

AAFP Board Takes Tough Stand on Retail Clinics

By AAFP

The AAFP calls on retail clinics and organizations that operate retail clinics to publicly endorse and implement a specific set of [business operation characteristics](#)(1 page PDF). These characteristics will help guide clinics' care management protocols, and interactions between clinics and the local primary care community, in order to reduce fragmentation in patient care services and ensure patients a seamless experience across the care delivery continuum.

These characteristics position the AAFP as a leader in creating and promoting a primary care delivery system that is patient-centric, team-based, and connected. AAFP leadership is actively reaching out to retail clinics and organizations that operate retail clinics that meet – or agree to meet – these characteristics for potential future collaboration opportunities.

Adoption of these characteristics by the retail clinic industry builds on the medical neighborhood concept by expanding points of entry to primary care services, while maintaining and promoting longitudinal relationships with primary care physicians. It creates an expectation that a community primary care network should exist in areas where retail clinics operate – driving connectivity and collaboration versus fragmentation.

Of course, retail clinics cannot replace a personal family physician who is familiar with a patient's medical and family history, coordinates care over a spectrum of conditions with other health care professionals, and can perform much more sophisticated testing and diagnosis and treatment techniques when appropriate.

As the initiative evolves, updates will be provided in *AAFP News*. Contact Shawn Martin by [email](#) or at ext. 2500 with questions.