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### **We all Need a Medical Home**

As a physician who's spent many years practicing both in an emergency room and at a family medicine clinic, I have realized that many patients receive costly and less effective care than they should. Our health care system often delivers fragmented care because Dr. Peter does not know what Dr. Paul has done for Mrs. Smith. And Mrs. Smith herself is unsure. This can lead to unnecessary, repeated exams and testing that are wasting money and other resources.

The fact is some patients see multiple doctors for multiple conditions and their care is not coordinated. The evidence shows that patients with a "medical home" receive more efficient and higher quality care. A North Carolina pilot Medicaid project has saved millions of dollars while improving quality and patient satisfaction. Minnesota has just passed legislation focused on the concept of a "medical home."

The [Patient Centered Medical Home](#) is a care concept sponsored by the American Academy of Family Physicians and other national groups of doctors. The central concept is for all patients to have a primary care physician.

An example of cost savings is demonstrated by comparing the cost per Medicare patient in Florida versus Wisconsin. Wisconsin is ranked second in the nation for quality of care yet spends one-third to one-half as much per recipient as Florida. This can be explained mostly because Wisconsin has a much stronger primary care network and Florida has more of a specialty focus.

By investing in the Patient Centered Medical Home, Wisconsin could save millions of dollars while improving quality and satisfaction. The Wisconsin Legislature needs to pass enabling laws to promote the Patient Centered Medical Home, and I going to do my best to make sure this happens.

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