

## **LOCAL PRIMARY CARE PRACTICE EARNS PATIENT-CENTERED INNOVATION AWARD**

The New Jersey Academy of Family Physicians (NJAFP) recently awarded a Patient-Centered Innovation Award to Vanguard Medical Group, a local primary care practice, for its innovative approach to patient-centered care. NJAFP's 2014 Patient-Centered Innovation Award was presented at NJAFP's *Advanced Topics in Healthcare Delivery* symposium. Cari Miller, MSM, PCMH CCE, NJAFP's Director of Advocacy and Project Operations, said, "This is the first year NJAFP is presenting this Award and we are excited to be able to recognize Vanguard Medical Group as a recipient for implementing patient-centered care approaches in practice." She explained that NJAFP has worked with physicians, providers, health systems, community health centers, health care teams, and other healthcare professionals in promoting patient-centered concepts since 2009.

Vanguard Medical Group successfully participated in this unique award program, which provided an opportunity for its office team to showcase an activity it implemented to positively impact patient-centered care in the practice. Vanguard's project was designed to improve access to primary care for homebound seniors. Through this effort, the practice was able to create a team comprised of a geriatrician, two geriatric nurse practitioners and a group of medical assistants devoted to the full time care of these seniors. "This award acknowledges Vanguard's commitment to caring for our seniors even when they become too ill to travel to our offices", said Dr. Thomas McCarrick, Vanguard's chief medical officer.

In addition, to NJAFP's Patient-Centered Innovation Award, Vanguard Medical Group, has also been nationally recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) as Patient-Centered Medical Home

(PCMH). A PCMH is a primary care practice/physician office that meets specific standards of care, including a practice in which healthcare professionals work as a team to provide patients with care that is individually determined and meets the specific needs of each patient. The team also coordinates patient care with other healthcare professionals in the community to help ensure a patient-centered approach for receiving health care services. As such, the practice becomes patients' "homes" for preventive, chronic, and ambulatory care.