

## Role of Patients and Their Care Partners

### OVERVIEW

Today, 5% of patients account for nearly half of the nation's spending on health care. The needs of this patient population extend beyond care for their physical ailments to social and behavioral services which are often of central importance to their overall well-being.

Improving care management for this population while balancing quality and associated costs is at the forefront of national health care goals. This will require a unified effort from a variety of stakeholders including health systems, payers, policy makers, providers, researchers, patients, and caregivers.

Improving care for high-need patients is not only possible—it also contributes to a more sustainable health system.

#### What is the role of patients and their care partners?

The six items listed below are opportunities for action that patients and their care partners can take to improve and ensure high-quality care.



**\$25,668**

Median household income for high-need adults.

**\$52,685**

Median household income of the overall adult population.

**63%**

of high-need patients are female

**55%**

of high-need patients are age 65+

**72%**

of high-need patients are white

**52%**

of high-need patients' annual income is below 200% of the federal poverty level.

### WHAT PATIENTS AND THEIR CARE PARTNERS CAN DO

- ✓ Work with care coordinator or care coordination team to amplify self-advocacy efforts and fully utilize care models.
- ✓ Participate in active communication with providers regarding quality of care, needs, and services.
- ✓ Request formal recognition as part of the care team.
- ✓ Seek out formal training and education experiences to enhance care, understand complex medical situations, limit injuries and other errors, and identify problems earlier.
- ✓ Explore with your care team the potential benefits of home-based care, including improved financial, social, and psychological outcomes.
- ✓ Contribute to the development of quality measures to assist in better decision making around care and care delivery.

Although **93%** of high-need adults have a usual source of care, only **46%** of high-need adults reported that they had a usual source of care meeting the definition of a medical home in providing care that is comprehensive, accessible, and responsive to patients' needs. Medical homes can benefit all patients and may especially help high-need patients improve outcomes and reduce spending.

Examples of successful care models can be found at [nam.edu/HighNeeds](https://nam.edu/HighNeeds)