



Rural Access to Medical Care

A “medical home” is a collaborative, culturally effective approach to providing comprehensive, high quality primary care. In a rural setting, barriers exist that may make it difficult to establish a good medical home, including limited access to providers due to location, transportation needs, or simply a shortage of providers. The unique health needs of rural families and agricultural workers require culturally effective care.

What is Primary Care, and How Do I Get It? Many health insurance plans, require you to choose a Primary Care Physician (PCP). This is your main doctor who provides non-emergency care, such as well visits or screenings, acute care when you have a minor illness or infection, or diagnosis/treatment for a health problem. Contact your health plan to find a PCP near you. For more information on using your health care plan, see [Insurance Basics](#) or [Using Your Medicaid](#).

What is Urgent Care? Urgent care centers treat illnesses or injuries that are not serious enough to warrant emergency room services but still require immediate medical attention. Urgent care centers are walk-in clinics that offer a much-needed healthcare access point for rural residents. Providers at these clinics can support your medical home by communicating with your PCP. Indiana has more than 250 walk-in clinics across the state. Click here for a list by [county](#).

Emergency Room Services: When you are facing a life-threatening emergency, dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Have a plan and know the fastest route to the emergency room, or request an ambulance.

What if I need mental and/or behavioral health services? Visit your PCP to discuss your condition. If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, call 911 or visit your nearest emergency room. For additional information, see the [Mental Health Fact Sheet](#).

What are Some Other Options for Medical Care?

[Community Health Centers](#) across Indiana provide medical care to individuals and families. Services are free to some patients, and there is a sliding scale for services based on income. Search by zip code or clickable map at [Indiana Primary Health Care Association](#), or call 317-630-0845 to find a clinic near you.

[Indiana Health Centers](#) are located throughout the state providing medical, dental, and behavioral health care to underserved and uninsured populations. Services are offered on a sliding fee scale to patients of all ages who might not otherwise be able to afford quality healthcare. Patients of these centers will receive access to health care regardless of their income, race, or background. The clinics are run in partnership with the Indiana Primary Health Care Association. While the resources available at each location vary, some offer free medical care, prescription assistance, vision care, wellness checks, flu shots, and basic check-ups. Many clinics provide specialty referral if needed. Click [here](#) for a list of clinics by county.

For more information, contact Family Voices Indiana.

1-844-343-4636

www.fvindiana.org



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[Free Clinics Indiana](#) is Indiana's largest online directory of free and affordable health clinics, featuring information for more than 140 health clinics across the state.

Can I get a Ride to my Doctor? Medicaid participants are eligible to receive transportation services to and from medical and dental appointments. Call the number on your card to find approved transportation in your area. If your child participates in Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS), transportation may be covered if certain criteria are met. Contact CSHCS for details. Rural Transit is available and offers accessible transportation in some areas of the state. Contact the Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-986-3505 for information.

Telemedicine Services: Telemedicine or "telehealth" services provide direct access to a doctor by means of technology (usually video conferencing). Patients can have an appointment with a doctor from the comfort and convenience of their home. Check your coverage benefits to determine whether telehealth services are covered, costs of these services, and to find available providers.

Resources for Rural Families

Optimizing Technology: Technological resources can be helpful tools for rural families. The internet, social media, and e-newsletters are valuable sources of information and support. When using the internet, it is important to determine if the source is reliable and up to date. The online tool [Trust It or Trash It](#) may help you verify the credibility of online information.

[Indiana Rural Health Association \(IRHA\)](#) provides resources and information about rural health clinics, school health clinics, critical access hospitals, and advocacy for rural families.

The [Rural Health Information Hub](#) is another resource for providers and patients, and it provides details about access points, statistics, maps, rural healthcare news, and more.

In Indiana, a person may dial **2-1-1** on their phone, text their zip code to 898211, or visit [211.org](#) to be connected to a local resource directory, which may provide information about food, shelter or housing, utilities, health care services, crisis and emergency management, and more.

For more information on supports and services, contact Family Voices Indiana at 1-844-323-4636 or www.fvindiana.org.

Programs and systems change often. It is important to ensure that you are using the most current information. This Fact Sheet was updated August 2017. Please check http://fvindiana.org/fact_sheets for the most recent edition. The creation of this fact sheet was supported in part by funding from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Indiana's Children's Special Health Care Services.