



Minnesota Department of Health

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News Release

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Minnesota Department of Health certifies state's first 'health care homes' *First step toward statewide transformation of primary care*

Minnesotans with complex and chronic conditions can begin to enroll in health care homes as the first clinics that have been certified by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The first 11 certified health care homes are in several regions of the state, include both urban and rural clinics and range from single-physician to large systems clinics.

Health care homes, also known as "medical homes," offer a team approach to primary care making it easier for patients to communicate and partner with their care team. Care teams can include: clinicians, nurses, specialists, pharmacists, care coordinators, community resources and others.

In a health care home, a care coordinator who develops a relationship with patients and their families works with them to coordinate their care and achieve better health. This includes streamlining access to appointments, improving communication with specialists, answering questions over the phone and planning for care.

The development of health care homes is an important part of Minnesota's 2008 health reform law that aims to improve the health of the population, the patient experience and the affordability of health care.

"Having this first set of certified health care homes is a great step forward for Minnesota as we strengthen the foundation of primary care in the state. Health care homes help ensure that patients get the right care, at the right time, in the right place," said Commissioner of Health Dr. Sanne Magnan. "This is a significant part of our state's redesign of care and payment to improve health outcomes and build a higher-value health care system. By focusing on better coordination of health care, we can improve health and manage chronic conditions better, while addressing the cost of health care."

Dr. Jeff Schiff, medical director of Minnesota Health Care Programs at the Department of Human Services, which has partnered with MDH on the health care homes initiative, noted that "certified health care homes now qualify to receive a monthly per-person care coordination payment for patients with multiple chronic conditions. This innovation in both care and payment is needed to truly transform health care in Minnesota."

Eligibility for these payments may depend on a patient's health insurance plan.

MDH's goal is to certify up to 150 organizations by the end of 2011. Currently, nearly 50

additional clinics from around the state, representing more than 400 clinicians, are in the process of applying for certification.

In addition, about 500 people have attended certification training sessions at regional workshops around the state, and more than 30 individual clinics and health systems have received a variety of mini-grants to help them move toward certification.

To be certified as a health care home, providers and clinics must meet a rigorous set of standards that were developed through a public-private stakeholder process, and complete an application and participate in a site visit. Certification represents a transformation of care delivery that can benefit all patients who receive their care in a health care home.

The first 11 certified health care homes in Minnesota are:

- Christopher J. Wenner, M.D., Cold Springs
- Mayo Health System-Austin Medical Center
- Lakewood Health System-Staples Clinic
- Lakewood Health System-Browerville Clinic
- Lakewood Health System-Eagle Bend Clinic
- Lakewood Health System-Pillager Clinic
- Lakewood Health System-Motley Clinic
- Park Nicollet-Minneapolis Pediatric Clinic
- Park Nicollet-St. Louis Park Internal Medicine Clinic
- Park Nicollet-St. Louis Park Family Medicine Clinic
- Park Nicollet-St. Louis Park Pediatric Clinic

More information on health care homes is available online at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/homes/index.html>.

-MDH-

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