



For more information  
Michael J. Ryan  
(210) 877-7713  
mjryan@wellmed.net

Dan Calderón  
(210) 693-2744  
dcalderon@wellmed.net

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## Noted Primary Care Researcher Studying WellMed As 'Medical Home' Stalwart

AAFP's Graham Center Received \$250,000 Grant To Examine Best Practices

San Antonio, TX – WellMed Medical Group is the sole subject of a study by **The Robert Graham Center: Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care** examining the senior healthcare provider's best practices as a high-functioning medical home.

Dr. Robert Phillips, director of the Washington D.C.-based Graham Center, visited San Antonio this week for the first round of on-site visits at WellMed, which operates 21 clinics in the Greater San Antonio area, serving 1 in 5 Medicare-eligible seniors in this region.

The term medical home should not be confused with a nursing home. Medical home refers to a complete coordination of patient care involving a team of healthcare professionals under the direction of a primary care physician.

"There is good evidence that the clinics that incorporate the elements of the medical home save money and improve quality and improve satisfaction for patients and providers," Dr. Phillips said. "Because of the capitated arrangement WellMed has with Medicare, it has access to all the pertinent quality measures data, and it is using that data to design interventions. Not many practices have the capacity or the luxury to do that."

WellMed, which specializes in senior healthcare, provides many patients with no-cost medical transportation and underwrites prescription co-pays for several chronic diseases as tools to remove barriers to quality preventive healthcare. The result of these initiatives has been dramatically improved kept appointment rates and filled prescription rates. Patients at high risk for cardiovascular disease experienced improved cholesterol levels and fewer hospitalizations.

Dr. Phillips is Vice Chair of the U.S. Council on Graduate Medical Education, which advises Congress and the President on physician workforce policy. The Graham Center, which is the research policy arm of the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the Distributed Ambulatory Research Network (DARTNet) received a \$250,000 grant from the Federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to conduct the WellMed study.

*WellMed Medical Management is a diversified healthcare company and health plan provider serving more than 80,000 patients and health plan members, mostly Medicare-eligible seniors in Texas, Florida, Arkansas and New Mexico. WellMed is an industry leader in medical risk management, highly effective disease management and chronic care programs, healthcare delivery services, and more.*

*WellMed is South Texas' largest physician-owned practice management company, specializing in senior health care since 1990. With 30 medical clinics in Texas and Florida, the vision of the healthcare company and insurance provider is to change the face of healthcare delivery for seniors.*

WellMed Medical Management  
WellMed Medical Group  
8637 Fredericksburg Road, Ste. 360  
San Antonio, TX 78240

Ph: (210) 615-0805  
Fax: (210) 694-0290  
E-mail: [marketing@wellmed.net](mailto:marketing@wellmed.net)  
Website: [www.wellmedmedicalgroup.com](http://www.wellmedmedicalgroup.com)