

Retail Health Clinics

See also:

[Integrated Practice Arrangements](#)

[Non-Physician Providers \(NPPs\)](#)

[Patient Self-Referral](#)

Retail Health Clinics

AAFP does not endorse Retail Health Clinics (RHC), believes that they could interfere with the medical home and opposes expansion of their scope of service, in particular, to include the diagnosis, treatment and management of chronic medical conditions in this setting. The AAFP is committed to the development of a health care system based on high quality, cost effective, team-based and patient-centered primary care and on the tenants of first contact, comprehensive, coordinated and continuing care for all persons (i.e., a medical home). The AAFP believes that the RHC model of care is not a medical home and has the potential to further fragment patient care.

In those markets where RHC's exist, the AAFP has defined a set of attributes related to their design and operation that are important to the patient care offered in this setting. It is the individual physician's choice whether or not to sponsor or work cooperatively with a retail clinic, however the AAFP urges all retail clinics to abide by the following attributes

1. Scope of Service -- Retail clinics must have a well-defined and limited scope of clinical services.
2. Evidence-based Medicine -- Clinical services and treatment must be evidence based and quality improvement-oriented.
3. Team-based Approach -- The clinic should have a formal connection with physician practices in the local community, preferably with family physicians, to provide continuity of care. Non-physician health professionals practicing in this setting, such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants, should operate in accordance with state and local regulations, as part of a "team-based" approach to health care and under responsible supervision of a practicing, licensed physician.
4. Referrals -- The clinic must have a referral system to physician practices or to other entities appropriate to the patient's symptoms beyond the clinic's scope of services. The clinic should encourage all patients to have a "medical home."
5. Electronic Health Records (EHR) -- The clinic should include an EHR system sufficient to gather and communicate the patient's information with the family physician's office, preferably one that is compatible with the Continuity of Care Record supported by AAFP and others.

(2010)