



# Check your practice: Patient-centred care in the Patient's Medical Home

## Best Advice Guide: Quick Reference

Patient-centredness is a core value in family medicine. Patient-centredness requires ongoing, trusting relationships between the patient and his or her family physician, as well as with other health professionals who may assist in care.

Helping patients be active in consultations will change physician-directed dialogues into discussions that engage patients as active participants. Training physicians to enhance their awareness of the patient's perspective transforms the medical role from one that is authoritative to one that seeks to achieve therapeutic partnership, empathetic responsiveness, and collaboration.



### Consider the following steps for your practice...



**Patient engagement in care:** Physicians can support patient-centred care by engaging their patients in decision making; for example, when patients need to choose among different treatments and making sure they understand the potential consequences of each option.



**Shared decision making:** By involving patients in decisions about their own care, physicians can help them understand the importance of their values and preferences when deciding the best possible course of action now and in the future.



**Self-care:** Support for self-care has been shown to be most effective when the support is consistently available from all team members of a practice.



**Continuous quality improvement:** To strengthen a patient-centred approach, practices should consider evaluating the effectiveness on an ongoing basis as part of the commitment to continuous quality improvement.



**Teams:** The implementation of team-based care allows health professionals—such as peer physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants—to complement the care provided by the primary physicians, while still working within their scopes of practice.



**Technology, including electronic medical records (EMRs) and email:** Ongoing, planned interaction with patients by email, telephone, or other electronic means, can facilitate management of care, particularly for those with chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, and mental illness.



**Increased access to care:** Practices should implement a system that ensures appropriate, timely access to appointments for all patients.

For more information about implementing patient-centred care in the **Patient's Medical Home** and for details about resources available to you, refer to the Best Advice guide **Patient-Centred Care in a Patient's Medical Home**.