



WASHINGTON ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Studies show that access to primary care through family physicians contributes to:

- Improved health outcomes
- Lower mortality rates
- Reduced ER visits
- Decreased rates of preventable hospital admissions
- Less invasive, lower cost care
- No differences in quality of care when compared to sub specialist care
- Higher patient Satisfaction

What is Family Medicine?

- Family Medicine provides the patient a medical home with comprehensive, compassionate, and personal health care.
- Family Medicine is a medical specialty solidly grounded in science and technology; family physicians provide scientific, evidence-based, patient-centered care.
- New family physicians must complete at least three years of training after medical school in an accredited family medicine residency.
- After residency, the family physician must pass a comprehensive exam to become Board Certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.
- In order to maintain Board Certification, family physicians must complete at least 150 hours of continuing medical education every three years, and continue to pass a certification exam every seven years and are tested annually on two concentrated medical topics. Family physicians are career-long learners continuously updating themselves on advances and developments in medicine.

What do Family Physicians do?

- Family physicians provide patients with a personal medical home – building relationships with patients, listening, taking time to explain and effectively coordinating overall care.
- Family physicians are the primary providers of care for Medicare and Medicaid patients. Of people 65 years and older who reported an individual provider as their usual source of health care, 60 percent identified a family physician or general practitioner as their provider. 76.9% of family physicians in the United States still treat Medicaid patients.
- Family physicians provide care for people of both genders and all ages.
- Family physicians help patients navigate the health care system by humanizing medicine.
- Family physicians make a difference in the lives of patients, their families and the community.
- Family physicians emphasize disease prevention and health maintenance in addition to treating illness.

Why is Family Medicine Important?

Washington needs a healthy, productive workforce. Family physicians provide high quality, cost effective care through the patient-centered medical home. Unfortunately, the U.S. lags behind other countries in its focus on primary care. Countries with primary care-based health systems (the kind of care provided by family physicians) have population health outcomes better than those of the U.S. often at lower cost.

Washington Academy of Family Physicians

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