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## AHRQ's Primary Care Practice Facilitation Forum

# New & Noteworthy

### PCMH Resource Center

The primary care medical home, also referred to as the patient centered medical home (PCMH), advanced primary care, and the healthcare home, is a promising model for transforming the organization and delivery of primary care.

We provide implementers, decisionmakers, and researchers with access to evidence-based resources about the medical home and its potential to transform primary care and improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of U.S. health care.

Please visit us at <http://pcmh.ahrq.gov>.

*This electronic newsletter continues our efforts toward building a learning network for individuals with an interest in practice facilitation. We will use this listserv to share questions and answers submitted by learning forum members, as well as resources, research articles, and events of interest to the community.*

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### Perspectives from the Field

This week **Cindy Brach, Senior Health Policy Researcher at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) Center for Delivery, Organization, and Markets**, talks with us about health literacy, safety net practices and practice facilitators.

#### How can practice facilitators encourage safety net practices and other primary care providers to communicate effectively with patients?

“As noted in Module 2 of *The Practice Facilitation Handbook: Training Modules for New Facilitators and Their Trainers*, safety net practices tend to disproportionately serve patients who have limited English proficiency and health literacy. Furthermore, any patient, from any walk in life, can have difficulty understanding medical information and navigating the health care system. Addressing health literacy benefits not only the 77 million Americans who have limited health literacy, but also the majority of Americans who have difficulty understanding and using currently available health information and health services. As a practice facilitator, you may want to recommend to **all** your practices that they adopt health literacy universal precautions.”

#### What do you mean by “universal precautions?”

“Employing health literacy universal precautions means treating everyone as if they are at risk of misunderstanding. It also entails making health information and the health care system less demanding. AHRQ's *Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit* is designed to help practices take a systematic approach to reducing the complexity of medical care and ensure that patients can succeed in the health care environment.”

#### How can practice facilitators help practices begin this work?

“You'll want to start by raising awareness about health literacy among the members of the practice's Quality Improvement Team. Try using the videos and group discussion guide in Tool 3 of the toolkit. You can help team members recognize that misunderstandings occur not only in clinical situations, such as when treatment options and medicine instructions are discussed, but also when receptionists ask for a signature on a form and billing staff discuss covered services and financial responsibilities.

Next, try using Tool 2's health literacy self-assessment to identify targets for improvement. The assessment tool will guide you to other tools in the toolkit that can help you work on your improvement targets. You may find synergies between health literacy improvement and other improvement initiatives, such as becoming a patient-centered medical home.”

#### What is next for the Toolkit?

“AHRQ is completing a demonstration of the Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit with a dozen practices around the country. A revised version of the toolkit, along with a Technical Assistance Guide for facilitators using the toolkit with practices, will be published in the winter of 2015.”

#### Are there other resources for practice facilitators?

“Another useful resource that practice facilitators can use to help primary care practices be more health literate is [The Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool \(PEMAT\)](#). The PEMAT is a systematic method to evaluate and compare the understandability and actionability of patient education materials. The PEMAT can help your practices compare and select education materials that their patients can understand and act on.

You can use the PEMAT with print or audio-visual materials. Materials that score better on the PEMAT can be distributed to patients in hard copy, placed in an electronic health record (EHR) system for providers to access at the point of care, or posted on patient Web portals.”

### Are there resources that can help organizational leaders understand the importance of health literacy?

“Health literate health care organizations make it easier for people to navigate, understand, and use information and services to take care of their health. A discussion paper by members of the Institute of Medicine’s Roundtable on Health Literacy describes 10 attributes of health literate health care organizations. Each attribute includes a brief elaboration of the meaning of and basis for the attribute. This is followed by a set of implementation strategies that can be used to achieve the attribute. The paper attempts to provide an aspirational vision and guide health care organizations on their journey to becoming health literate. To learn more, see [Ten Attributes of Health Literate Health Care Organizations](#).”

(Ms. Brach co-authored AHRQ’s [Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit](#), [The Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool \(PEMAT\)](#), and [Ten Attributes of Health Literate Health Care Organizations](#).)

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### What Do You Think?

Ms. Brach has suggested a few toolkits for improving how primary care practices communicate with patients. ***Do you have tools and resources that you think are helpful for primary care practices?***

*Please join the discussion by sending your thoughts to us at [PracticeFacilitation@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:PracticeFacilitation@mathematica-mpr.com). We look forward to receiving your responses and sharing them in the next newsletter.*

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### Upcoming Event

#### *Teleconference on Tool to Assess and Improve Teamwork Among Physicians and Other Health Professionals*

**Save the Date! April 9, 2014; 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM ET**

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) will host a 1-hour Web conference on the use of the Agency’s teamwork training program, TeamSTEPPS®, and a teamwork effectiveness assessment tool developed by the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM). **Benjamin J. Chesluk, Ph.D., Clinical Research Associate with ABIM**, will discuss how to:

- Distinguish differences between organizational and individual views of teamwork.
- Understand ABIM’s strategy for developing and implementing an assessment of individual physicians’ competency in multidisciplinary teamwork.
- Understand the strengths and limitations of multi-source feedback for assessing physicians’ teamwork competency.
- Integrate training an assessment of for physician competency in teamwork with other teamwork assessment and learning activities such as TeamSTEPPS.

To register, please [click here](#).

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### New Opportunity

#### *Technical Assistance Conference Calls on New FOAs for Implementing PCOR in Primary Care Practices*

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has issued two funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) aimed at increasing the use of patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) in primary care practices. On April 24, 2014, technical assistance and information conference calls will be held to provide potential applicants with background information and respond to questions about the preparation of an application.

- The [first FOA](#) will fund up to 8 regional cooperatives to assist primary care practices build capacity for the implementation of PCOR findings in clinical care. Initial efforts will support the

use of PCOR findings to improve heart health. Click [here](#) for more information on this FOA. **Technical assistance conference call: April 24, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern time.**

- The [second companion FOA](#) solicits a robust, external evaluation of the same initiative designed to discover if and how practice support can best be used to disseminate and implement PCOR findings in primary care practice. Click [here](#) for more information on this FOA. **Technical assistance conference call: April 24, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. Eastern time.**
- To register to participate in either or both of the conference calls, please send an e-mail request to [Phillip.Jordan@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:Phillip.Jordan@ahrq.hhs.gov) by April 21, 2014. Participants are encouraged to submit up to five questions via e-mail with their name and the name of their institution to Phillip Jordan by April 21, 2014. When submitting questions, for the first FOA, please include the phrase "DISSEMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS" in the subject line and for the second FOA, please include the phrase "EVALUATION QUESTIONS" in the subject line. Notes from the conference call will be posted on the AHRQ web site.

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## Managing Your Account

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