

# Medical Home Telephone Conference

## April 26, 2005

Lisa Sampson-Fang, MD; Alternative Therapies Discussion

Issues related to alternative moderated therapies.

Example of parent advocate experiences with therapies:

Maria – Used Chiropractic and Cranial Sacral Therapies for daughter with seizures and they were very successful. Maria did a lot of research before trying the therapies to make sure of the risks and side effects. Maria also spoke to their family practitioner, he basically laughed at the idea. Maria then spoke to Dr. Joel Thompson at PCMC and he advised her to be cautious about what practitioner she chooses for the therapies and also to allow Dr. Thompson to monitor the success.

The hard part about alternative therapies are that there are no hard facts that alternative therapies are going to work. The family practitioner thought it was just chance that the therapy worked. It is important to note that parents want respect and confidence from doctors not someone telling them “I told you so”, or “That was chance”.

From a doctor’s perspective (Wendy) – Had a Down’s Syndrome patient who was taken to the chiropractor for ear infections, and multiple colds. Spinal Manipulation was being done on the child that had not had any x-rays done yet. Wendy talked to the family and shared concerns and the family didn’t go back.

Maria suggests that parents do not see a practitioner who promises they can “fix the problem” or suggests they stop all meds.

Bob Nicollet has a grid about how a physician can be helpful when a family is considering alternative therapies. It is important to give the family a thought process to think it thru and this will also open doors to communication. Questions to consider are: what do you know about the therapy; what are people’s experiences with the therapy; what is the cost; what are the side effects. Also, you need to consider behavioral issues and be cautious of one-sided approaches.

Gina from family voices shares that there is a lot of information to share on new therapies that work and usually parents are always willing grasp onto the hope of a new therapy that will help their child.

Sometimes conflicts can arise such as having enough money to buy herbals but not meds.

A letter of medical necessity for alternative therapies can be written by practitioner, some of the doctors are uncomfortable with these referrals and some just state the facts.

Families usually find alternative therapy information on the web. Another source would be talking with the pediatrician, making sure that you discuss the traditional therapies that available and covered. When considering talking her child to a chiropractor, Maria called the Board of Chiropractors and had them refer a chiropractor that works with children and then got a referral from him for another chiropractor. The list serves is another available place for information where usually you will get responses from parents. Parents do want to talk to Medical Home.

Record keeping can be important, an example can be found on the Medical Home website.

When parents consider an alternative therapy, they need to know what they are looking for and how long before they will stop the it, and what things do they want to see change.

Next Phone Conference is on Tuesday May 24, 2005.

Attendees: Lisa Samson-Fang, Gina Pola-Money, Barbara Ward, Grace Baugh, Meridan, Lisa Lee, Diane, Sharon, Robert Terashima, Maria Wiscombe, Cathi.