



Minnesota Association of County
Social Service Administrators

Counties Unique Role in Case Management: A MACSSA Policy Statement

Chemical Dependency Case Management

What is Chemical Dependency Case Management?

Chemical Dependency (CD) Case Management services are provided to individuals diagnosed with chemical dependency or chemical abuse. Case management services provide ongoing assessment, referral, coordination and monitoring of treatment and recovery services for individuals in need. The goal is to work with the person to improve their safety, dignity and quality of life. Case managers assist individuals in maneuvering through multiple layers of services, requirements, rules and guidelines.

CD Case Management includes:

- Referrals for assessment, inpatient and outpatient treatment.
- Ongoing monitoring and support of treatment services, early recovery, and treatment transition.
- Coordination of chemical dependency and mental health care services.
- Assistance with obtaining primary medical and dental care along with health insurance.
- Support, coordination and referrals for transportation, housing, medication management and education, public assistance and job search activity.
- Supportive services for crisis intervention and relapse prevention.

Four Primary Functions of County Case Managers



Unique Characteristics of Chemical Dependency Case Management

Availability: Chemical Dependency services are accessible to all individuals who meet eligibility criteria regardless of level of need and ability to pay.

Acuity: An individual seeking case management usually presents with a high level of need due to impacts on many life domains that may require immediate attention. Case management can occur through voluntary or involuntary means, often depending on their level of risk or harm to themselves or others.

Multi-disciplinary: Individuals with chemical health needs may also have other co-occurring needs, such as mental health, physical health or cognitive disorders. The intertwining nature of the disorders usually require linkages with other county services, such as mental health, disability, child protection and financial services. At times, a person in need of chemical dependency case management may also be connected to county corrections or justice systems.

Example from the Field...

Sarah is a 25 year old, single mother with three children under the age of 6. Sarah was diagnosed with Depressive Disorder at the age of 15 while she was in foster care. Sarah began using alcohol and marijuana as a teenager and transitioned to heroin use at the age of 23. Sarah was arrested for possession and had her children placed in foster care. Through case management services Sarah was able to complete chemical dependency treatment, obtain housing, stabilize her mental health and regain custody of her children. ▲

What Does Success Look like?

Case managers focus intently on working with the individual to improve their ability to live within the community in a safe and stable environment, while obtaining treatment for their addiction. From a systems perspective, success is measured in decreased county cost for detoxification services, declining rates of hospitalizations, and reduced wait-times to access inpatient and outpatient treatment.

Success is measured individually, achieving and maintaining chemical health is a life-long endeavor. For one person, success may be measured in being one day sober; for another it may be about reaching life-long goals of education, career, family or health that can only be accomplished through long term chemical health stability.

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