

NEWS RELEASE



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United Health Foundation Grant to the American Academy of Family Physicians to Help Doctors Improve Care Delivery Through Patient-Centered Medical Homes

Foundation's support is part of its ongoing commitment to assist medical societies in improving the quality of patient care

MINNEAPOLIS – April 29, 2008 – The United Health Foundation today announced a \$64,000 educational grant to the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to help primary care physician practices meet the quality and clinical care standards consistent with recognition as Primary Care Medical Homes.

The medical home concept is a model for improving care provided by physician practices to their patients. A Primary Care Medical Home strengthens the physician-patient relationship by replacing illness-based episodic care with coordinated care that emphasizes long-term healing as well as preventive care services that help patients live healthier lives. The AAFP and other medical specialty societies have defined the medical home as a model of care where each patient has an ongoing relationship with a personal physician who, in turn, leads a team that takes collective responsibility for each patient's care.

Bruce Bagley, M.D., medical director of quality improvement at the AAFP said, "The patient-centered medical home can transform how primary care is organized and financed to provide better outcomes to patients, more appropriate payment to physicians, and better value, accountability and transparency to purchasers and consumers. Thanks to this grant, the AAFP will be able to support more family physicians as they transform their practices in alignment with recognition as a true medical home for their patients."

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The AAFP intends to use the funds to assist family physician practices in obtaining initial recognition as Medical Homes. This is the first step in the AAFP's longer term goal of helping family physician practices obtain the third and highest level of recognition, based on measures set by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Reed Tuckson, M.D., a director of the United Health Foundation board and executive vice president and chief of medical affairs for UnitedHealth Group said, "This grant continues a tradition of United Health Foundation support for medical specialty societies in advancing innovations that lead to better quality care and best possible patient outcomes. We are confident that the AAFP will be successful in supporting our nation's family physicians in implementing this important new care delivery model that will significantly benefit patients."

Dawn Bazarko, RN, MPH, and senior vice president, clinical innovation, UnitedHealthcare said, "Evidence clearly suggests that sufficient access to high-quality primary care results in improved quality and safety and lower overall health care costs, particularly around use of high-cost services such as specialty care services, emergency room and inpatient care. Patients [in the Patient-Centered Medical Home Model of care delivery] experience a better coordinated and simplified health care experience, enjoy higher levels of satisfaction with the health care system and report an increased sense of empowerment and well being."

The grant announced today is part of the Foundation's ongoing commitment in advancing the medical home concept. For example, the Foundation recently announced an educational grant to the American College of Physicians (ACP) to develop a new Practice Improvement Workbook to help internists and their staffs more consistently provide the preventive services and chronic care that are at the heart of the Patient-Centered Medical Home Model of care delivery. These grants are part of the Foundation's Advancing Clinical Excellence (ACE) program that will provide \$500,000 in support to medical specialty societies for the purpose of assisting them in fulfilling their clinical quality improvement missions. Under the Foundation's ACE program, grants were previously issued to the American Society of Transplant Surgeons and the Council of Medical Specialty Societies. Since 2000, the United Health Foundation has invested \$42 million to help physicians and other health professionals advance clinical excellence, and the Foundation annually distributes *Clinical Evidence*, the prestigious British Medical Journal Publishing's guide to what works in clinical care to over 500,000 physicians.

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About the American Academy of Family Physicians

Founded in 1947, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) represents more than 93,000 physicians and medical students nationwide. It is the only medical society devoted solely to primary care. Nearly one in four of all office visits are made to general and family physicians. That is 207 million office visits each year - 62 million more than to any other medical specialty. Today, family physicians provide the majority of care for America's underserved and rural populations. In the increasingly fragmented world of health care where many medical specialties limit their practice to a particular organ, disease, age or sex, family physicians are dedicated to treating the whole person across the full spectrum of ages. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care. To learn more about the AAFP or about the specialty of family medicine, please visit <http://www.aafp.org>.

About United Health Foundation

The Foundation provides reliable information to support health and medical decisions that lead to better health outcomes and healthier communities. The Foundation also supports activities that expand access to quality health care for those in challenging circumstances and partners to improve the well being of communities. The Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit organization funded solely by UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH). For more information, visit www.unitedhealthfoundation.org.