1. What is a Patient Centered Medical Home?

A Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) is defined as a model or philosophy of primary care that is patient-centered, comprehensive, coordinated, integrated, team-based, easily accessible, and committed to quality and safety. The model strives to deliver high quality of care that can lead to lower costs, improved patient experience, and improved health outcomes. PCMH services intention are to be continuous and actively involve patients and their caregivers with health decisions.
2. **What are key features of a PCMH?**

   **Patient-centered**: A partnership among practitioners, the patient, and their families enables decisions to be made with respect to the patient’s needs and preferences. Also, it ensures that patients have the right amount of education and support they need to make choices and be proactive in their own care.

   **Comprehensive**: A group of care providers acting as a team is accountable for a patient’s mental and physical health care needs. This may include prevention and wellness, acute care, and chronic care.

   **Coordinated**: Care is organized across all elements of the health care system. This consists of specialty care, hospitals, long-term care, home health care, community services and supports.

   **Accessible**: The PCMH strives to provide patients access to care when they need it through, "after hours" care, 24/7 electronic or telephone access, and strong communication through health IT innovations.

   **Committed to quality and safety**: Clinicians and staff as a team strive to provide the safest care at the highest level of quality to make sure that patients and families make informed and educated decisions about their health.

   Many practices measure performance to ensure the delivery of safe, quality care to patients.

   Adapted from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality:  
   [https://pcmh.ahrq.gov/page/defining-pcmh](https://pcmh.ahrq.gov/page/defining-pcmh)

3. **Where can I find out more about PCMH?**

   The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has a PCMH resource center that is rich with information. This site includes an explanation, evidence, and resources. For more information, visit: [https://pcmh.ahrq.gov/](https://pcmh.ahrq.gov/)

   The NCQA provides a PCMH Recognition program. To find out more about the application process, visit:  
   [http://www.ncqa.org/Programs/Recognition/Practices/PatientCenteredMedicalHomePCMH.aspx](http://www.ncqa.org/Programs/Recognition/Practices/PatientCenteredMedicalHomePCMH.aspx)

   The Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative is a not-for-profit organization that is “dedicated to advancing an effective and efficient health system built on a strong
foundation of primary care and the PCMH”. You can find a variety of resources and upcoming events on their website: https://www.pcpcc.org/

4. What is the role of the pharmacist in a PCMH?

**Embedded Model:**
Pharmacists are the medication experts. As such, pharmacists can play an important role in optimizing therapeutic outcomes and promoting safe, cost-effective medication use for patients. Pharmacy training and pharmacotherapy expertise can be complementary to traditional prescriber roles in team-based care.

Publications supporting embedded pharmacist involvement in PCMHs include promotion of team-based care, enhanced access, care coordination, and improved quality and safety of care.


**Off-site Model:**
Some work has been done to describe the experience of community pharmacies providing medication management services for PCMHs. This is an area of great potential, but more work is needed to determine the most effective implementation strategies.


5. How do you go about embedding a pharmacist into a PCMH?

Ambulatory care pharmacy practitioners can turn to ASHP’s *Building a Successful Ambulatory Care Practice: a Complete Guide for Practitioners* to gain valuable information on how to develop or enhance a practice site. Specifically, the text addresses various practice models and settings, including the PCMH model, performing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis to aid the pharmacist during the
implementation phase. In a step-by-step manner, the authors guide the reader through creating a practice that includes a discussion on clinical services, business plan, marketing, communication, documentation, quality assurance, risk management and liability, and reimbursement. Alongside the book is a downloadable toolkit that offers sample documents, forms, and case studies to help illustrate the process. The book and toolkit is available for purchase and can be found via the following link: http://store.ashp.org/Default.aspx?TabID=251&productId=6744

Several articles have also addressed and described the integration of a pharmacist into a PCMH model, sharing insight on barriers and lessons learned throughout the process. A common theme amongst the literature has been ensuring that pharmacy services can help meet the standards posed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) for recognition of PCMH. These articles are listed below:


6. **What are some examples of “Best Practices” of integrating a pharmacist into a medical home?**

Areas in which the pharmacist has contributed to the team in a PCMH are: collaborative drug therapy management, identification and resolution of medication related problems, providing comprehensive medication review and medication reconciliation, optimizing medication regimens based on evidence-based guidelines, recommending cost-effective treatment, improving medication adherence, assisting in transitions of care and care coordination.

**General Practice Examples:**
Disease State Specific Examples:


7. How can pharmacists obtain reimbursement within the medical home?

ASHP has listed several valuable resources for pharmacist billing within an ambulatory care practice. Depending on the pharmacy services provided within the PCMH, several Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes can be utilized for reimbursement within the practice setting. Visit the following links to learn more about various reimbursement strategies:


Another great resource to learn more about reimbursement and building your service is “Building a Successful Ambulatory Care Practice: A Complete Guide for Pharmacists” by Mary Ann Kliethermes and Tim R. Brown. This resource is available for purchase through ASHP: [http://store.ashp.org/Default.aspx?TabID=251&productID=6744](http://store.ashp.org/Default.aspx?TabID=251&productID=6744)
8. What other ways can you justify your position within the medical home model?

There are many varied approaches to justifying pharmacy positions within medical homes. It is critical to know your practice site to ensure that your justification demonstrates contribution to achievement of the institution’s goals.

In developing your proposal, consider including the following elements:
Quantitative
• Improved outcomes (disease specific outcomes such as hemoglobin A1c, blood pressure, INR, etc; decreased hospitalizations; decreased emergency department visits), identification and resolution of medication related problems, etc.
• Cost avoidance (decreased hospitalizations, ED visits for uninsured). Reduced penalties for high readmission rates.

Qualitative:
• Improved patient satisfaction rating and quality of life tracking Some Improved provider satisfaction
• Patient stories of individual impact of pharmacy services.
• Targeted quality improvement projects to achieve NCQA PCMH recognition.
• Contribution to “Must Pass” elements for NCQA’s PCMH Standards.


Many institutions are shifting from visit-based care to population health based care that may occur outside of the traditional face to face visit. This shift is increasing as payment models shift from fee for service to pay for performance. This shift may open opportunities for pharmacists. Visit the following links to learn more about pay for performance models:


9. How can you network with other pharmacists that have experience in PCMH?

ASHP provides great network opportunities including ASHP Connect and NewsLinks. More information about ASHP networking can be found online:
http://www.ashp.org/menu/MemberCenter/SectionsForums/Networking.html
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