

**American College of Physicians
Council of Subspecialty Societies (CSS) Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Workgroup**

Definition of a Specialty Practice as a Patient Centered Medical Home Neighbor

A specialty practice recognized as a Patient Centered Medical Home Neighbor (PCMH-N) engages in processes that:

- *facilitate communication, coordination and integration with a PCMH practice in a bi-directional manner to promote high quality and efficient care;*
- *facilitate appropriate and timely consultations and referrals that complement the aims of the PCMH practice;*
- *facilitate the efficient, appropriate and effective flow of necessary patient and care information;*
- *effectively guides determination of responsibility in co-management situations;*
- *support patient centered care, enhanced care access and high levels of care quality and safety; and*
- *recognize the PCMH practice as the provider of whole person primary care to the patient and as having overall responsibility for ensuring the coordination and integration of the care provided by all involved providers.*

Explanatory Supplement to the Definition

The concept of a PCMH-N acknowledges that, at times, patient care is required by providers outside of a patient's PCMH practice. The PCMH-N concept highlights the importance of effective integration and coordination of services provided by specialist providers with the PCMH. It further recognizes that a given practice may be a PCMH-N for some patients, and a PCMH for others.

Clinical interactions between the PCMH and the PCMH-N can take many forms including referral for consultation; performance of a procedure; assumption of responsibility for the principal care of a given condition or other co-management arrangement; or the transfer of full PCMH responsibilities for a given patient. The PCMH-N practice should have processes to effect bi-directional, effective, efficient and timely information flow between care providers. Responsibilities regarding services to be delivered by both the PCMH and PCMH-N should be clearly defined and also understood by the patient, and if appropriate, their family. Service agreements between PCMH and PCMH-N practices will need to be established to address these functions based on the appended set of principles.

The PCMH-N practice emphasizes care delivery that respects the patient's needs and preferences, facilitates care access, and promotes the highest levels of clinical quality, appropriateness and safety. These standards are consistent with those expected from a PCMH.

This definition highlights the assumption that the PCMH, and not the PCMH-N, has overall responsibility regarding the delivery of primary care services and ensuring overall care coordination and integrations remains with the PCMH, unless explicitly defined otherwise within a specific patient treatment plan or service agreement.