



WISCONSIN ACADEMY OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS  
**STRONG MEDICINE FOR WISCONSIN**

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November 21, 2008

Senator Julie Lassa, Co-chair  
Performance-Based Disease Management Programs for Large Populations Committee  
WI State Capitol, Room 323-South  
Madison, WI 53707

Representative Steve Wieckert  
Performance-Based Disease Management Programs for Large Populations Committee  
WI State Capitol, Room 16-West  
Madison, WI 53808

Dear Senator Lassa and Representative Wieckert:

The Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians (WAFP) would like to take this opportunity to request the inclusion of a Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) pilot program for Wisconsin's Medical Assistance recipients in the final recommendations of the Special Committee on Performance-Based Disease Management Programs for Large Populations.

The PCMH model is an innovative – and proven – health care delivery model based on a physician-guided medical practice, chosen by the patient, which integrates health care services for patients who confront a complex and confusing health care system.

Under the PCMH model, primary care physicians oversee all aspects of a patient's care and coordinate a team of specialty practitioners to meet the patient's medical needs at each stage of life. The PCMH places an emphasis on prevention and wellness to reduce overall care costs by improving outcomes, reducing complications, eliminating unnecessary care and unnecessary emergency room visits

The PCMH is structured to focus on the patient, who will benefit directly through greater access to needed services, improved quality of care, more attention to prevention, and early identification and management of health problems.

Not only does the PCMH model provide improved access to quality healthcare and increased involvement of patients in their own care, it has the potential to save Wisconsin's Medical Assistance program millions of dollars as has been demonstrated in other states, specifically North Carolina.

Equally important, by creating a mechanism that increases access to primary care services, the PCMH could help attract much-needed qualified primary care physicians to Wisconsin.

Wisconsin has a severe shortage of primary care physicians – a specialty that plays a key role in the delivery of healthcare and management of chronic disease. According to the Wisconsin Council on Medical Education and Workforce, Wisconsin currently has a shortage of 374 primary care physicians, which is expected to increase dramatically over the coming years.

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Unfortunately, the dearth of primary care doctors will only be exacerbated by the state's aging population who are more likely to have chronic diseases.

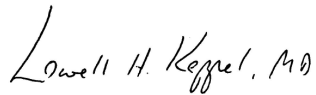
The PCMH model recognizes the added value of coordinated care and has a payment structure that rewards primary-care physicians who participate and invest in their practices by restructuring them in compliance with the PCMH model. This added financial incentive could potentially, as stated above, attract new primary care doctors to Wisconsin.

The PCMH concept has been championed as a viable solution to Wisconsin's healthcare crisis by several speakers who have addressed the Committee, including Laura Tobler, Health Program Director from the National Conference of State Legislatures and Ken Thorpe, Executive Director of the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease.

The WAFP would urge the Committee to propose the implementation of a PCMH pilot program for the state's MA population in their final recommendation. I have enclosed the WAFP's Patient-Centered Medical Home proposal to aid the Committee.

I look forward to further discussion on this important issue in the future. If you would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or to visit the Academy's PCMH webpage at [www.wafp.org/members.asp](http://www.wafp.org/members.asp).

Sincerely,



**Lowell Keppel, MD - President**  
**Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians**

**cc: Committee members**

**Enclosure**