



Understanding Concierge Medicine

What is it? Is it right for you?

What is the PartnerMD approach?

partner 

So, what exactly is concierge medicine?

Concierge medicine is a relationship between a patient and a primary care physician in which the patient pays a fee, often referred to as a membership fee.

At its heart, concierge medicine is about building a personal relationship between physician and patient — a relationship that keeps the patient's specific wellness needs in mind along with their likes, dislikes, goals, and dreams.

The membership fee enables this personal relationship to form by allowing doctors to drastically shrink their panel size, usually from 2,300+ patients to somewhere between 400-600 patients.

In return, patients get a much more patient friendly primary care experience. Most concierge medical practices offer:

- **Longer appointments (at least 30 minutes)**
- **Same-day or next-day appointments**
- **Little to no waiting in lobbies**
- **24/7 access to care**

Concierge medicine goes by many other names, including retainer medicine, membership medicine, subscription-based medicine, and boutique medicine, among others. Hybrid models exist as well.

The most important thing to keep in mind as you evaluate different options is that not all concierge practices are the same. Terms, costs, and benefits vary widely.



What is typically included in a concierge medicine membership?

What's included in a concierge medicine membership varies from practice to practice. Generally, you'll see some form of these three features:

1. Enhanced access to a primary care physician.

Includes features like longer appointments, same-day or next-day acute care visits, little to no waiting in the office, and 24/7 access to care. This represents the most standard form of concierge medicine.

2. Advanced Physicals

In addition to primary care, some concierge medicine practices also offer an advanced physical. Advanced physicals go beyond what insurance typically covers and could last anywhere from 90 minutes to a full, 8-hour day.

3. Wellness

Compared to enhanced primary care and advanced physicals, wellness services are less frequent in concierge medicine. Wellness could mean a lot of things. It could be anything from a doctor who focuses on wellness as a concept to relationships with third-party wellness resources to onsite health coaches and dedicated wellness programs.

At PartnerMD, we've made wellness services and access to on-staff certified health coaches a standard part of our membership since our founding.



"PartnerMD allows me to take a more integrative approach to patient care. More time with the patient means we can focus on diet, exercise, and gut health. A 15-minute appointment just doesn't allow for deep conversation into the "Hows & Whys" of a recommended treatment, let alone to follow up, see what's working, and make adjustments."

—Dr. Rob Norris, PartnerMD Sandy Springs

What are the **pros** and **cons** of concierge medicine?

THE PROS

- ✓ A relationship with a doctor who truly knows you and your goals.
- ✓ Peace of mind from knowing you'll get the care you need, when you need it.
- ✓ Convenience from handling the simple matters the way you prefer, whether that's over the phone, via telehealth, or electronically.
- ✓ A quarterback for your care, streamlining conversations among your various doctors and specialists. Oh, and handling scheduling for your specialist appointments, too.

THE CONS

- ✗ Membership fees can be prohibitive for some. No way around that. Not a solution for all out-of-pocket costs.
- ✗ While concierge medicine is gaining popularity, there's still a chance, depending on where you live
- ✗ Most concierge practices accept many major insurance plans (for treatment, not the medicine fee). However, some practices accept fewer carriers than a traditional practice, and many practices do not take Medicare, Medicaid, or TRICARE.
- ✗ Expect to have the same out-of-pocket expenses for specialist consultations, prescriptions, and hospital visits that you would expect with a traditional primary care doctor.



"PartnerMD's practice model gives physicians more time with their patients. This is so important to me because I went into family practice so I could treat my patients like family. And I never rush family."

— Dr. Mark Petrizzi, PartnerMD Short Pump

What is the cost of concierge medicine?

Since its launch in 1996, the cost of concierge medicine has come down significantly.

Yes, you will continue to hear about the outlier, like the so-called “elite” practice that costs \$20,000 or more a year, but we tend to call that VIP medicine or luxury medicine. Most concierge practices cost considerably less.

As a leading concierge medicine practice, our research has shown that annual fees for concierge medicine membership now tend to fall between \$2,000 and \$10,000 per year.

At PartnerMD, our fees definitely fall in this range.

We transparently provide our costs through the cost calculator available on our website at:

<https://www.partnermd.com/concierge-medicine-cost>



How does insurance work with concierge medicine?

Most concierge practices work with health insurance the same way a traditional practice would. Here are a few things to know about insurance and concierge medicine:

- Your membership fee does not replace your health insurance.
- Your health insurance will be billed for medical care, including office visits, lab work, and tests.
- You are responsible for co pays/deductibles, but your health insurance will cover the costs of approved services/procedures, just as it would if you were seeing a traditional PCP.

Some concierge practices accept fewer carriers than a traditional practice, and some may not accept Medicare or TRICARE.

If you're exploring a concierge medicine practice that does not accept insurance at all, it might be better described as direct primary care. Be sure to double-check that a concierge office works with your specific carrier. See if they take government plans, like Medicare, Medicaid, or TRICARE, that you might use now or in the future.

What's the difference between traditional primary care and concierge medicine?

Before we go any further, you're probably wondering...ok, so what's the difference from the traditional primary care that we all grew up with? And it's a good question.

Nearly 20 years have passed since the first concierge medicine practices opened and it's still not a well-known or understood concept in healthcare.

First, it's important to understand the difference is not in the doctor. Primary care doctors, regardless of the type of practice, are typically family or internal medicine physicians and can be either medical doctors or doctors of osteopathy.

Within both traditional and concierge practices, you'll find capable doctors who strive to provide the best possible care to their patients.

What's the difference between traditional primary care and concierge medicine?

The big difference is the environment in which the primary care physician practice. See the chart below for a comparison of the big differences.

TRADITIONAL PRIMARY CARE	PARTNERMD
Doctors see 2,000-3,000 patients total and 20-35 patients per day	Doctors see 400-600 patients total and 6-10 patients per day
Appointments average 10-15 minutes	Appointments average 30 minutes
Difficult to get last minute acute appointments	Same or next-day acute appointments
Hard to get the care you need when you need it	Offers 24/7/365 access to care
Standard tests and screenings for annual physicals	In-depth and advanced physicals and screenings

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It's wonderful to have a long-term relationship with the same doctor and nurse, to have a doctor who can pull up my last 5+ years of labs and put this year's in context, to not be rushed, and to not feel stressed about going to the doctor.

- Andrew, Patient, PartnerMD



Why do people switch to concierge medicine?

Pretty much everyone who thinks about joining concierge care has something in common: They're ready to ditch 7-minute medicine. The question is, why now? Why is now the time to make the jump?

Let's look at the 5 top reasons for joining a concierge practice.

1. High achievers like concierge medicine.

If you're the type of informed consumer and health advocate who wants a proactive outlook from your physician, then you're fitting in with many who choose concierge care.

2. Existing condition requires attentive care.

If you have a condition that necessitates a doctor's in-depth attention, then 7-minute medicine is likely driving you crazy, bankrupt, or both.

3. Medical scare.

Plenty of people choosing concierge care came from a moment of reckoning. They have a jarring experience that makes them re-examine their decisions, including their physical wellness choice.

4. Done with the waiting.

If you're tired of waiting days or weeks to get an appointment and then waiting again in the lobby or the exam room, then concierge medicine is a fit for you.

5. Peace of mind for themselves or their loved ones (or both).

For many, the deeper relationship with a physician and the 24/7 access to care provides peace of mind. You know you, or your loved ones, will get the care you need, when you need it, whether it's the middle of the day or the middle of the night.



What is the PartnerMD approach to concierge medicine?

PartnerMD provides membership-based concierge medicine as an alternative to traditional healthcare, which meaningfully improves the lives of members through personalized medical care. Members are empowered to take their health into their own hands through education, accountability, and support.

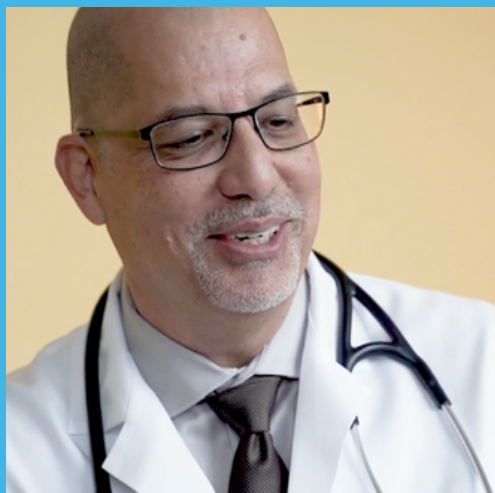
No matter your specific health goals, the PartnerMD team will help you achieve them. Through a focus on proactive health and education, the PartnerMD team helps you live your fullest, most rewarding life.

Here's How We Do Concierge Medicine:

- **Active listening.** If you have a condition that necessitates a doctor's in-depth attention, then 7-minute medicine is likely driving you crazy, bankrupt, or both.
- **Unrushed office visits.** You and your doctor have plenty of time to talk, learn, and brainstorm. Appointments typically last 30 minutes and start on time. Same or next day appointments are always available for acute care.
- **Better access.** You have 24/7 access to physician care via phone, including after hours, on the weekends, and on holidays. It's part of our pledge to provide the care you need, when you need it.
- **Dedicated focus in between office visits.** Thanks to a significantly smaller patient roster, your PartnerMD physician has time to focus on your health and wellness long after you've left the office. Think more time to complete notes and paperwork, more time to research and learn new techniques and technologies, more time to think, and more time to oversee your specialist care and manage your prescriptions.
- **Responsive communication.** Have you ever been in a situation where someone says, "Feel free to reach out any time," but you know they don't mean it? Guess what? Our doctors mean it. Reach out with your questions, thoughts, concerns, obstacles, and victories. They respond quickly, smartly, and compassionately.



- ***A whole person approach.*** The physical and emotional, the brain and the heart, the mind and the soul—all these things work together, and when one is out of balance, it can throw everything else out of whack. Our physicians take a holistic view of each patient, understanding the big picture, before delving into the specifics.
- ***Advanced physicals that go above-and-beyond what insurance covers.*** You have access to the most customizable physicals on the market with advanced tests and screenings available to help identify where you are most vulnerable, hopefully before symptoms occur. With 3 options available, your annual physical becomes more than just a basic annual checkup. It becomes a roadmap for prevention, longevity, and peak performance.
- ***Exclusive access to Wellness University and our certified health coaches.*** As a PartnerMD member, you have exclusive access to Wellness University, our members-only wellness platform featuring more than 70 courses on the four body systems (adrenal, cognitive, metabolic, and muscular) that are most associated with long-term positive health outcomes. You will work hand-in-hand with your physician and our team of certified health coaches to execute a plan to improve your health and your life.
- ***Coordination of your specialist care.*** One pain point within traditional primary care is specialist care. You don't know which specialists to go to, and it's a chore to schedule an appointment with them. At PartnerMD, our team of referral coordinators manages this process for you. Your physician will make the referral to their recommend specialist. Our team will reach out and handle scheduling the appointment for you and then communicate your appointment date and time. And then after your specialist visit, we will make sure your records and information get returned to PartnerMD, so all of your health information is available in one place. We call it quarterbacking your care.



“It’s all about figuring out our motivations for living our best lives... And to do it well, you have to know them well. You have to spend the time listen, and get to know people, and understand their motivations. And based on that, you can help them move. That’s the deal. That’s where the cutting edge really is.”

— Dr. David Pong,
PartnerMD Richmond

Is PartnerMD Right for You?

PartnerMD members can answer “yes” to every question below. Can You?

- Can I get in to see my physician when I need to?
- Does my physician know (and remember) my first name?
- When I have an appointment, is my wait time less than five minutes?
- Can I contact my physician’s office 24 hours a day and get a quick response?
- Does my physician seem calm, relaxed, and unrushed during my appointment?
- Do I have access to wellness resources to help me improve my life?
- Has my physician taken the time to know me as a person, not just a list of symptoms?
- Has my physician helped me identify my health goals and does he/she actively help me achieve them?

A single “no” could be all the motivation you need to consider the difference a concierge medical practice like PartnerMD can make in your life.

Ready to develop a true relationship with a PartnerMD physician?

Relationships begin with a conversation. We invite you to talk with one of our membership experts who can answer any additional questions about concierge medicine, match you with the right physician, and explain the membership process.

We can also set up a free meet-and-greet with a physician, so you can get to know them before you join and decide if they are the right fit for you.

[Talk with a membership expert](#)

Locations

- Richmond, VA
- Short Pump, VA
- Owings Mills, MD
- Greenville, SC
- Midlothian, VA
- McLean, VA
- Sandy Springs, GA

