

Strategies & Solutions

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In This Issue

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The health care delivery system is being reoriented toward primary care. Learn more about the changing role of primary care physicians and opportunities to create infrastructure and provide support during the transition.

Topic Trends



Founded in 2010, The Ambulatory Practice of the Future (APF) is a primary care clinic adjacent to the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). APF is focusing on proactive population management and

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The Changing Role of Primary Care Providers: Understanding and Supporting the Change

The passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) confirmed what many health care providers, practitioners, payors, legislators, and academics have long believed — that reorienting the health care delivery system toward primary care is the best approach for making health care affordable and accessible for all Americans, while slowing down the rapid and unsustainable rise in health care expenditures. Reorientation toward primary care requires fundamental changes in the primary care infrastructure and the roles of the physicians practicing within the infrastructure.

The anticipated deficit of primary care physicians coupled with the increase of insured patients who will consume twice as much medical care as uninsured patients points to an imperative to develop innovative models of care and advance the role of the primary care provider. Primary care physicians are rapidly transitioning from caregivers (traditional role) to care coordinators and managers (emerging role) with new, multifaceted responsibilities and different incentives for patient care and health management.

Traditional Role:	Emerging Role:
• Care provider	▶ Care manager
• Episodic care	▶ Health and wellness across care continuum
• Supervising staff	▶ Leading a team
• Individual practitioner	▶ Team-based patient care
• Face-to-face patient care	▶ Group visits, telemedicine, and e-visits
• Managed care interaction and contract negotiation	▶ Provider – payor partnering
• Payment for service	▶ Payment for quality and outcomes

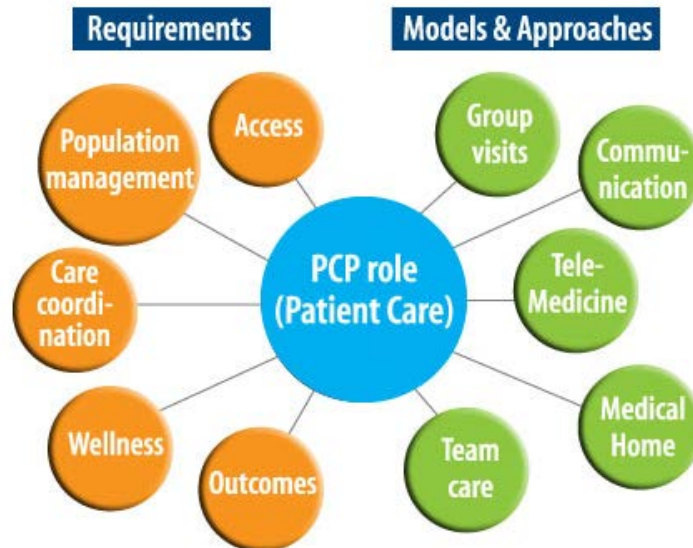
improving the health of MGH-related employees by empowering patients to be more engaged in their care. An equally important goal is to return the joy of practicing medicine to APF practitioners and staff. The model relies heavily on the use of technology, including a new patient portal.

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The historical role of primary care physicians has been to provide episodic, fee-for-service medical care in a one-to-one provider-to-patient approach. The new emerging role requires primary care physicians to manage the health of the patient population served, ensuring wellness, access, coordinated care, and high-quality outcomes.

Innovative care models, particularly ones that help leverage physician resources by using new care management approaches, advocating for health promotion and wellness, and optimizing the use of non-physician clinicians will close the gap between the traditional and emerging role of physicians. Team-based care, group visits, telemedicine, and medical homes will become the standard for primary care delivery. Primary care providers will be in the hub of care delivery - employing the novel models and approaches that are necessary to coordinate the continuum of care for a defined patient population.

Emerging Requirements, Models, and Approaches for Primary Care



Relevant Reading

["Will Patients Choose You for Their Medical Home?"](#) by Philip Betbeze

["How Health Care Reform Will Affect Family Physicians"](#) by Brandi White

Health system executives must help primary care physicians successfully adapt to their new roles and incorporate these innovative approaches by

- Prioritizing the development of and assisting with access to information technology as a gateway toward timely information sharing and distribution, measuring and reporting quality outcomes, and streamlining financial data
- Assisting in establishment of teams of primary care providers by facilitating access to care managers and providers such as physicians, advanced practice clinicians, social workers, etc.

Upcoming Events



Join Kathleen McCarthy, vice president, Health Strategies & Solutions, and Leo Brideau, president and CEO, Ascension Health Care Network

2012 Health Forum and AHA Leadership Summit

July 19 in San Francisco

Before and After the Merger: Strategies for Moving Toward Successful Integration

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- Spearheading development of primary care models that result in clinical care coordination and accountability

For more information on the changing role of primary care physicians, contact [Jennifer Etkin](#) at 215-399-1853 or [Craig Holm](#) at 215-399-1899.

HS&S is getting a fresh, new look!

Stay tuned for our new website launch, set to occur later this week.

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