

La Pine Community Clinic
Brice Stanley PA-C

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR PROVIDER:

Most of us have experienced the first time with a new provider. I'm sure that most patients come to a medical office mostly out of necessity. Whether it is because your children need immunizations, or you need an annual or even for the cough that just won't resolve, the likelihood is that a doctor's office is often times a place where you simply feel lousy. With this in mind, how do you then decide what is the right clinic or which provider is best for you and your family? Is it important to feel comfortable when you're sick?

Personally, I know that when I'm sick, home is where the heart (and comfort) lies. In fact, there is a satisfaction that you cannot buy over-the-counter, in a pharmacy or with the best insurance. The feeling of trust in those around you goes a long ways. Recently, I've come to realize that this is hardly different in your doctor's office. Most patients that come to see me are there for illnesses, fears or issues they would rather ignore. As I get older and my youthful health fades into the bitter reality of aging, I now understand better how sitting on the table can feel. And for you women out there, I now understand the ultimate exam of being in stirrups (see cystoscopy.) Anyway, back to the questions of how to pick a provider.

First of all, I want to impress upon all of you that there is such a thing as a "good fit." A medical provider, from my prospective, is someone who will be taking a journey with you down the road of your medical life. Each of us has a different way of looking at our health. We simply value different things than the person next to us. Even partners often disagree on what is or is not important. Therefore, when you look for a primary provider such as an M.D., D.O, PA-C or FNP/ANP you need to first decide what you want out of healthcare. Actually, knowing what each of the acronyms truly stands for is a good start. Once you've taken this basic step then you may move forward with the fine tuning.

Decide what personality best suites you. There are certainly providers more or less abrupt, empathetic or caring than others. We all know this to be true if you've spent more than a sniffle in a medical office. Decide what clinic or medical office best serves you financially and practically. For instance, if you have children who play sports consider a provider with an orthopedic or sports medicine background. If you're someone who mainly

is seen for an annual then find a provider that makes you as comfortable as you can be for this one visit. More importantly, if you're medically complex, consider a provider sound in internal medicine issues. At least, make sure that you have someone in your medical office capable of dealing with your more complex issues.

Lastly, make sure that the issues most important to you will not be a problem with your current or future provider. Will they shun you if you choose not to have certain or any immunizations administered to your children? Will they review your chart randomly with your health and well-being in mind or simply sign the prescription requested? Think about these things the next time you decide with who you entrust your well-being. Please read my next article entitled "Asthma...do I have it?"