ND Department of Human Services, Medical Services Division, Children's Special Health Services and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 11-P-92506/8-01