

Fundamentals of Case Management Practice

Al Garcia, MSW

United American Indian Involvement, Inc.

Case Management: Definition and Responsibilities

- Unlike specific services, case management does not focus on just one problem but rather on the many issues, strengths and concerns a client brings. (Strength-based perspective)
- Case management is a process for assessing the client's total situation and addressing the needs and problems found in that assessment.
- The primary purpose for case management is to improve the quality of life for the client.

- Another major purpose of case management is to prevent problems from growing worse and costing more to remedy in the future.
- Case management is a process within health and human services. Training and educational background will effect service provision. Para-professionals and professional staff serve this function. Often times, front-line contact can be most effective to the client and will be reflective of the agency.

Why Case Management?

- Case Management serves two purposes:
 1. It is a method for determining an individualized service plan for each client and monitoring that plan to be sure it is effective
 2. It is a process used to ensure that the money being spent for the client's services is being spent wisely and in the most efficient manner

Roles of a Case Manager

- **Coordinator:** identify effective services and arrange for optimal use by the client
- **Planner:** develop a comprehensive plan that enables the client to function at optimal level
- **Monitor:** monitoring the plan progress and revising goals/objectives, as needed
- **Collaborator:** collaborating with the client and other services providers to ensure effectiveness and efficiency

Roles of a Case Manager

- **Advocate:** promoting fairness and the rights of clients; supporting methods for change
- **Educator:** teaching, informing and modeling to increase client's awareness and enhance level of functioning
- **Consultant:** consulting with treatment team and other service providers

Case Management is a method that can be used to:

- Identify and **assess** the needs of the client
- Develop a **plan** for effective services and/or treatment
- Identify and **link** the client to appropriate services and/or resources
- Continuously **monitor** the effectiveness and efficiency of the plan

Assessment (Initial)

- Should be comprehensive, thorough and address personal and environmental aspects
- Should include a historical, cultural and psychosocial history
- Should clearly define a primary problem
- Could include secondary and tertiary problem
- Should identify personal strengths / barriers
- Should include observations and recommendations

- **Assessment** - The first case management task is an initial assessment to explore and evaluate:
 - The client's initial or presenting problem and the background to that problem.
 - The person's current situation
 - The person's background in areas like education, relationships, work history, legal history
 - What the person needs to make life more stable and to resolve the current problem

- What strengths, including both those the person brings to the problem and those in the person's environment, would be useful in resolving the situation
 - Observations about how well the person functions cognitively and any seeming mental problems you have noted
 - Recommendations for a service or treatment plan for the person
- ** Prior to a client assessment, case managers could be required to complete a screening and intake process.

Case / Treatment Planning

Based on the information gathered during the intake/assessment, the plan should address:

- The **primary problem** identified by the client
- Goals and objectives that will eliminate or alleviate the identified problem
- Goals and objectives that are realistic and achievable for the client
- Goals and objectives that can be monitored in a timely manner

Linking the Client

- Is a process for transferring or referring the client to services that will assist in achieving the service/treatment plan
- May require a written referral
- Should be time specific
- Effective case managers will be familiar with referring partners, contact/service providers and the quality of services that are expected

Monitoring

- It is the case managers responsibility to monitor the services given and referred to the client
- Can include case conferencing or peer review
- Includes review of documentation (progress reports, notes)
- Includes ongoing contact with service providers involved in the treatment/service plan

Important Concepts: Confidentiality

- Understanding client confidentiality and exceptions to confidentiality. Legal reporting requirements and agency policy.
 1. Danger to self or others (suicidal and homicidal ideation and/or tendencies)
 2. Child / Elder Abuse (neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse)
 3. Legal proceeding (court order)

Important Concepts: Release of Information

- Release of information form allows client information to be shared with others. This form must state specifically to whom the information is being released and must be **time limited** (3 months, 6 months, 1 year).
- Blanket release of information forms are not allowable.
- Case managers are required to adhere to all HIPAA requirements

Important Concepts: Informed Consent

Informed Consent: the client's right to consent or withdraw from services based on the condition that the client was informed about the benefit or harm from such services.

Informed Consent consists of three parts:

1. Capacity
2. Comprehension of Information
3. Voluntariness

Capacity: the client has the ability or capacity to make clear, competent decisions on their own behalf

Comprehension of Information: the client clearly understands the information presented to them

Voluntariness: the client gives consent freely with no coercion or pressure from the provider offering services

Effective Case Management Techniques

- Awareness and application of culturally competent practice and services
- Developing and maintaining effective professional boundaries
- Understanding ethical responsibility
- Familiarity and practice of basic helping attitudes
- Implementing effective interviewing techniques: M.I., Reflective Listening

Effective Case Management Techniques

- **Cultural Competence**
- Should not use stereotypes or assumptions
- Should freely validate a client's cultural identity, history and experience
- Should respect cultural values, traditions, beliefs and practices
- Should seek ongoing education, training and familiarity about cultural diversity

Professional Boundaries

- Understanding self-awareness of personal values and individual belief systems
- Adhering to ethical standards of profession
- Identifying and addressing issues related to transference and counter-transference

Basic Helping Attitudes

1. **Warmth:** Being friendly, non-judgmental, receptive, respectful and non-dominating
2. **Genuine:** Being authentic, honest and non-pretentious
3. **Empathy:** Completely comprehending the client's feelings and needs; sensitively communicating a response with sensitivity and support

Effective Interviewing

- Practicing motivational interviewing techniques
- Use of open-ended questions rather than closed questioning
- Providing reflective listening and validation
- Being non-judgmental and not blaming, shaming, moralizing or authoritative

Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change

Stages of Change

1. **Precontemplation:** Not interested or concerned
2. **Contemplation:** Consideration
3. **Preparation:** Preparing, creating
4. **Action:** Initial change; implementation; revision
5. **Maintenance:** Sustaining change