

What is Professional Case Management?

DEFINITION OF PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT

Professional Case Management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, care coordination, evaluation and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's and family's comprehensive health needs through communication and available resources to promote patient safety, quality of care and cost effective outcomes. (CMSA, 2016). Professional Case Managers are recognized experts and vital participants in the care coordination team who empower people to understand and access quality, safe and efficient health care services.

PHILOSOPHY OF PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT

The underlying premise of Professional Case Management is based in the fact that, when an individual reaches the optimum level of wellness and functional capability, everyone benefits: the individuals being served, the client's family or family caregiver, the health care delivery system, the reimbursement source or payer their support systems, the health care delivery systems, the reimbursement source or payer, and other involved parties such as the employer and consumer advocates. Professional Case Management serves as a means for achieving client wellness and autonomy through advocacy, ongoing communication, health education, identification of service resources and service facilitation. Professional Case Management services are best offered in a climate that allows client engagement and direct communication between the case manager, the client, and the client's family or family caregiver, and appropriate service personnel, in order to optimize health outcomes for all concerned.

WHAT DOES A PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGER DO?

The healthcare system can be confusing and, at times, fragmented. Professional Case Managers help the person who is sick and their families or caregivers navigate the healthcare system. Professional Case Managers serve as a liaison between the ill or injured person, the doctor and other treating providers, the insurer and employers to identify what services might be needed. Professional Case Managers help coordinate all services and resources necessary to promote a return to the person's highest level of well-being. Professional Case Managers communicate with people in person, or by telephone, and often create letters and reports, to enhance communication between all parties. Professional Case Managers aim to educate and to empower individuals in their own self-care. Professional Case Managers support the individualized needs and values of the client to assure in collaboration with the inter-professional health care team the provision of safe appropriate, effective client-centered, timely, efficient and equitable care and services. The Professional Case Manager has a defined standard of practice and holds licensure or certification in a health or human services discipline and/or holds a baccalaureate or graduate degree. Nursing, Social Work and Rehabilitation Counseling are examples of professionals that may be working as a Professional Case Manager.

WHY DOES AN INDIVIDUAL NEED PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT?

Professional Case Managers can help individuals and their caregivers cope with the medical, social, emotional, insurance, and vocational problems related to injury or illness. Professional Case Managers can provide support in making informed decisions and in getting answers to questions about treatment and rehabilitation. Professional Case Managers can assist in getting the care that is needed. Professional Case Managers do not make decisions for individuals but will help provide the tools needed to do so. Professional case managers positively impact healthcare delivery by focusing on the “Triple Aim”. The “Triple Aim” refers to improving health outcomes for individuals and populations, enhancing the healthcare experience and reducing the cost of care for the client.

WHO MIGHT REFER AN INDIVIDUAL TO A PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGER?

Their physician or provider, insurance company or employer generally refers individuals who have specific illness or injury for Professional Case Management service. An individual or caregiver can also ask their physician or provider, insurance company or employer for a referral to a Professional Case Manager.

WHO PAYS FOR PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES?

The referring source, generally the insurance company, pays for the Professional Case Manager's service. Sometimes a Professional case manager is hired directly by the provider, patient or family.

**The Case Management Society of New England is available to talk to
community groups regarding the role of the Case Manager.**

If interested please contact 603-329-7481.

Thank you for your interest.

This document was developed by the Case Management Society of New England and based on the Case Management Society of America's 2016 Standards of Practice for Case Management.