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## Are Your Clinical Services Really Accessible?

by David Ellsworth, MPH, Ohio Department of Health, OSU Nisonger Center

One in five people living in Ohio identifies with having some form of disability, and there are over 1.5 million Ohioans with disability currently living in the community setting. People with disabilities need to access Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMH) for the same reason anyone does—to be healthy, active, and enjoy a high quality of life. However, people with disabilities have lower rates of primary screening and are more likely to have poor health outcomes compared to those without disabilities. Specifically, working age adults with disabilities are three times more likely to report heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

These types of chronic conditions are largely preventable by PCMH strategies; however, people with disabilities are much more likely to encounter physical barriers to accessing primary care compared to those without a disability. These barriers can represent an enormous source of frustration, anxiety, and embarrassment for people with disabilities, decreasing patient satisfaction and increasing their likelihood of experiencing adverse health outcomes that could have otherwise been prevented or treated effectively. Thus, a primary objective of *Healthy People 2020* is to “reduce the proportion of people with disabilities who report delays in receiving care due to specific barriers.”



**The Ohio Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (OPCPCC)** is a coalition of primary care providers, health professionals from the medical neighborhood, insurers, employers, consumer advocates, government officials and public health professionals. They are joining together to create a more effective and efficient model of healthcare delivery in Ohio. That model of care is the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH).

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The role of the physical environment in the healthcare setting is a critical and often overlooked component of the patient centered medical home. A recent survey found that patients perceived their primary care environment as an important factor of their health and recovery, and environments that were supportive of accessible movement and functioning were the most conducive to their wellbeing. One of the major challenges that public health officials and practitioners face is ensuring that hospitals and primary care facilities meet or exceed the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure equitable access to health care. However, a

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# Health Professions Workforce Programs Open for Applications

by Coleen Schwartz, MHA, Primary Care Administrator, Ohio Department of Health

The Ohio State 30 J-1 Visa Waiver Program application cycle is open for sponsors interested in recruiting physicians for placement in 2016. Foreign physicians who receive J-1 visa waivers serve three years in an approved site in lieu of returning to their home country upon completion of post-graduate training in the United States. Applications for primary care placements in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) and Medically Underserved Areas on the 2016 list will be accepted until June 30. All other applications must be postmarked by March 31.

[https://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/chss/pcrh\\_programs/recruitment/jvisa](https://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/chss/pcrh_programs/recruitment/jvisa)

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program is also accepting applications for 2016. This program is open to primary care medical, dental and mental/behavioral health clinicians who work at approved NHSC sites in HPSAs. Selected participants may receive up to \$50,000 to repay their health professions loans in exchange for a two-year service commitment.

Applications will be accepted until April 5. <https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment/loanrepaymentprogram.html>

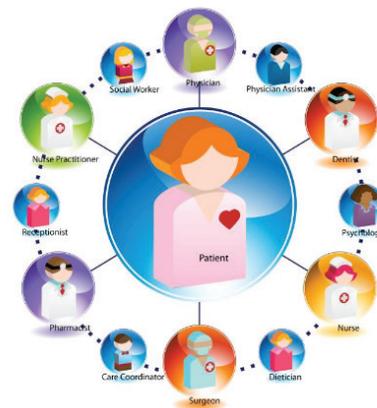
To become an NHSC-approved site, look for the NHSC site application cycle, which is expected to open in April. Sites must be located in HPSAs and provide primary care medical, dental or mental/behavioral health services regardless of a patient's ability to pay. <http://www.nhsc.hrsa.gov/sites/>

For more information on NHSC programs in Ohio, contact Shane Ford, Recruitment/Retention Coordinator in the Ohio Department of Health Primary Care Office at (614) 466-7475 or [shane.ford@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:shane.ford@odh.ohio.gov).

## OPCPCC Learning Centers UPDATE

The Patient Engagement Learning Center continues to improve and update the [PCMH Patient Engagement Toolbox](#). The Patient Engagement Learning Center held their fifth quarterly webinar, "Improving Access through Cultural and Linguistic Competency" on Feb. 23.

The OPCPCC Workforce Learning Center (formerly PCMH Education Advisory Group) will meet on March 30 to discuss changes to the Choose Ohio First primary care scholarships and an interprofessional learning event to be held on June 3.



The image represents you at the center of your health care team.

Your support team is dependent on the care that you need to lead a healthy and productive life.

The [PPCMH consumer website](#), developed by a subcommittee with members from the Communication and Education and the Patient Engagement Learning Centers, was accepted by the Society of Public Health Education for a poster presentation for its annual conference in March. The Ohio Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (OPCPCC) Communications and Education Learning Center has developed a [flyer](#) for the promotion of the [PCMH consumer website](#).

If you are interested in participating in an OPCPCC Learning Center, please contact OPCPCC at (614) 644-9756 or [PCMH@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:PCMH@odh.ohio.gov).



## OPCPCC Membership

The Ohio Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (OPCPCC) invites you to become a member of OPCPCC and join us in spreading PCMH throughout Ohio. Check out the [OPCPCC website](#) to see the strong list of supporters. **Membership in OPCPCC is free** and benefits include:

- Conferences and networking opportunities
- Quarterly Newsletters
- Ohio PCMH Weekly updates
- Discount code for 20 percent discount on NCQA application fees

Please complete the [on-line membership form](#), to ensure that you will receive updates about OPCPCC and PCMH activities in Ohio. Please call (614) 644-9756 with any questions regarding membership in OPCPCC.

## NCQA Discount for OPCPCC Members

As part of the purchase of monthly data feed subscription through the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has a sponsor discount code for NCQA fees. Members of the Ohio Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (OPCPCC) can use this discount code to receive a 20 percent discount on NCQA application fees. The code can be used by OPCPCC members who are not already eligible for other discounts, such as the 50 percent NCQA multi-site discount given to practices that have three or more sites that share the same EMR. To use the ODH sponsor discount code, please first complete the free on-line OPCPCC membership form and then call Amy Bashforth at (614)644-9756 to receive the code.

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recent study determined that facility administrators greatly overestimated the degree to which their facilities were in compliance with these standards; effectively cutting off access to those who need PCMH services the most.

The good news is the Ohio Disability and Health Program (ODHP) is working to help solve this problem in Ohio. ODHP is currently offering free and confidential accessibility assessments to provide federally qualified health centers and other health care facilities with tailored strategies to improve the accessibility of PCMH services. The assessments generally take two hours to complete and do not interfere with the day-to-day activities of the clinic. ODHP team members assess aspects of the clinical setting from the patient perspective, and provide feedback on the accessibility of the facility's parking lot, entrance, and access to clinical services, free of charge. The team generates a tailored improvement strategy report for each facility that can be used as a tool to make the space more accessible.

If you are interested in having one of these assessments done at your facility, ODHP is happy to help! Please contact David Ellsworth at 614-644-9848, or [David.Ellsworth@osumc.edu](mailto:David.Ellsworth@osumc.edu) to obtain more information and to schedule your appointment.

## Announcements and Upcoming Events

### OPCPCC Activities and Events

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Tue., March 8 at 2:00 p.m.   | OPCPCC Coordinating Council strategic planning meeting |
| Tue., March 22 at 11:00 a.m. | Patient Engagement Learning Center conference call     |
| Wed., March 30 at 10:00 a.m. | Workforce Learning Center meeting                      |
| Tue., April 26 at 11:00 a.m. | Patient Engagement Learning Center conference call     |
| Tue., May 24 at 12:15 p.m.   | Patient Engagement webinar                             |

If you have ideas or would like to contribute an article for an upcoming newsletter, please send your ideas to [PCMH@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:PCMH@odh.ohio.gov) or call Amy Bashforth at (614) 644-9756.

