

Miramont is 2011 PCMH Best Practice of the Year

Fort Collins practice has improved outcomes, continues to strive

The Colorado Academy of Family Physicians has named Miramont Family Medicine in Fort Collins as the 2011 PCMH Best Practice of the Year. The purpose of the award is to encourage Family Physicians to create medical homes and to recognize excellent systems of care.

In addition to John Bender, MD, Miramont medical director, other Miramont physicians are Juan Rodriguez, DO, Kelly Lowther, MD, Douglas DeYoung, DO, Janice Weisman, DO and Linda A. Burnham, MD. The health care team also includes six mid-level providers, a nurse educator and five quality management personnel.

Patient Centered Medical Homes represent a new, transformational approach to primary care. Each is characterized by a physician-guided team that provides comprehensive, coordinated care to patients across the complex health care system. PCMHs ensure first-contact access and longitudinal, trusting relationships that provide high quality and safe care based on evidence-based medicine and shared decision-making.

A certificate in Miramont's application for the award shows that in July 2009 the practice became a Level 3 PCMH, as recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. But beyond that, the application is full of evidence that the practice excels as a PCMH and continues to strive for improvement.

Access to all

Growing according to plan at a rate of 34 percent per year, Miramont provides services to 15,000 patients in northern Colorado. The practice offers

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services at three locations in Fort Collins and two in the rural communities of Wellington and Red Feather Lakes. Physicians round at three hospitals and 11 skilled nursing facilities.

Miramont is open to all patients. All types of insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, are accepted and an in-house plan is available for non-insured patients. Some staff members are fluent in Spanish and American Sign Language.

"Our clinics offer extended hours, open access scheduling, in-house laboratory, X-ray, medication dispensing, IV hydration and therapy ... and many other services that are usually only available in an urgent care or emergency room setting," the application states.



John Bender, MD,
Miramont medical
director

EHR aids outcomes, communication

Miramont's electronic health record supports evidence-based medicine and improved outcomes.

The narrative states, "As part of PCMH, reports from RMD (Reach My Doctor) are reviewed and metrics are followed and reported to Health TeamWorks who distribute them to other PCMH practices and insurance payers. We grade ourselves internally by reviewing each physician's data and grade ourselves externally as a practice against the other groups in the pilot. The metrics we follow are related to Diabetes, Heart/Stroke, and Preventive."

The reports have shown improvements in such measures as LDL and A1c numbers and the practice has decreased the number of patients seen in the emergency department and admitted to the hospital on a monthly basis. "As a result, we are decreasing the cost of care curve," the narrative states.

The EHR also includes several inter-related features that work together to improve communication and efficiency and to reduce errors.



Amanda Cline exchanges the daily backup tapes in the servers of the data center.

An "Order Tracker" links incoming results with orders to verify that all consultations and test results are received in a timely fashion. Other features help providers print out appropriate handouts. The "Patient Portal" allows patients to view and comment on select portions of their charts. It also is the vehicle for sending lab results directly to patients. SureScripts, which is coupled to the e-MD prescribing module, enables providers to send and refill prescriptions electronically.

The value of the EHR was recognized in 2010 when Miramont Family Medicine received the HIMSS Davies Ambulatory Care Award, which identifies organizations with exceptional use of health care information technology. The application states, "Miramont was chosen for this national award after a site visit from the Davies Award Committee, where they observed patient care from beginning to end through our innovative systems."

Checklist, Meetings and More

Some of the items mentioned in Miramont's application are simple, but effective. A color-coded checklist, which is pocket-sized for office use, includes each item that needs to be considered by

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medical assistants. According to the application, this combines with standing orders to create “efficiencies so the provider can spend more quality time with each patient.” A nurse educator teaches patients about diabetes management, weight loss and smoking cessation.

The staff meets weekly to discuss quality of care issues. “All staff members are invited to attend and asked to bring issues forward,”



Jolietta Boyer scans paper records into .pdf files prior to shredding .

the application states. “We discuss and make changes that improve our overall efficiency and quality of patient care within our practice.”

Leadership and participation

Leadership and participation are characteristics of both Miramont and the practice’s individual staff members. Dr. Bender is a past president of the CAFP and the Larimer County Medical Society and he has served as vice president of the Northern Colorado Independent Practice Association. Other physicians in the practice are active in the Independent Physicians Association, as well as county and state medical societies and state and national specialty organizations.

Programs and groups in which Miramont or individual staff members are involved include the following:

- Colorado Multi-Payer, Multi-State PCMH Pilot Project and the Distributed
- American Academy of Family Physicians Practice Enhancement Forum
- AAFP Ask and Act Smoking Cessation program
- Ambulatory Research in Therapeutics Networks depression screening



Julie DeSaire teleconferences in for a meeting from a remote clinic location, while Peter Lowther, Tina Smith and Amanda Marquez look on.

Assuring Better Child Health and Development
Colorado Foundation for Medical Care prevention project
Colorado Immunization Information System
Patient Centered Medical Home Coalition of Larimer County

Support from peers and patients

The Miramont application includes several letters of support from specialists and patients.

A surgeon wrote, “I feel that patients are very fortunate that Miramont Family Medicine has such a wide range of care at one facility, not only their physician but also X-ray, physical therapy, massage therapy, psychological services, pharmaceutical services, lab services and a pain management physician.”

A patient wrote, “The multiple physicians and virtually all of the staff know us and are knowledgeable about our conditions. The atmosphere is similar to being a regular visitor to a particular restaurant or store where everybody knows your name and cares about you. ... In short, we have learned that we are just a few of the extremely lucky patients to have this kind of medical care.”

Another Patient wrote, “On countless occasions they went above and beyond to accommodate our schedules, individual needs, endless questions and insecurities. ... The most important thing to me, ALL of them ALWAYS listen, and they do so as if my questions and concerns are their highest priority.”

Runners-Up

Runners-up for the 2011 PCMH Best Practice of the Year are Clinica Family Health Services, which provides services to the poor at four metro Denver locations, Clinix Health Services in Centennial and Westminster Medical Clinic, which was the 2010 PCMH Best Practice of the Year.

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to naturopathic doctors only. CAFP is not supporting this bill because of the potential harm to consumers and because it would allow a scope of practice for naturopaths that exceeds their training. Many efforts were made to negotiate a bill that the medical community and the naturopaths could agree to, but an accord could not be met. The bill was postponed indefinitely after a thorough committee hearing.

Finally, one of the highest priority bills for the academy this year is House Bill 1245, “Concerning Payment Reforms for the Creation of Patient-Centered Medical Homes for Adults.” This bill is crucial for the academy because the main focus is around the definition of the Patient Centered Medical Home. The bill also outlines the payment structure for PCMHs, to be implemented no later than Jan. 1, 2014. Many stakeholders are interested in the passage of a PCMH

definition, resulting in a lot of controversy. The academy has had a large role in shaping the definition and will play a very active role throughout the entirety of the bill’s span in the Legislature. This bill was also postponed indefinitely, but the planning has already begun to resurrect the issue next session.

The CAFP is closely monitoring many other issues, which can be referenced on the academy’s web site.