

HEALTH CARE INC.
NORTHWEST

Jun 26, 2013, 3:30pm PDT

Rest easy naturopaths, you've got your creds



Elizabeth Hayes

Staff reporter-
Portland Business Journal

[Email](#)

The Center for Natural Medicine in Portland can now serve Medicaid patients, thanks to a credential recently bestowed on it by the [Oregon Health Authority](#).

"It's big news in the alternative medicine industry," said Dr. [Martin Milner](#), the center's medical director.

The center, on Southeast Cesar Chavez Blvd., is the first naturopathic clinic in the U.S. to receive the credential as a Patient-Centered Primary Care Home.

The designation is significant because Oregon is pioneering the Patient-Centered Primary Care Home model for health care delivery in order to optimize wellness and decrease costs. It's a delivery model being carefully watched across the country as states try to reduce health care spending as part of the Affordable Care Act, which goes into effect in January.

Naturopathic medicine focuses on diet, exercise, stress management, mental health and natural medicine. Such doctors focus on preventive medicine, as well as managing advanced diseases.



The center is the only clinic in North America that offers naturopathic cardiology training and care in a clinical facility.

The center is the only clinic in North America that offers naturopathic cardiology training and care in a clinical facility.

Oregon delivers Medicaid through 15 Coordinated Care Organizations, including two in Portland, [Health Share of Oregon](#) and [FamilyCare Inc.](#) CCOs are networks of all types of health care providers, including physical and behavioral and are focused on prevention and helping people manage chronic conditions. About 200,000 more people will be added to the Medicaid rolls statewide in January, as the program expands.

The next step for the Center for Natural Medicine is to be credentialed by one or more CCOs. Milner said his center could help them alleviate the huge demand in primary care. [Before now, the CCOs were not covering naturopaths as primary care providers.](#)

"There aren't really enough primary care doctors to meet the demand," Milner said. "The stronger the infrastructure is, the less hospitalizations and the better the patient education. It helps the system save money and lives."

The Center for Natural Medicine is a naturopathic teaching clinic of the [National College of Natural Medicine](#).

Elizabeth Hayes covers health care for the Business Journal.