

New URAC Program to Guide Practices as They Transform Themselves into Patient Centered Health Care Homes Now Available

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PCHCH Program Toolkit and Informational Resources Available at
http://www.urac.org/healthcare/prog_accred_pchch_toolkit.aspx

Washington, DC – December 29, 2010 – URAC, a leading health care accreditation and education organization, announces the release of its Patient Centered Health Care Home Program Toolkit. This new program provides an educational, step-wise, self-paced approach to guide health care practices, and sponsoring health plans, insurers, and pilot programs, on how practices can transform themselves into a patient centered health care home.

The growth in demonstration projects and efforts to test health care home programs points to the broad benefits of this model. Initial results have shown a significant impact on reducing unnecessary emergency department visits, avoidable hospitalizations and re-hospitalizations – this translates to lowered morbidity, mortality, lost days of productivity, and cost savings for our health care system.

A Patient Centered Health Care Home(PCHCH) is an interdisciplinary clinician-led team approach to delivering and coordinating care that puts patients, family members, and personal caregivers at the center of all decisions concerning the patient's health and wellness. A PCHCH provides comprehensive and individualized access to physical health, behavioral health, and supportive community and social services, ensuring patients receive the right care in the right setting at the right time.

By using URAC's PCHCH Program Toolkit and related resource materials, practices and their sponsoring organizations can more fully understand what constitutes a fully functional PCHCH, and implement any changes in practice culture, infrastructure, and operations needed to become a PCHCH. URAC's PCHCH Program Toolkit includes:

- **Practice Assessment Standards, Interpretive Guidance and Checklist** – Enabling practices to self-assess themselves in the following key areas:
 - Core Quality Care Management
 - Patient-Centered Operations Management
 - Access and Communications
 - Testing and Referrals
 - Care Management and Coordination

- Advanced Electronic Capabilities
- Performance Reporting and Improvement
- **Performance Measures Information Resource** – Identifying measures directly pertinent to the provision of high quality patient centered care.
- **Survey Information Resource** – Providing an overview and recommendation of publicly available patient experience surveys.

“Across the provider spectrum, practices are looking at ways to improve patient care. URAC’s Patient-Centered Health Care Home approach delivers on the promises of health care reform – increasing access, driving coordination across the continuum of care, increasing patient access to information and decision-making and driving efficiency and effectiveness,” said Alan P. Spielman, president and CEO of URAC. “However, many providers are looking for guidance in implementing these programs. The URAC toolkit will provide clear direction on how to transform and assess patient centered health care home practices.”

The URAC PCHCH Program Toolkit was developed with input and guidance from a broad-based Advisory Group of more than 60 expert thought leaders from across the health care spectrum.

“Primary care physicians and other providers have long believed in the medical, or health care, home for their patients. In fact, the health care home is essential for providing stewardship of scarce health care resources, improving quality of care, and assuring comprehensive care – in partnership with their patients” said Bernard Mansheim, MD, URAC Board Immediate Past Chair and Chair, PCHCH Advisory Group. “URAC is excited to provide a set of tools which primary care providers can use to grow their practices into mature, primary care health care homes. The toolkit is not meant to be an onerous inspection of a medical practice. Rather, it is a well-constructed set of guidelines that offer continuous process improvement and improved clinical outcomes. Our PCHCH product fits perfectly with the current national initiatives to enhance the quality of health care for all Americans.”

In developing this PCHCH Program Toolkit, URAC adapted elements from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan's (BCBSM) Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Initiatives. BCBSM’s initiatives embody URAC’s transformation approach by providing practices with the flexibility needed to build and grow their medical home capabilities over time.

To access URAC’s Patient Centered Health Care Home (PCHCH) Program Toolkit and Informational Resources, go to http://www.urac.org/healthcare/prog_accred_pchchp_toolkit.aspx.

About URAC

URAC, an independent, nonprofit organization, is well-known as a leader in promoting health care quality through its accreditation, education and measurement programs. URAC offers a wide range of quality benchmarking programs and services that keep pace with the rapid changes in the health care system, and provide a symbol of excellence for organizations to validate their

commitment to quality and accountability. Through its broad-based governance structure and an inclusive standards development process, URAC ensures that all stakeholders are represented in establishing meaningful quality measures for the entire health care industry. For more information, visit www.uran.org.

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