

# Medical homes contributing to decreasing cost of care

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(HealthDay)—The patient-centered medical home (PCMH) model of

care seems to be contributing to decreases in costs and improvement in patient care, according to a report from the American Academy of Family Physicians.

The Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative's annual report notes that steady progress has been made on reducing costs and the volume of expensive procedures. Twenty-one of 23 studies that measured change in cost reported reductions in one or more categories, while 23 of 25 studies that assessed hospital utilization rates reported reductions in one or more categories. However, although more than half of physician office visits each year are for primary care, it received only 4 to 7 percent of the \$2.9 trillion spent by Americans on [health care](#) in 2013.

Considerable cost savings are feasible with successful transformation; the University of California, Los Angeles, Health System showed a 20 percent decrease in emergency visits and \$1 million reduction in the total cost of care for the PCMH model versus control practices. Ninety-four percent of physicians in the system reported that the program was effective. However, the right incentives need to be accompanied by appropriate support for transformation efforts in order to make the PCMH model work.

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, Christopher Koller, president of the Milbank Memorial Fund and a former Rhode Island health insurance commissioner, said that "the chief medical officers (of insurers) know the value of primary care. But they cannot move first because of competitive advantage. We have to find ways to put [primary care](#) first."

**More information:** [More Information](#)  
[Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative](#)

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