

THE STATE OF PRIMARY CARE IN ILLINOIS

MAKING HEALTH PRIMARY



States like Illinois are already seeing progress with...deliver[ing] primary and preventative care for children and adults...This emphasis on coordinated and ongoing care is leading to better health outcomes and it is saving money. Cost savings is not the only benefit...early analyses are finding that having regular access to a particular physician through the medical home is associated with earlier and more accurate diagnoses, fewer emergency room visits, fewer hospitalizations, lower costs and better care.¹



- Senator Richard Durbin

STRENGTHENING PRIMARY CARE: A ROAD MAP FOR A HEALTHY ILLINOIS

Illinois is focused on transforming the health of every citizen by increasing access and creating partnerships between doctors and patients to make health primary.²

In 2013, Illinois was one of 16 states to receive a state health care innovation plan award to focus on achieving the Triple Aim of better health, better care, at a lower cost for all Illinoisans.³ Over the past two years, Illinois has engaged over 1,300 stakeholders and worked to develop recommendations around five major transformation drivers of improved health care, including strengthening the primary care physician workforce, a greater focus on prevention and wellness, and advancing the use of technology to better connect primary care doctors and patients.⁴

TRAINING PRIMARY CARE IN ILLINOIS

Illinois has eight medical schools, but in 2013, only nine percent of the nearly 1,100 medical school graduates chose to practice in family medicine and in the end, only 35 family doctors will do their residency training in Illinois.⁵

However, colleges of medicine across the state have been working to change the focus—and the ultimate destination—of Illinois' medical students. In fact, this year, two medical

TEACHING HEALTH CENTERS DRIVE PRIMARY CARE PIPELINE

Chicago is home to Northwestern McGaw Family Medicine Residency at Erie Family Health Center, a pilot Teaching Health Center. Almost all (91%) of teaching health center graduates nationwide remain in primary care practice compared to less than one-quarter (23%) of traditional graduate medical education graduates. About three times as many teaching health center graduates (76%) choose to practice in underserved communities, compared to 26 percent of traditional graduates.

schools—Southern Illinois University and University of Illinois College of Medicine in Rockford—saw 45 and 66 percent of their graduates choose primary care.

Meeting the primary care need in Illinois means increasing graduates in Illinois. A majority of family medicine graduates practice where they trained. Data from the Association of American Medical Colleges show that 63 percent of family medicine residents nationwide stayed in their training state, which is the highest of all specialties. The rates are even higher for family physicians that specialize in hospice and palliative care. From 2000-2006, 64 percent of Illinois family medicine residency graduates stayed in the state to practice, up 10 points from the 1990s (54.8%).

There is still more work to do—there remain Illinois counties that have no full time doctors and nearly one in four state residents live in a primary care shortage area.⁶ Family medicine is working in the state and around the country to address student barriers to primary care careers and ensure a strong primary care workforce.

PRIMARY CARE: THE NEED IN ILLINOIS

According to the Robert Graham Center, there are currently 8,832 primary care physicians in Illinois—lower than the national average per capita.⁷ In fact, approximately 25 and 29 percent of Illinoisans live in a primary care shortage area.⁸ When considering the state's aging seniors, growing population, and the number of newly insured individuals, Illinois will need an additional 1,063 new primary care physicians—or 12 percent of the current workforce—by 2030 just to maintain the status quo.⁹

FAMILY MEDICINE IN ILLINOIS

Family physicians in practice mirror the demographics of our patients.

- We provide access across the state and in many underserved communities.
- We care for Medicaid and Medicare patients.
- We diagnose and treat 80 percent of conditions presented in the practice, and work with other providers and hospitals when more care is needed to ensure the right care in the right place.

¹ Congressional Record, Senate—Vol. 155, Pt. 10, Page 13008, May 20, 2009 <https://books.google.com/books?id=ktPoYuXlY6wC&pg=RA1-PR119&lpg=RA1-PR119&dq=M any+studies+conclude+that+having+both+health+insurance+and+a+medical+home+leads+to+improved+overall+health+for+the+entire+population.&source=bl&ots=SDGjt ky1Km&sig=ZWJbP3tMd-UqydBMJAtdESeTlvA&hl=en&sa=X&ei=dW4IvcHALsSMsAXNt4HgAw&ved=OCB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Many%20studies%20conclude%20that%20having%20both%20health%20insurance%20and%20a%20medical%20home%20leads%20to%20improved%20overall%20health%20for%20the%20entire%20population%2C&f=false>

² <http://www2.illinois.gov/gov/healthcarereform/documents/alliance/illinois%20state%20health%20care%20innovation%20plan%20as%20of%2010%2030%2013.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20130418/ISSUE07/130419798/will-illinois-have-enough-family-physicians-beyond-2014>

⁶ <http://www.newsmax.com/US/Shortage-of-Primary-Care-Physicians-Exacerbated-Under-Obamacare/2013/06/22/id/511355/> and <http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-physician-relationships/15-things-to-know-about-the-physician-shortage.html>

⁷ <http://www.graham-center.org/content/dam/rgc/documents/maps-data-tools/state-collections/workforce-projections/illinois.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-physician-relationships/15-things-to-know-about-the-physician-shortage.html>

⁹ <http://www.graham-center.org/content/dam/rgc/documents/maps-data-tools/state-collections/workforce-projections/illinois.pdf>