

Improving the Medical Home Through the Use of Health Information Technology

A Fact Sheet for Health Care Professionals

Recognizing the important role that health information technology (HIT) can play in the pediatric family-centered medical home, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) supports development and universal implementation of a comprehensive electronic infrastructure. This infrastructure assists the medical home in delivering quality care by supporting information functions and effective communication through:

- Timely and continuous management and tracking of health data and services over a patient's lifetime;
- Comprehensive organization and secure transfer of patient health data between providers, institutions, and practices;
- Establishment and maintenance of central coordination of a patient's health information—including personal health records and information exchanges;
- Translation of pediatric recommendations into clinical actions; and
- Reuse of archived clinical data for continuous quality improvement and research.

The Relationship Between HIT and Medical Home

What is HIT?

- The use of computer applications to record, store, protect, retrieve, and transfer clinical, administrative, and financial information electronically within health care settings
- An electronic infrastructure to assist with communication and transfer of patient information between physicians and other professionals, patients, programs, and service agencies
- HIT "tools" include:
 - Electronic health records (EHRs)
 - Personal health records
 - Patient portals
 - Family-centered care plan with patient preferences
 - Patient registries
 - Patient post-visit summaries
 - Clinical decision-support systems
 - Computerized provider order entry and e-prescribing
 - Telemedicine
 - Tracking actions (eg, lab and x-ray results, consultation and referrals)
 - Health promotion via social media

How Do They Interact?

Well-designed and implemented HIT systems can:

- Engage patients and families in their health care and provide information on recommended care and services (eg, recalls, reminders)
- Enhance provider-patient communications
- Enhance the role of primary care practices when implementing the medical home approach (eg, care coordination, comanagement)
- Facilitate access to and sharing of important patient information among a care coordination team
- Facilitate successful transition across settings and from a pediatric to an adult model of care

HIT also helps to support medical home functionality by assisting providers with

- Data availability
- Data sharing and exchange
- Information and data assurance
- Internal and external performance reporting
- Public health reporting
- Quality improvement

What is a Medical Home?

- An approach to providing comprehensive primary care
- A partnership between the pediatric care team, the child/youth, and the family to ensure that all medical and nonmedical needs are met
- A way to help the child/youth and the family access, coordinate, and understand specialty care, educational services, out-of-home care, family support, and other public and private community services

The Time is Now! Considerations for a Practice

Patient Engagement

Technology is everywhere—even in health care. Patients and their families not only have access to more health care information than ever before, but they often have (and desire) a more active role in managing their care and have different expectations for communicating and accessing their health care professionals. For a health care professional, technology can help a practice respond to their patients' emerging needs through the utilization of many of the HIT tools previously discussed.

Recognition & Meaningful Use

The appropriate use of technology in health care has the potential to enhance patient and family engagement. In addition, recognition and accreditation programs related to the family-centered medical home address the use of HIT as a way to help facilitate patient and family access to quality care and enhance patient safety. Some programs also reinforce federal meaningful use incentives. Further, recognizing and accrediting bodies are encouraged to consider collaborating with HIT vendors, such as registry and EHR companies, to ensure that the vendors incorporate structured data elements that will enable collection of the necessary data to meet the program's documentation requirements. Should a practice achieve recognition from an accrediting body, it may be better positioned to advocate and negotiate for improved and appropriate primary care payment.

Translating HIT Functionality to Medical Home Implementation

DATA AVAILABILITY	DATA SHARING AND EXCHANGE	INFORMATION AND DATA ASSURANCE	QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect, track, and manage patient health information through an EHR or registry Assist in open-access scheduling; medication management; maintain an up-to-date problem list of current and active diagnoses Connect with your medical and community partners to track referrals and follow-up, coordinate with facilities, and ensure transition of care Create a Web site with information on office policies and procedures, how to reach staff, after hours care, educational materials, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With a privacy framework in place, exchange of key clinical information amongst providers of care and patient authorized entities electronically Develop and maintain individual care plans with patients and families Create a patient portal that would allow patients and families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update demographic information Answer previsit questionnaires and schedule appointments Report data for ongoing management between office visits Access health information (eg, immunization records) Implement telemedicine opportunities to enhance comanagement of care Use text messaging to prompt, remind, or obtain information from patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Web site with information on office policies and procedures, how to reach staff, after hours care, educational materials Create a patient portal that would allow patients and families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update demographic information Answer previsit questionnaires and schedule appointments Report data for ongoing management between office visits Access health information (eg, immunization records) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement evidence-based clinical guidelines with the aid of electronic prompts before, during, or after visits Develop a patient registry Utilize a Web-based quality performance reporting system (eg, for quality improvement, assessment, maintenance of certification, research, and program planning)

HIT Resources

AAP Child Health Informatics Center (CHIC)

www.aap.org/informatics/chic.html

The CHIC is the home for AAP HIT initiatives. The AAP is working to ensure that pediatrics is considered in national discussions about HIT, that members are provided with timely information and guidance, and most importantly, that children have access to high-quality care. Resources available through the CHIC include:

- Meaningful Use Overview and Resources
- State Pages
- Federal and State Advocacy Tools and Resources
- EMR Review Site
- EMR Toolkit
- Child Health Informatics Advocacy Brief

National Center for Medical Home Implementation (NCMHI)

www.medicalhomeinfo.org

The NCMHI is a cooperative agreement between the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau and the AAP. The NCMHI is a resource to assist health professionals, families, and others in creating a medical home for all children and youth.

- Clinical Care Information and Organization—HIT www.medicalhomeinfo.org/how/clinical_care/HIT/HIT.aspx
- *Building Your Medical Home* Toolkit www.pediatricmedhome.org
- Medical Home State Pages www.medicalhomeinfo.org/state_pages/

AAP Policy Statement—Health Information Technology and the Medical Home

www.aappolicy.org

Discusses how HIT can help support pediatric information functions within the medical home (*Pediatrics*, May 2011).

US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration

www.hrsa.gov/healthit/

The HRSA is the primary federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated, or medically vulnerable. Resources available through HRSA that assist with the planning, implementation, utilization, and evaluation of HIT adoption include:

- Health IT Toolboxes (Pediatric Oral Health and Health IT, Health IT Adoption, Health IT for Children, Rural Health IT Adoption, etc)
- Health IT and Quality Webinars
- Meaningful Use Information/Resources
- Find a Regional Extension Center
- How Can Providers Use Health IT to Help Create a Medical Home?

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