

Patient-Centered Connected Care

Now more than ever, patients face a growing number of choices in how and where they receive health care. Urgent care centers, retail, worksite and school-based clinics, and even sites that provide outpatient care such as physical therapy and chiropractic medicine are expanding access to health services across America. But how are these sites managing quality and connecting with patients' medical teams? The new NCQA Patient-Centered Connected Care Recognition Program helps close the gaps between care settings by recognizing these sites that deliver quality outpatient care and connect patients with primary care providers. Built on the nation's most widely-used Patient-Centered Medical Home Program, Patient-Centered Connected Care measures these sites on a core set of principles:

- **Connecting with primary care:** The site connects with and shares information with patients' primary care providers and helps them find a primary care provider if they do not have one.
- **Identifying patient needs:** The site directs patients to appropriate providers, when necessary.
- **Providing patient care and support:** The site uses evidence-based decision support in care delivery, collaborates with patients to make care decisions and delivers culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- **Expanding system capabilities:** The site uses electronic systems and health records to collect data and execute specific tasks.
- **Measuring and improving performance:** The provider systematically monitors performance and carries out activities to improve clinical outcomes and patient experience.

Collaboration and coordination across healthcare settings is critical to improving the quality and value of health care services that patients receive. The Patient-Centered Connected Care Program creates a roadmap so that these sites can fit into the larger medical home neighborhood and responsibly manage shared patient populations.

Recognized sites help patients identify appropriate settings for care while also emphasizing the importance of regular primary care visits and driving down the overall cost of health expenditures.¹ And since NCQA Recognition demonstrates robust yet responsible use of health information technology to coordinate care, these sites promote communication across providers and settings.

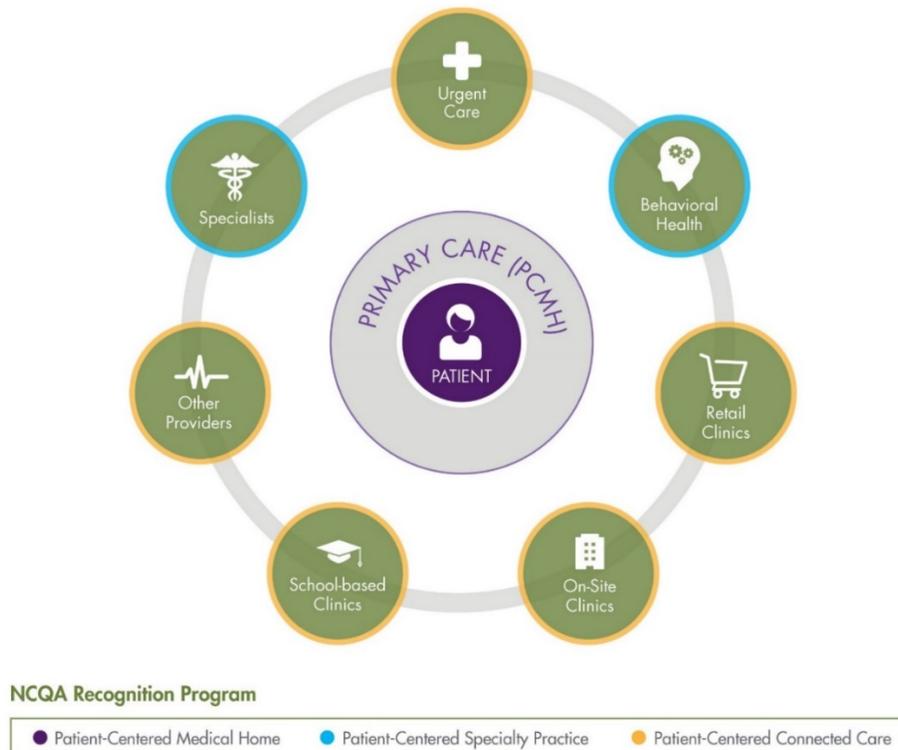
Recognized practices use measurement systems focused on better health outcomes, patient satisfaction, and operational efficiency, reflecting their commitment to quality and patient-centered care. Thousands of practices have been recognized through NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home and Patient-Centered Specialty Practice Recognition Programs. The Patient-Centered Connected Care Program builds on that success to create a health care system that is fully integrated and focused on cutting costs, improving quality and expanding access.

¹ <https://www.pcc.org/resource/patient-centered-medical-homes-impact-cost-and-quality>

NCQA Patient-Centered Connected Care: Completing the Medical Neighborhood

NCQA Patient-Centered Connected Care captures and recognizes quality across the growing number of environments patients choose to receive their healthcare. Primary care remains the fundamental hub of patient-centered care, but the Connected Care Program addresses the demand for recognizing quality across a diverse landscape of provider settings because:

- The number of alternative care settings is expected to grow between 25% and 30% annually, roughly doubling the number of clinics across the country.²
- 13% of patients say they used a retail clinic in the past year, and use of these clinics is comparable across payers: 10% of Medicaid, 11% of Medicare and 13% of commercially-insured adults.³
- Effective use of urgent care centers drives down unnecessary utilization of emergency department services by 48%.⁴
- Overall, up to 27% of all emergency department visits could take place at one of these alternative sites, potentially saving up to \$4.4 billion annually.⁵



NCQA Patient-Centered Connected Care Standards and other guidance are available at www.ncqa.org/connectedcare. NCQA will offer educational programs about how the program works. For more information, please contact our Assistant Vice President for Physician Recognition Programs, Mina Harkins, at (202) 955-3500.

² <http://www.accenture.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/PDF/Accenture-Retail-Medical-Clinics-From-Foe-to-Friend.pdf>

³ http://www.collaborationhealthcare.com/DeloitteHealth_Care_ConsumerismOpportunitiesandChallengesforHealthPlansJune2009.pdf

⁴ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10750912>

⁵ <http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/29/9/1630.full>