

# A New Kind of Home for Family Doctors

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SWAMPSCOTT — When Maxine and Martin Goldman of Swampscott, both in their eighties, took a strength and balance class on a recent Saturday morning, they brought their sneakers, not to the local fitness center, but to a newly-designed multi-use exercise room at Family Doctors LLC in Swampscott. The ability to offer such a trainer-led class on site is just one element of Family Doctors' commitment as a patient-centered medical home.

A new concept in primary care medicine, the patient-centered medical home is a model of care that features integrated and coordinated comprehensive care with a focus on quality, safety and enhanced access.

"It is one-stop shopping for medical care," said Wendy Gilman, clinical manager for the practice, which serves people of all ages, from newborns to seniors, providing care for acute illnesses, chronic conditions and preventative services.

"The patient-centered medical home is the primary care model for the future," explained Dr. Peter Barker, Family Doctors' medical director. "For most people, the primary care practice is the point of access to the health care system. A majority of the health care services a person might need can be provided within the patient-centered medical home. For the services needed outside of the practice — mostly specialty and hospital care — the primary care provider serves as coordinator and advocate of the patients' care."

In addition to the usual array of primary care services such as walk-in and urgent care, and on site laboratory and radiology, Family Doctors offers many specialty services including mental health, gynecology, orthopedic surgery, physiatry and endocrinology.

According to Dr. Barker, the Family Doctors practice, a group of 10 board certified family medicine physicians and four nurse practitioners, has been recognized at the highest level of certification as a patient-centered medical home for the past four years and was one of the first medical practices to be so recognized in the Greater Boston area.

The challenge had been space. Prior to the addition, there was no patient education space and more limited opportunities for specialists. The addition — a new three-story building, connected to the old building by a narrow atrium with a skylight — provides 5,000 additional square feet of space, a 40% increase, that includes, in addition to the exercise area, a spacious conference room, several new examination rooms with natural light and a new lab.



Dr. Peter Barker works at a flow station.



Trainer Rick Aurelio (left) teaches strength and balance exercises to (l-r) Maxine Goldman, Neil Green and Martin Goldman.

"We were able to design the physical space to fit the style of practice," said Dr. Barker.

The new exam rooms are situated next to "flow stations," meeting spaces where providers and medical assistants (called flow managers) sit side by side to consult. Previously, nurses would sit at their own station, and doctors went to their offices.

In addition to the strength and balance class, the practice also offers gentle yoga for people with back pain in the new exercise space.

"It is a very pleasant surprise to find someone like [trainer] Rick Aurelio working out of a doctor's office because I don't know of anything like this around," said Maxine Goldman. "I think it is very forward looking to provide for the needs of patients in this way."

In January, the new conference room will do duty as a patient education room for group medical visits, when a four-month program begins to help patients suffering from various life-style related medical problems such as obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. The team-directed program will be led by physicians, nurse practitioners, and a certified nutritionist, and will focus on sustained wellness including nutrition, exercise, sleep, and stress management.

"The new space greatly enhances our ability to address problems head-on in a fun, social, and medically sound way," said Dr. Jeffrey Phillips. "We want to help our patients make long-term changes in their lifestyle and overall health."

*Family Doctors is located at 250 Paradise Road, Swampscott. Visit [myfamdocs.com](http://myfamdocs.com).*



Dr. Daniel Trutt, designed the atrium.