

AltaMed Receives First-Ever Primary Care Medical Home Designation from The Joint Commission

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AltaMed Health Services recently became the first organization in the nation to earn the Gold Seal of Approval™ in compliance with The Joint Commission's standards for Primary Care Medical Home (PCMH).

While PCMH is a relatively new term in the health care industry, it

is a practice AltaMed has used for a long time.

Under the PCMH model, AltaMed primary care doctors work closely with an interdisciplinary team to support the patient and ensure comprehensive and coordinated care, treatment and services. This team works closely with patients to develop a custom care plan based on a patient's individual needs. I'm personally proud of this designation as it recognizes the efforts our team has made to continuously improve the personal and coordinated care that we provide for our patients. PCMH creates an environment that allows us to work as a team and treat the whole patient—it's the core of our organization and an accreditation we're extremely proud to have.

For patients with chronic conditions, this model of care is exceptionally valuable. Now they have assistance in scheduling referral appointments, getting access to medication and medical equipment or coordinating with other community

resources that will improve their overall health. We've seen significant recovery in many patients who have numerous conditions. This is the way physicians have always wanted to care for patients, they just didn't have the resources to do so.

To earn this Joint Commission designation, AltaMed underwent a rigorous unannounced on-site survey the week of July 11, 2011. A team of Joint Commission expert surveyors evaluated AltaMed staff for compliance with the standards of care that exemplify PCMH. "Organizations that pursue the PCMH option from The Joint Commission are demonstrating the highest commitment to delivering primary care in a comprehensive, coordinated and accessible model," says Michael Kulczycki, executive director, Ambulatory Care Accreditation Program, The Joint Commission. "I commend AltaMed for successfully achieving this pinnacle, the first using the accreditation option from The Joint Commission, and for its dedication to continually improving patient care."

"This Joint Commission designation recognizes the hard work AltaMed employees engage in every day as they put our patients at the center of our organization. Following these practices also gives us a framework to take our organization to the next level and helps create a culture of excellence," says Cástulo de la Rocha, President and CEO.

The PCMH designation is a new Joint Commission option for accredited ambulatory care organizations, enacted July 1, 2011. AltaMed is the first organization to receive this Joint Commission designation.

AltaMed's patients always come first and our medical model is designed to deliver patient-centered care through an integrated delivery system for the whole family. Our patients are more than just users of services; they are part of AltaMed's governance structure. More than fifty-one percent of our Board of Directors is made up of current AltaMed patients.

Our organization provides services for the entire family with primary

medical care, dental clinics and complete senior long-term care services, including Adult Day Health Care Center (ADHC) services, senior case management, and the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). AltaMed also delivers disease management programs, health education, youth services, specialty HIV/AIDS care and substance abuse treatment.

AltaMed believes in patient-focused care delivered through a caring team of culturally competent health care professionals. Our integrated system emphasizes prevention and healthy living and is designed to reduce health care disparities and avoid unnecessary trips to emergency rooms or other more costly forms of care.

AltaMed is Southern California's leading nonprofit health care system delivering integrated primary care services, senior care programs, and health and human services for the entire family for more than four decades. AltaMed's team of multi-cultural and bilingual physicians and health care professionals de-

liver superior quality care through an integrated delivery system of 43 sites and an affiliated Independent Practice Association (IPA) of contracted physicians in Los Angeles and Orange Counties serving more than 855,000 patients each year. For more information visit altamed.org or call 1-877-462-2582.

Dr. Serota has a long history of building and managing sizeable primary group practices with a surrounding IPA network and achieving distinctive market presence. He is committed to quality clinical practice and has implemented leading-edge, metrics-based quality programs. He also has experience with medical home model of care, with disease management programs, and with leveraging data for improved clinical outcomes and enhanced enterprise-wide decision making. Dr. Serota received his MD from the University of California, San Francisco, is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and is a Diplomat of the National Board of Medical Examiners.

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