USCCB/MRS Refugee Resettlement

Case Management Manual

The Application of Social Work Principles, Ethics, and the Case Management Approach in Service Delivery to Refugees



DEPARTMENT OF MIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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Washington, D.C.

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Introduction and Purpose

As employees in a refugee resettlement program affiliated with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS), we have heard and used the term "case management" countless times. But what does case management really mean for us? Do we really understand case management and how to apply this model in our resettlement programs?

Of course, we know the requirements outlined by the Department of State (DOS) in the Reception and Placement (R&P) Cooperative Agreement. These requirements tell us what services must be provided and when they must be completed. But this is just the beginning.

To do your best in serving your clients, you must understand the basic principles and ethics of social work. You will need to understand how these principles apply to everyday situations that you face when providing services.

To begin, let us describe the resettlement program.

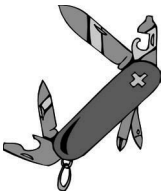
- The program uses a crisis-intervention approach to service delivery. You often have little time to plan, and you may not know all the information about your clients ahead of time.
- The program serves diverse clients who are semi-involuntary, meaning that they usually do not choose which agency will assist them or will not have an opportunity to change agencies once they arrive.
- The program is short-term.
- The program must demonstrate cultural sensitivity and understanding.
- The program is carried out by a culturally diverse staff, most of whom do not possess social work degrees.

In addition, our USCCB/MRS programs do not operate in isolation. Most resettlement offices must also meet the requirements of a human service organization, like Catholic Charities or Catholic Social Services. These requirements are derived from the social work profession. Often, they also conform to the standards and guidelines of the Council on Accreditation (COA).

This manual describes foundational concepts of social work, social work ethics, and cultural competency that are governed by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).[1] The manual also applies these principles to everyday realities in a resettlement program. Finally, the manual provides tools to enhance training with case management staff.

Our funding agencies require that all resettlement programs follow the terms outlined in the various Cooperative Agreements (R&P, C/H, and MG programs). However, there are many different ways to carry out these terms. This manual outlines one method that currently is practiced by many resettlement programs. Each office might apply this method differently, depending on the circumstances. However, we hope that this manual will help all of you to manage and provide services more effectively.

[1] Visit the National Association of Social Workers online at *www.socialworkers.org*.



I. Basic Concepts of the Social Work Profession

When you first look at this section's title, you may think: "Social work? This has nothing to do with my job, because I am not a social worker. In fact, I never studied this topic in school, and I have not received any other formal training. I just want to help refugees."

Yet whether you are formally trained or not, you are a social worker. You work in a social service agency and within a program that provides services for refugees. And because you are a social worker, you are part of a larger system of theories and principles that should guide your work.

Sometimes it may be hard to see yourself in this picture, given all the tasks and challenges you face. This manual exists to make your job easier. It will help you to understand and follow the principles of the social work profession.

So let us begin with the basics. This section lists the four important concepts that guide social workers in their work.

Concept 1. The Purpose of Social Work

The purpose of social work is to help a person overcome issues he or she may have, so that he or she can live a better life. A social worker helps a client in two ways: (1) by creating a safe environment and (2) by connecting a client with appropriate resources and networks. The case management method can be used to assist clients in either of these two ways. (See Section III of this manual for more about case management.)



How does this concept apply to refugee resettlement?

The USCCB/MRS refugee resettlement program is designed to provide services to refugees and to help them adjust to social and economic life in the United States. The program connects refugees with anchor relatives and communities that are already present in their new communities. It promotes refugees' financial self-sufficiency and their integration into U.S. society as soon as possible after their arrival.

Concept 2. Person-in-Environment



Each person functions within an environment, which is made up of many structures and systems. The **immediate environment** is made up of systems, structures, and factors that most frequently affect a person's day-to-day social functioning. These may include the following:

- Family (those related by blood and by association)
- Close friends
- Culture
- Sets of beliefs
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Neighborhood
- Workplace

The **distant environment** is defined by the laws, culture, and social structure of the country and of the mainstream society in which a person lives. Consider the larger elements of society that one cannot choose or control. These elements make up the distant environment.



For a person living in the United States, the distant environment might include the following:

- The concepts behind the U.S. Constitution
- Political and educational systems
- Federal and state laws
- Classes of society (lower, middle, and upper)
- Issues related to race

Remember, each person is unique. Each person will interact with and react to these environments in different ways. This is the meaning of the **person-in-environment** concept. Acknowledge this concept when trying to help clients.



How does this concept apply to refugee resettlement?

For you, part of applying the person-in-environment concept means taking a culturally competent and sensitive approach. Acknowledge your client's immediate and distant environments and try to understand them in the way your client might see them. By doing this, you put the person-in-environment concept into practice. This will help the refugee client or family to live a more successful and productive life in the United States.

Consider and respect your clients' cultural and religious beliefs, family composition and structure, and culturally defined roles—all elements of their immediate environment. Also work to orient your clients to their new distant environment by helping them to understand the basic social norms and laws of the United States. This step is crucial in their social adjustment and their acculturation.

Use a cross-cultural approach for service delivery to clients. As the term "cross-cultural" implies, you must consider the culture and expectation of your clients as you introduce them to the expectations and culture of U.S. society. The services they receive must be linguistically appropriate, culturally sensitive, and competent.

Consider the following example, which will illustrate these concepts.

Imagine you are a case manager assisting two Somali Muslim women, Hawa and Sarah, who arrived together in the United States. Both are married with two children, and both are willing to work.



At first, you might think you would follow the exact same approach in helping the two women find jobs, yes? But when you find out more about each woman, following the person-in-environment concept, you realize that you may need to approach employment very differently with each of them. Let us examine why.

First of all, you assess the immediate and distant environments of each of these women. In this process, you discover that although Hawa does follow the customs of her religion, she enjoys wearing more Western-style clothing, such as jeans. She will, however, continue to wear her hijab (head scarf). Sarah, on the other hand, wants to continue to wear her traditional tunic as well as her hijab, in order to preserve her culture and religious expression.

Hawa and Sarah share the same immediate and distant environments, but they interact with their environments quite differently. A case manager who does not recognize the person-in-environment concept might tell Sarah that she should not wear her traditional dress if she wants to be employed and accepted by people in the United States. However, in applying the person-in-environment concept, you would support Sarah's desire to continue wearing traditional garments as a way of preserving her culture. If an employer or someone else sees this as a problem, there might be ways to address the concern.

Concept 3. Social Justice

Social justice principles recognize that all people have **basic human rights**:

- The right to food, shelter, basic medical care, and essential social services—all basic human needs to maintain life
- The right to be protected from abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- The right to privacy
- The right to worship based on chosen religious beliefs
- The right to basic education
- The right to participate in the political life of the government and one's chosen community



How does this concept apply to a resettlement program?

The pre- and post-arrival services of the refugee resettlement program are grounded in the basic social justice principles described above. Pre- and post-arrival services are designed to meet the basic human needs of clients.

Core Services

- **Pre-Arrival Services**
- **Case File Preparation and Management**
- **Reception Services**
- **Community and Other Orientation**
- **Health—Orientation and Referrals**
- **Health—Class A Conditions**
- **Resettlement Plans; Employment Orientation and Referrals**
- **Employment and Welfare—Communication with State and Local Authorities**
- **Health—Notification of Local Authorities**
- **Assistance to Refugee Minor Children**

The pre- and post-arrival services are known as **core services**. They meet the clients' needs for food, shelter, basic medical care, and other essential social services to maintain daily life.

After these basic needs are met, clients can focus on their goals of social and economic independence. You can then provide additional social adjustment services and assist with acculturation processes. Such additional services may include the following:

- Job readiness and preparation (since employment is the basis for achieving economic independence and self-sufficiency in America)
- Introduction to the U.S. school system and to the United States' laws and human rights standards
- Learning English
- Other orientation topics required by the Reception and Placement (R&P), Cuban/Haitian (C/H), or Matching Grant (MG) program

As a basic application of this social justice principle, explain to clients what they can expect from the agency, what the agency will expect of them in return, and to what they are entitled—all of which is known as **"Client Rights and Responsibilities"** (CRR). Remember that most clients usually are not familiar with this concept. Therefore, you need to fully understand and follow the CRR policies of your agency and ensure that clients are informed about them in an appropriate and consistent way.

Each agency should have its own CRR policy. If your agency does not have one, your program can develop its own. This policy should be translated into the main languages of the caseloads that you serve and be reviewed with clients at the beginning of the resettlement process and throughout the service period.

Although the content of each agency's CRR policy may be different, it should include the following basic client rights:



a. The Right to Consent to or Refuse Any Service

Clients need to affirm their willingness to accept services by signing a consent form. This form should exist in each client's primary language. Place the signed copy in the client's file.

Remember, your clients are semi-involuntary, meaning they may have little influence over where they go and which agency will be assigned to provide their resettlement services. Because refugee clients often do not have an option to seek services from another agency, you should clearly explain what may happen if they refuse to receive services.

Many refugee clients do not realize that *they* ultimately have the right to decide whether or not to receive your assistance. Remember that many of your clients come from societies quite different from the United States. Because you represent a larger agency, clients may think *you* have the power to make them conform to the rules of the agency. They may have difficulty understanding that they have individual rights.

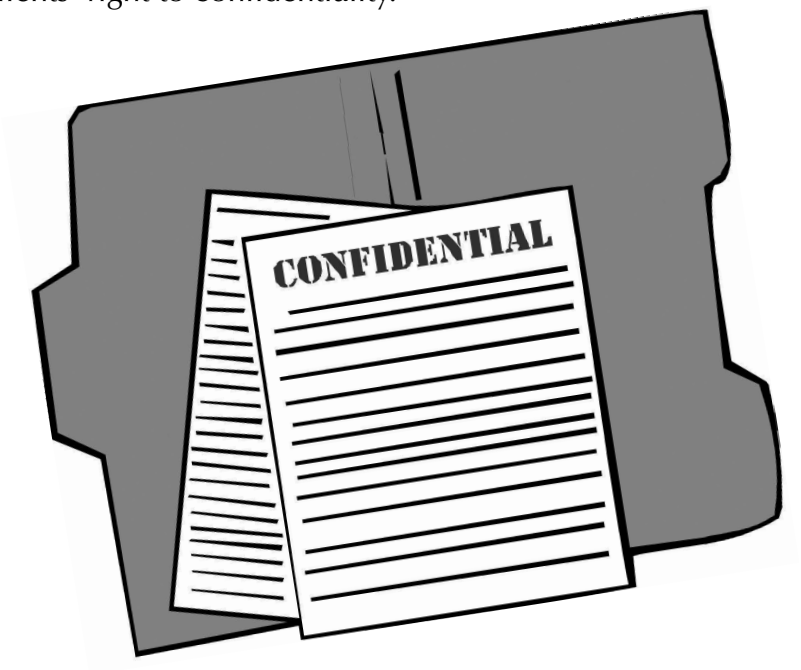
Because of these realities, you may need to spend additional time with the client to review the consent for service form. You have a responsibility to help your clients understand this concept. Often, you may be focused only on the need to have this required form signed. Remember to explain what the form means, even though it may take extra time.

b. The Right to Confidentiality

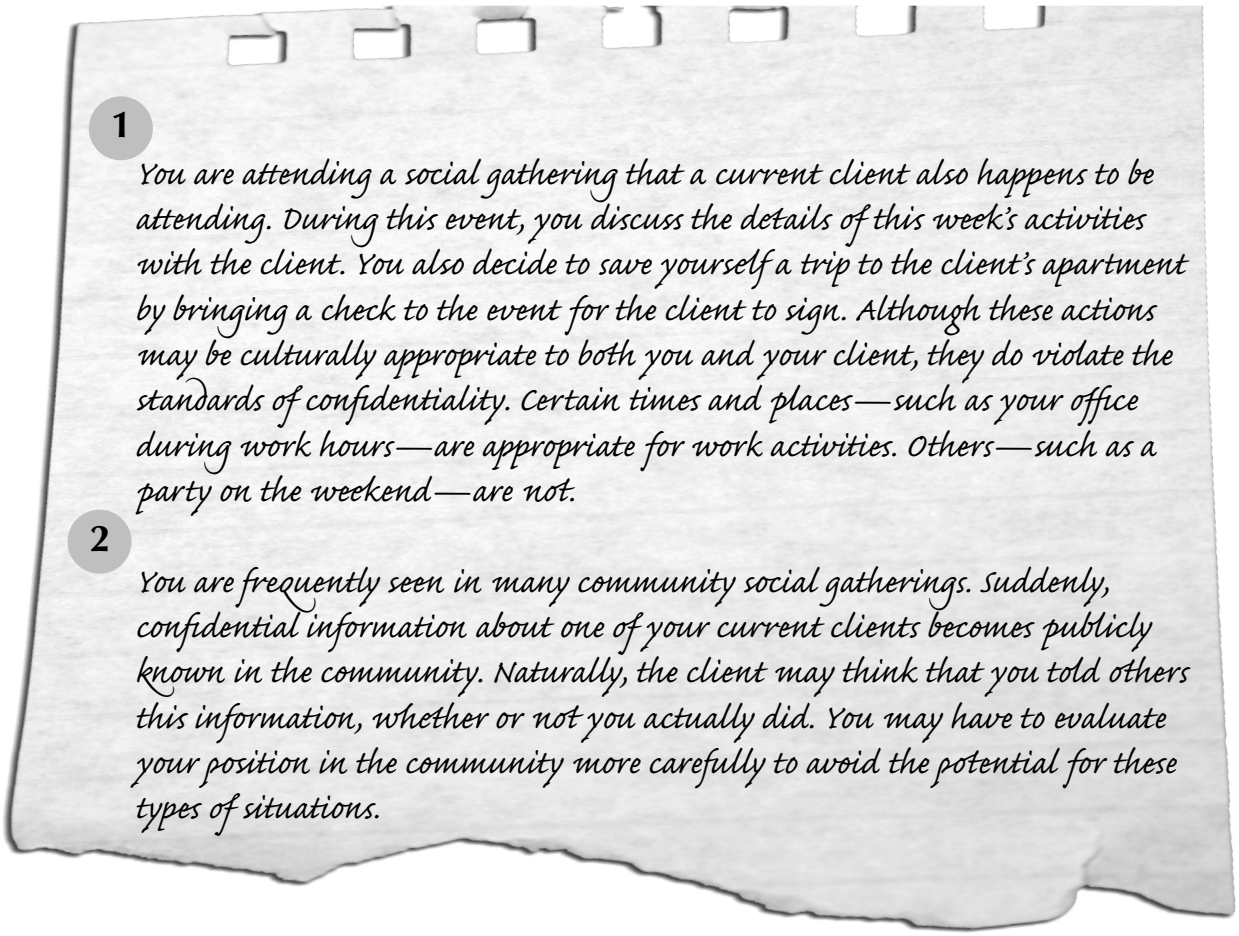
This is one of the most important and yet difficult concepts to explain to refugee clients. Just as clients sometimes have difficulty understanding their individual rights, it can be hard for them to understand the concept of confidentiality. Previously, many clients lived in countries ruled by oppressive dictators whose governments abused basic human rights. There, clients certainly did not enjoy the right to confidentiality when receiving services from governmental or private institutions.

Slowly, clients will come to understand and accept the concept of confidentiality, a process that will be helped along by your reinforcing this concept over and over again. As with the consent for service form, you may be tempted to review this concept only once, during the initial intake when the CRR policy is explained. Understand that each client will accept this concept only over a period of time, as you both work to strengthen and develop your relationships with the agency and with each other.

You yourself may have experienced difficulty with the concept of confidentiality. If you came to the United States from another country, remember how you thought and felt when you had just arrived. Now that you work in a resettlement program, you may be playing a dual role—you represent the social service agency, but you might also participate on a social level in your cultural community. In itself, your dual role does not need to present a problem. But if you are not careful, it might compromise your clients' right to confidentiality.



Consider the following scenarios:



1

You are attending a social gathering that a current client also happens to be attending. During this event, you discuss the details of this week's activities with the client. You also decide to save yourself a trip to the client's apartment by bringing a check to the event for the client to sign. Although these actions may be culturally appropriate to both you and your client, they do violate the standards of confidentiality. Certain times and places—such as your office during work hours—are appropriate for work activities. Others—such as a party on the weekend—are not.

2

You are frequently seen in many community social gatherings. Suddenly, confidential information about one of your current clients becomes publicly known in the community. Naturally, the client may think that you told others this information, whether or not you actually did. You may have to evaluate your position in the community more carefully to avoid the potential for these types of situations.

Both scenarios demonstrate the need for program leaders to coach you and other case managers about making appropriate choices with regard to the role(s) you might play in your community. You may also seek out advice from your supervisor if you are struggling with issues in this area.

c. The Right to Question an Agency Action or Decision Through the Grievance Process

A client must be able to voice dissatisfaction or disagreement about the services or treatment he or she receives. Your agency or department should have an established protocol for this, and your CRR policy should include the protocol. The grievance process relates back to a client's basic right to be protected from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Explain the grievance process to each of your clients in detail. Repeat the explanation from time to time over the course of the service period. Like confidentiality, the grievance process is another concept that the client will need time to successfully understand.

d. The Right to Participate in Development of an Individual Service Plan (ISP) or Resettlement Plan (for R&P, C/H, and MG)

In order to successfully implement a resettlement plan, you must involve your clients in the process of setting goals and timeframes for their own accomplishments. Explain to your clients why certain types of services may or may not be a part of their plan. Do not simply inform them, but also ask for their input and acceptance. Be willing to adjust the plan to the extent possible within the parameters of the program.

When clients engage in the planning process themselves, and when they see that you are flexible and cooperative, they will be more likely to accept responsibility for following the plan.

Concept 4. The Role of the Social Worker

As a social worker, you fill many different professional roles while helping your clients. These roles should be well defined, and you need to understand what they are. This understanding will help you and your co-workers to develop an effective case management model for helping refugee clients.

As a social worker, you may function as one or more of the following:



A Broker

As a **broker**, you link clients to appropriate human services and resources. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you refer your clients for many services, such as:

- Health screening
- Other health and mental health services
- Food stamps and/or welfare benefits
- Social security cards
- Employment authorization documents
- Employment services



An Advocate

As an **advocate**, you help clients to receive available resources and services, and you represent their rights on an individual and community level. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you represent your clients as they obtain the services and resources to which they are entitled. You speak on behalf of your clients, and you help your clients to speak for themselves.



A Teacher/Educator

As a **teacher/educator**, you equip clients with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent problems, improve their lives, and function independently based on their abilities. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you provide ongoing orientation on U.S. culture, environment, and laws. You help them to understand those concepts as they relate to health and mental health. You also teach clients basic survival skills for their new environments, such as:

- How to obtain services and resources
- How to pay rent and other related expenses
- How to use food stamps to shop for food
- Where to buy food and necessities
- Where their children might attend school
- Where to attend ESL classes
- How to use other educational/vocational resources
- How to use basic household equipment
- How to use public transportation
- How to make appointments for medical and social needs

On a community level, you might share your knowledge about refugees' cultural norms and needs. You might speak at workshops and seminars in schools, colleges, offices, hospitals—anywhere people provide services to refugees or want to learn more about refugees.



A Counselor

As a **counselor**, you help clients improve their own ability to function, understand themselves, change their behaviors, and cope with problems. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you provide support for mental health interventions and consultations. If, like most case managers, you are not a trained mental health counselor, do not try to modify clients' behavior

yourself. However, you can act as a cultural coach when your client sees a health professional. You can work together with health professionals and your client to resolve physical and mental health issues.



A Professional

As a **professional**, you engage in competent and ethical social work practice. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you must follow the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics, which is described more fully in Section II of this manual. You must provide culturally competent and sensitive services to clients.



A Social Change Agent

As a **social change agent**, you help to identify and address community problems. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you understand the needs of refugee communities and help them to advocate for change and new resources. You also help refugees to advocate on their own behalf.



A Case Manager

As a **case manager**, you identify the services needed and ensure that they are received appropriately. As a staff member in a resettlement program, your most important role is that of case manager. The role of case manager combines all of the other roles described above, and it is grounded in the concept of case management. Case management includes a wide range of activities and functions, such as the following:

- *Client assessment*—gathering intake information; assessing the client's needs, situation, and resources.
- *Service planning*—identifying services that your refugee clients can access to meet their needs; designing and implementing an integrated intervention plan (resettlement plan).
- *Linkage and service coordination*—linking your clients with appropriate services and resources, and coordinating the delivery of these services. You also coordinate your clients' use of resources by becoming the main point of contact for communication between agencies. You not only set up appointments for clients; you also ensure that clients get to these appointments. You arrange for interpretation if necessary, help to set follow-up appointments, and provide clarification for clients and service providers.

- *Follow-up and monitoring of service delivery*—making frequent follow-up contacts with service providers to make sure they deliver services, and also with clients to make sure they utilize services properly.

  For example, you might make sure clients receive the correct amount of food stamps on time, and then ensure they can use them to buy food. Or you might ensure that the client has obtained prescribed medication and understands its proper use. As a part of follow-up, you should also refer back to the client's resettlement plan, monitor the achievement of agreed-upon goals and objectives, and make appropriate adjustments. Finally, you must complete the necessary paperwork to document client progress and the delivery of services.
- *Client support*—providing ongoing support, which includes the following:
  - Counseling
  - Helping to resolve family conflicts
  - Providing information and clarification
  - Giving emotional support
  - Explaining cultural norms and beliefs
  - Advocating on behalf of clients to ensure that they receive entitled services

For Supervisors



An Administrator

If you are an **administrator**, you plan, develop, and implement programs, services, and infrastructures within a human service organization (such as Catholic Charities). If you are a staff member in a leadership position in a resettlement program, you seek additional funds to provide culturally appropriate services that will benefit the refugee populations being served. As an administrator, you participate in different local and national forums to promote the refugee program. You develop and implement new programs and services that refugee populations need.



A Staff Developer

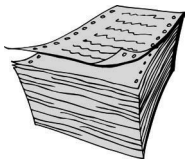
If you are a **staff developer**, you promote the professional development and growth of human service organization staff through training, supervision, consultation, and personnel management. If you are a staff member in a leadership position in a resettlement program, this is one of the most important roles you will play. Managers of resettlement programs need to

possess a high level of cultural competency and sensitivity in order to guide a culturally diverse staff. A well-managed staff will provide the most effective services to clients.

As a staff developer, you must provide staff with opportunities to receive basic social work training to master and improve social work skills. This training will help staff to appropriately meet their clients' needs. A best practice is to require staff to take a basic course in social work from an accredited educational institution. You may also draw on the resources within your own agency.

You should also provide opportunities for staff to learn more about the background and culture of new refugee groups scheduled to be resettled. Create an environment that recognizes the rich cultural and linguistic skills of staff. Encourage them to share their expertise within the agency and larger community.

Be the first to reach out to other agency departments and communities. This will promote the program, make collaboration easier, and allow others to benefit from your program staff's competencies.



A Workload Manager

As a **workload manager**, you work to provide the most efficient services to clients within the guidelines of the organization. In this role, you must balance the obligations to clients and the agency alike. As a staff member in a resettlement program, you must effectively and efficiently manage the assigned case load. At times, this load can be quite heavy. The resettlement program often operates in a crisis-intervention mode. Therefore, you will need to be able to set priorities according to importance and urgency.

You will also need to make plans that help you accomplish work in the most efficient and effective way possible. Effective time management is critical if you are to give clients proper attention while still meeting other requirements. You may need to learn how to use new technology, including agency computer systems.

Your agency may establish other requirements, such as the following:

- Participation in a quality assurance monitoring process (typically for accredited organizations)
- Collection of data to document client needs and services provided
- Completion of reports
- Maintenance of case records
- Participation in staff meetings and other program-related activities





II. Introduction to National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics

National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics: Six Core Values

1. Service
2. Social Justice
3. Dignity and Worth of the Person
4. Importance of Human Relationships
5. Integrity
6. Competence

In the previous section, you learned about the purpose of social work and some important basic principles of this profession. This section will review the values and standards that must guide your daily work as a social worker. It will discuss why we, as resettlement workers, should follow such a code of ethical behavior.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is a professional organi–zation that has established the standards for moral behavior, the Code of Ethics, to guide the everyday professional conduct of social workers. This Code of Ethics is based on the following six **core values**.

Core Values

Core Value 1. Service

This ethical principle defines the primary goals of a social worker: to help people in need and to address social problems. The obligation to serve others takes precedence over any self-interest. Social workers use their knowledge, skills, and values to help clients function better in society.

Core Value 2. Social Justice

This ethical principle prompts social workers to challenge social injustice. Social workers seek social change on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals or groups of people. They focus on addressing issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. Social change activities promote understanding of oppression and of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Core Value 3. Dignity and Worth of the Person

This ethical principle teaches respect for the inherent dignity and worth of the person. Social workers treat each individual with respect. They take individual and cultural differences into account. Social workers recognize and promote clients' self-determination and encourage clients to address their own needs and to create change. In this capacity, social workers are conscious of their dual responsibility to clients and to the society.

Core Value 4. Importance of Human Relationships

This ethical principle helps social workers to recognize the central importance of human relationship and its impact in achieving positive change. Social workers realize the importance of engaging clients as partners in the helping process.

Core Value 5. Integrity

This ethical principle prompts social workers to behave in a trustworthy manner. Social workers recognize the importance of building and develop–ing trustworthy relationships with the clients they serve.

Integrity confirms a social worker's honesty and respect for clients' rights to privacy. It also demands ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which social workers are affiliated.

Core Value 6. Competence

This ethical principle calls social workers to practice within their areas of competence and to develop and enhance their professional expertise. Social workers should participate in continuing education to learn more about their area of practice. When they do this, social workers contribute to the knowledge base of the social work profession.



How are these six core values applied in refugee resettlement?

As a staff member who serves refugees, reflect on your daily commitment to these six core values:

- Do you put clients' interests above your own?
- Are you committed to social justice?
- Do you show respect for the dignity and worth of every individual?
- Do you show that you consider human relationships to be important?
- Do your actions display trustworthiness to your clients?
- Do you work to improve your knowledge and your skills?

Recognize the six core values, and reflect on how to apply them to your daily work with refugees. This practice will improve your ability to provide quality services to your refugee clients.

Ethical Standards

You must observe a number of ethical standards in your professional activities and services with refugee clients. The most critical standard is your ethical responsibility to your clients. Sixteen standards outline your responsibilities in this area.



Ethical Standard 1. Commitment to Clients

Every social worker's first responsibility is to increase clients' sense of well-being and ability to function in society. Certain situations, however, can override this loyalty to represent the client's interest. For example, you must report if a client is engaging in child abuse or if a client threatens harm to self or others. In such cases, the client's freedom to choose his or her actions cannot come before his or her own safety or the safety of others.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

It is important to explain this standard to your clients early in the resettlement process as part of the orientation process. You might also provide specific details so that clients fully understand the definition of child abuse and harmful behavior in the United States. Cultural standards, norms, and belief systems sometimes differ on this definition. For example, in some

countries, it might be accepted behavior to leave small children alone and unsupervised. Or it may be accepted for parents to discipline children in a physical manner that might be considered violent in the United States. Your clients should understand that, although you are committed to helping them in any way you can, you must report any instances of abusive or harmful behavior to the proper authorities.



Ethical Standard 2. Self-Determination

Social workers respect each client's right to determine his or her own future. Social workers help clients to define their own goals. They suggest ways to achieve these goals, based on the client's ability and willingness to work toward certain outcomes. Social workers may limit this right to self-determination if a client's actions create a danger to self or others.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

Explain to your clients all the options available to them. Encourage them to take ownership of the resettlement plan you establish together.

Sometimes, you may face a dilemma when trying to uphold this ethical standard. Clients' goals for themselves might directly conflict with the requirements and expectations of federally funded programs (such as R&P or MG). Or clients may not be able to meet the set requirements within the prescribed timeframes.

The most common example is the conflict that often arises in promoting the R&P principle of achieving economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible after arrival. But as a part of self-determination, some clients may make it their first goal to learn English—before seeking employment.

Self-determination is closely related to the concept of person-in-environment, discussed in Section I of this manual. Each person will react differently to immediate and distant environments. Therefore, each will achieve self-sufficiency at different times. Accept your clients' wishes about how fast and far they are willing to move forward with self-sufficiency and social adjustment. At the same time, help clients to understand the consequences of their choices. This is why it is important to involve them in the development of their resettlement plan.



Ethical Standard 3. Informed Consent

Social workers should only provide services to clients in the context of a professional relationship based on valid, informed consent (permission to serve). Social workers help clients to clearly understand the type of services being provided. This assistance includes explanation in their primary language (such explanation can be written, oral, or both). Social workers should inform clients that clients have the right to refuse services or to withdraw consent. When clients receive services on an involuntary basis, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services. They should also inform clients of the consequences that may result if clients refuse services.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

Think back again to the concept of social justice and client rights, especially the right to consent or refuse any service. Remember, clients will need your help to fully understand the concept of informed consent. Each agency needs to have uniform documents to support this process. If your agency does not have these documents, your program can develop its own. These are considered legal documents and should be translated or interpreted in a client's primary language. Clients should be required to sign an acknowledgment stating that they have received the documents and have given informed consent.

Explain to your clients the consequences (if any) that may result if they withdraw from or refuse to participate in the services offered. For instance, an R&P client who refuses services would not be able to receive these services from another agency.



Ethical Standard 4. Competence

Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the framework of their education, training, licenses, certification, consultation, and supervised experience.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

As a staff member of a resettlement program, you bring valuable knowledge and skills to your job, especially cultural and linguistic competency. To complete your skill set, you will also need to understand basic social work principles and how they apply to the daily work within a resettlement program.

You must also work within the framework provided by U.S. laws and by agency policies and procedures. Remember that the standard of competency is meant to safeguard you, your colleagues, your clients, and your agency.



It is important for each of us to recognize our limitations and biases. Know when you need the help of other professionals. Competency is a process—every social worker will always be able to further improve his or her skills, knowledge, and understanding of work with refugees.

Program leaders must ensure that all resettlement staff receive appropriate ongoing training, especially since most are from other countries and might not have received formal social work training.

The following example illustrates why the standard of competence is so important.

Many refugees experience problems understanding and adjusting to the new culture. You, as a case manager, may feel overwhelmed by these problems. Yet you also feel obligated to counsel your client about his or her frustration, depression, feelings of homesickness, inability to sleep at night, and frequent crying.



Although talking to your client about all these frustrations and behaviors may feel good to you, it is not necessarily the best way to help the client. Keep in mind that symptoms of depression related to displacement usually require more specialized help than you are able to offer. You are charged with helping your client, but this does not mean providing every kind of help all by yourself. In fact, if you try to do more than you are qualified to do, you could unintentionally harm your client.

Therefore, you need to recognize your own limits. If a client is depressed, refer him or her to appropriate professionals who can give the help needed. In a situation like the one described above, you can offer your cultural expertise. Explain your client's culture to the mental health professional, and explain to your client how mental health assistance works in the United States. In this way, you fulfill your professional role and stay active in helping your client.



Ethical Standard 5. Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

Social workers should follow these four guidelines:

a. Understand the concept of culture and its impact on human behavior and society.
b. Know and understand the client's culture and its impact on service delivery.
c. Demonstrate competence in providing services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.
d. Obtain education to better understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, political beliefs, religion, and other social attributes.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

Within the agency, you are usually considered the expert when it comes to cultural competency and sensitivity. However, this does not mean that all staff have a full understanding of U.S. culture and social diversity. All resettlement staff need ongoing training about cultural differences, with emphasis on U.S. culture. This training can help both you and your client to act and interpret appropriately within the culture.

Let us continue with the mental health example above. In many situations, you are asked to provide interpretation services. Here, you represent the culture and speak the language of your client. You establish a link between your client and the helping professional. As mentioned before, you need to provide cultural background to the helping professional to help him or her better understand your client. You should also educate yourself about the helping process within the host culture. When you understand this process, you can explain it to your client and guide your client through it. In this way, your expertise can be used effectively by both the client and his or her professional helper. You are more than an interpreter; you create a link and provide a context in which both parties can understand each other.



Ethical Standard 6. Conflict of Interest

In this area, social workers should follow these three guidelines:

a. Understand and avoid conflicts of interest.
b. Do not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship. Do not exploit clients or other individuals to pursue one's own personal, religious, political, social, or business interests.
c. Do not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients (e.g., friendship or other personal relationship with a client; someone who exchanges gifts with a client) that could lead to the potential for harm or exploitation of the client.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

As a member of a resettlement staff, you may have more than one kind of relationship with your clients, especially those who are from your country of origin. In addition to your job responsibilities, you might play other roles within the larger community. Outside of working hours, for example, you might volunteer in the community or encounter clients in social situations. Although you have the right to participate in the activities of your choice, it is important to consider the potential conflicts of interest that could occur.

Conflicts of interest do not only occur in situations within social communities based on your culture of origin. They can arise in many other circumstances. For instance, the manager of the apartment complex in which you live might offer to reduce your rent if your agency agrees to place clients in their complex. As another example, a client might want to give you a personal gift. Your acceptance of the gift would result in a conflict of interest if you benefit personally. Also, the client might feel that your acceptance entitles him or her to preferential treatment or services.

A conflict of interest may affect job performance and violate agency standards or social work ethics. If you find yourself in this situation, you may have to either change the situation or resign from the resettlement program.

Program leaders should discuss conflict of interest early in the training of their staff. Different standards govern professional relationships in many foreign countries. However, those accepted practices, including the working relationship between helper and client, may be considered culturally inappropriate within the standards and laws of the United States.



Ethical Standard 7. Privacy and Confidentiality

Social workers should do the following with respect to privacy and confidentiality:

a. Respect the clients' right to privacy.
b. Protect the confidentiality of all information obtained while providing services, except for compelling professional reasons (such as knowledge of child abuse or intent to harm self or others).
c. Inform clients, to the greatest extent possible, about what it means to disclose confidential information. Discuss the potential consequences before making such a disclosure.
d. Discuss the issue of confidentiality with clients. Talk about the limitations of the clients' right to confidentiality.
e. Do not discuss confidential information in any situation unless you can ensure privacy.
f. Protect clients' confidentiality during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law.
g. Protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records.
h. Transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects the clients' confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes and agency policy governing record-keeping and disposal.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

Most refugees served by our programs have lived in countries with oppressive governments that violated basic human rights, including the right to confidentiality. Also, many have come from societies that value community involvement and that view the larger community as being responsible for the well-being of its members. Clearly, these societies do not place the same emphasis on privacy and confidentiality that U.S. society does.

As a case manager, one of your most important tasks is to establish a trusting relationship with your clients. Many refugees have had negative experiences with representatives from the government and other institutions. Therefore, they view these organizations—and those who work for them—as having great power and control. Some clients may not recognize that here in the United States, the government and institutions are bound by law to respect individual rights.

Help your clients understand that the United States is a democratic society, built on principles of individual freedom and protection. Only then will the client begin to see and understand the meaning of the right to confidentiality.



Ethical Standard 8. Access to Records

Social workers should provide clients with access to records that concern them individually, while also protecting the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in those records.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

At any given time, clients have the right to view case file information related to the services they have received. This right does not extend to anchor relatives. All resettlement staff should be trained in appropriate case recording, which includes keeping accurate and current file documentation. Information related to other clients **should not** appear in the case file. Section IV of this manual provides more specific information on case recording.



Ethical Standard 9. Sexual Relationships

Social workers **should not** engage in sexual activities or contact with the following persons:

a. Current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced
b. The clients' relatives, or other persons significant to the client, when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client
c. Former clients, because of potential harm to the client

In addition, social workers **should not** provide clinical services to persons with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. This could harm the client, and it makes it unlikely that the social worker will be able to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

The professional environment in the United States is different from that in some other countries. In some cultures, it may be accepted for a sexual relationship to develop and exist between an employee and client. In the United States, this behavior is not acceptable. It may cause you to lose your job, and it could even harm your future professional career.

As a staff member in a resettlement program, you often work with vulnerable and traumatized clients. These clients might behave in a manner that could create a dangerous and inconvenient situation for you as a case manager. You must provide many of the required services in settings outside of the office, such as in client homes and other private settings. Therefore, you must set boundaries early on in your relationship with a client. Work to create an environment that protects you and your clients from certain situations.



Ethical Standard 10. Physical Contact

Social workers **should not** engage in physical contact with a client when there is a possibility for potential psychological harm to the client. If physical contact is appropriate, social workers should set clear, culturally sensitive boundaries.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

You are working with clients from many different cultures, and the appropriateness of physical contact will vary. You may feel that a client is in need of physical contact, such as patting on the back, holding a hand, or even hugging the person. Remember that what you consider as an appropriate response may not be considered appropriate by the client. Become familiar with the customary use of physical contact in different cultures. In this way, you can appropriately choose the best methods for providing help to your clients.



Ethical Standard 11. Sexual Harassment

Social workers **should not** sexually harass clients. "Sexual harassment" is defined by sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

It can be difficult to understand sexual harassment as it is defined in the United States, particularly for someone from another country. Most of the time, people do not intend to violate this standard, but a misunderstanding can easily lead to problems. Examples of behavior that could be misinterpreted or experienced as sexual harassment may include complimenting a co-worker on the way he or she looks or offering a flower as a wish for a great working day. These actions, which may be accepted norms in the working environment in many foreign countries, might not be acceptable within the U.S. working environment.

Other examples of potential sexual harassment situations arise from cultural norms. For instance, in some cultures an older man is viewed as an advisor to younger people, including women. In those cultures, he might be expected to offer advice about male-female relationships. He might feel obligated to provide a ride home after work. He might even make a courtesy call if he knows a young woman is home alone. These actions could be misinterpreted by those not familiar with the man's culture.

You and your colleagues need to learn about the practices of different countries and take time to discuss why certain behaviors may be inappropriate in this country. This knowledge will help you to avoid potential problems in this area.

As a staff member in a resettlement program, you should receive and keep a copy of your agency's sexual harassment policy and learn its contents. If anything in the policy is unclear, speak to your supervisor. Program leaders should provide staff with ongoing coaching in this area. Your agency may have a diversity council or other type of cultural committee that might assist with the coaching.



Ethical Standard 12. Derogatory Language

Social workers **should not** use derogatory language while helping clients. Social workers should use appropriate and respectful language while communicating with and about clients.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

In a resettlement program, you and many of your co-workers may be multilingual. While this is a good and necessary skill, it allows for situations where this standard could be accidentally violated. Two factors especially contribute to potential problems or misunderstandings.

The first factor arises from mistakes in interpretation or translation. It is easy to choose the wrong word or to misunderstand a word's exact meaning. This could result in an unintended, offensive, or disrespectful use of language.

The second contributing factor arises from the types of vocal tone and nonverbal communication that may be appropriate in different cultures. In certain cultures, communication in a loud tone of voice and with certain body language may be acceptable. In the United States, the same tones and gestures may be considered offensive or inappropriate.

In some situations, you or your client may feel that the use of derogatory language is the only way to get what you need or want. This behavior might be related to past experiences in other countries or in refugee camps. Remember that the current situation is different. Remind yourself or your client that different situations call for different responses.

It is important to respect other cultural norms and practices of communicating. However, as an employee of a social service agency in the United States, you may need to adjust your communication style or language. Teach your clients about appropriate cultural communication in the United States, as the appropriate and respectful use of language applies to them as well.



Ethical Standard 13. Payment for Services

Social workers should ensure that, when required, fees are set in a fair and reasonable manner, giving consideration to the clients' ability to pay. In addition, social workers should (a) avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services, and (b) not solicit a private fee or other payments for providing clients with services that are available free of charge through the social worker's employer or agency.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

With the exception of some immigration services, the help that our programs provide to clients should be free of charge. This concept may be difficult for some refugee clients to understand, as they often follow the customs and standards of their culture.

In many countries, an individual who needs help is expected to provide a bribe or some type of compensation in order to receive services. One example of this behavior might be paying extra money to medical professionals to receive preferential treatment in a hospital. Another is giving a bottle of expensive alcohol or bouquet of flowers to a government official for help resolving an issue.

Reinforce the concepts of free and non-preferential treatment with your clients. If any types of services require fees, your program should post a fee schedule. If needed, this chart should be translated into the primary languages of the clients served by your agency.



Ethical Standard 14. Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the clients' interests and rights while acting on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make an informed decision.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

Sometimes you have clients who might not be fully aware of, or understand the reality of, a situation or issue. They may appear to be confused, overwhelmed, and incapable of making the best decision. In such situations, seek advice and help from your supervisor or another qualified professional.

It is not appropriate to make a decision on behalf of the client, even if you feel it is the right thing to do. While you do have the client's best interest in mind, such an action may actually act against the client's best interest.

For instance, what if your client appears unable to fully understand the U.S. banking system? You are trying to help your client save money, budget well, and establish good credit for his or her own future benefit. Given this, you may feel that compelling the client to open a checking account seems like the best decision. However, it may not be the best course of action for the client. With an imperfect understanding of the banking system, the client might, for example, write checks for more money than he or she has in the account. This could lead to criminal charges or credit problems for the client.

It is important not to reflect an attitude that says to your clients, "I was once in your shoes, and I know what you should do." This is not a healthy approach to use when you have a client who lacks the capacity to make an informed decision.



Ethical Standard 15. Interruption of Services

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure that clients will continue to receive services in the case of interruption due to relocation, illness, or disability.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

The case management model, which you use to deliver services to your clients, requires you to provide services without interruption for the service period(s) of various programs. If one of your clients relocates to another city or state, you should at least provide the client with the telephone numbers, addresses, and names of refugee resettlement organizations in the area.

Also, your agency should make reasonable efforts to inform the USCCB/MRS resettlement program in the state to which the refugee client is relocating (if there is one). There may also be circumstances when you should contact USCCB/MRS Processing Operations if an R&P client moves within a certain timeframe.



Ethical Standard 16. Termination of Services

a. Social workers should terminate services to clients, and end the professional relationship with them, when clients no longer need such services and relationships.
b. Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who still need services.
c. Social workers **should not** terminate services in order to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

In addition, social workers should notify clients promptly before terminating services. Or, where appropriate, social workers should act to ensure that services will continue to be provided to clients.



How does this standard apply to your work with refugees?

As someone who works directly with clients, you may sometimes feel it is difficult to close certain cases. Maybe you just are not ready to let go of a case that was especially difficult. You have worked so hard for several months, and you have finally established a relationship of trust. The clients have finally started to progress. You think that if help is withdrawn now, they might not function as well. Remember that, as a social worker, you follow the principle of empowerment. Your goal is to work within clients'

capabilities and strengths to help them master the skills they need to become independent.

Introduce the concept of termination to clients from the beginning of services. Reinforce this idea—in a positive way—throughout the service period. This helps clients to understand that services in the USCCB/MRS resettlement program do have time limits. However, we work within those limits to help clients successfully resettle.

Each program should have a policy that ensures that a final contact is made with each client. During this contact, discuss the steps that will be taken to terminate services. Inform clients about additional resources in case they should need them in the future.

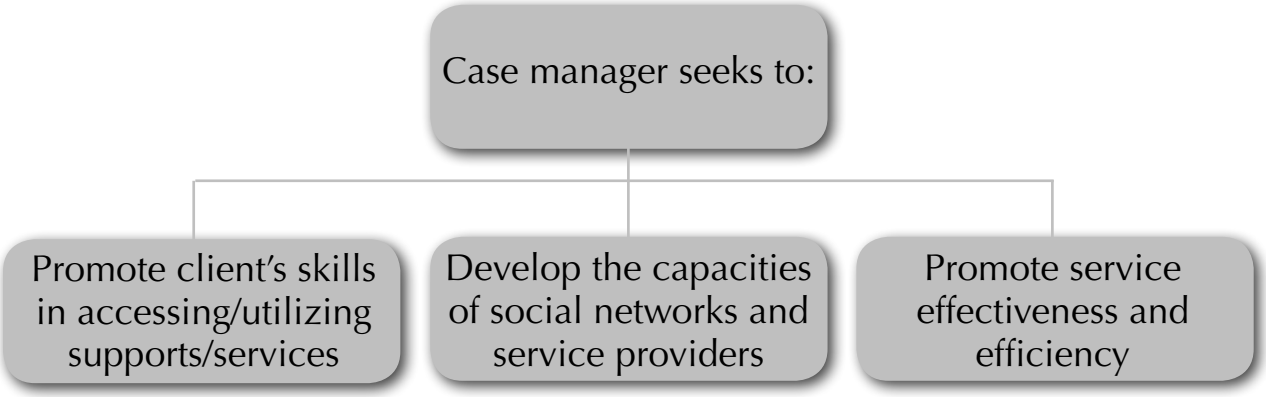


III. The Role of Case Management in a Resettlement Program

III.1 General Overview of Case Management

What Is Case Management?

- **Case management** is the most effective method of delivering services to clients who have multiple needs. Case management aims to increase clients' ability to function independently.
- Case management is one of the methods most commonly used to deliver services to clients within human service organizations.
- Case management provides a framework that takes the whole person into account. It does not focus on just one problem that a client has, but instead focuses on many issues, problems, and concerns.



Goals of Case Management

The basic goals of case management are the following:

- To promote a client's ability to access and use human services and social supports
- To create a structure of social networks and service providers
- To promote service effectiveness and efficiency

Focus of Case Management

Case management focuses on the creation of a client support network. This network includes the following components:

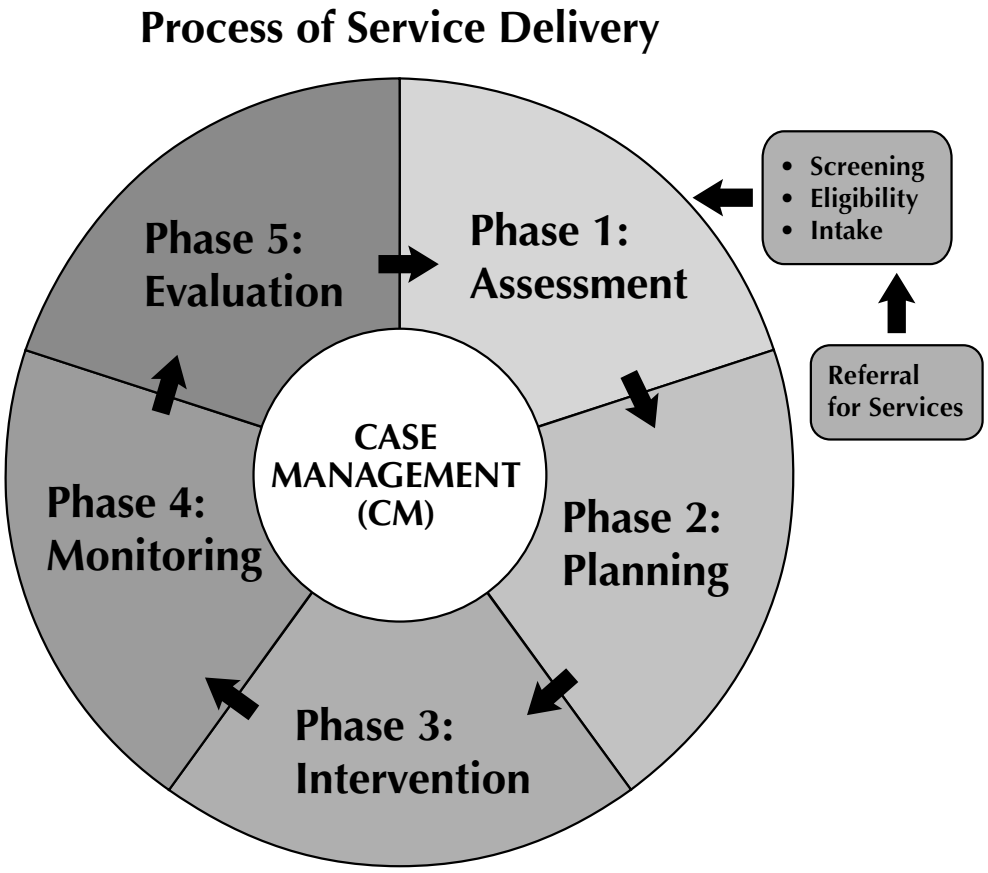
- Self-care (individual client skill development)
- Professional care (involvement of multiple professional providers)
- Mutual care (involvement of the client's social network)

Consider all three of these components of a client support network within the practice of case management.

Practical Functions of Case Management

The five basic functions performed by case managers are the following:

- Assessment
- Planning
- Intervention
- Monitoring
- Evaluation





Implications of Applying the Case Management Model in a U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program

The objective of the U.S. resettlement program fits within the overall goals of case management. Your goal is to help refugee clients become economically self-sufficient as soon as possible. How do you accomplish this? You help them to use their own skills and abilities to adjust to a new culture and environment. You assist them as they draw upon a network of formal and informal support systems.

The services you provide to refugees are linguistically and culturally appropriate. They are comprehensive and coordinated. They foster independence, self-direction, and self-support. Your support and training increases clients' abilities to transfer skills from their former countries to their new environment in the United States.

When you apply the case management model to your program, you provide clients with the most comprehensive, holistic services in the most effective and efficient way possible. To put this model into practice, all staff members need to have not only cultural and linguistic capabilities, but also a chance to learn basic social work concepts and develop necessary skills. Sections I and II of this manual address these concepts and skills.

III.2 Assessment



Defining Assessment

The assessment phase of case management involves these steps:

- Make a first contact with the person requesting assistance, in order to gather and assess information to determine a person's eligibility for services.
- Establish eligibility and then accept the individual for services (this is when the person becomes a client).
- Carry out comprehensive assessment activities, including (a) assessment of a client's self-care capacity and human service needs; (b) assessment of a client's social network and its capacity to respond to the client's needs; (c) assessment of human service providers and their capacity to respond to the needs of the client.



How do you carry out assessment in your work with refugees?

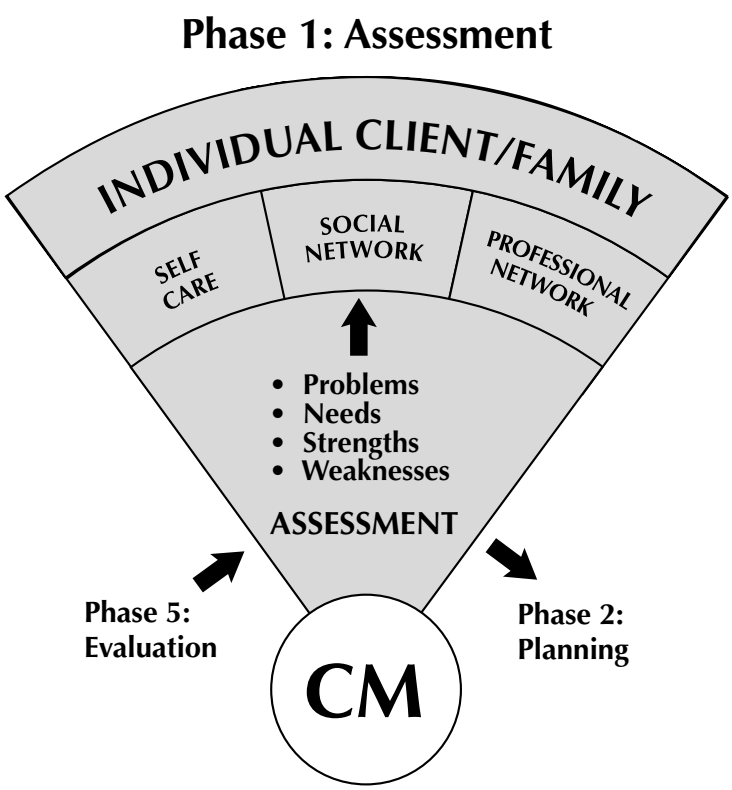
Eligibility Criteria

- All legally admitted refugees and entrants can receive initial resettlement services when they are resettled under the sponsorship of USCCB/MRS through the R&P and Cuban/Haitian (C/H) programs.
- All legally admitted refugees, asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and trafficking victims can receive Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)-funded employment and social adjustment services for the first five years from the date of entry to the United States or from the date of approval for political asylum status.

Screening Process

Initial screening to determine refugee status takes place overseas. Refugees accepted for admittance to the United States are referred to a national agency (like USCCB/MRS). This agency, in turn, assigns cases to local resettlement programs.

USCCB/MRS resettlement programs do not discriminate in any way. We accept clients for services regardless of their religious affiliation or country of origin. Anchor relatives may be able to select the agency that will help their family through Affidavit of Relationship (AOR) filing. Still, remember that most non-U.S. tie clients rarely have an opportunity to choose their final destination. Therefore, they are considered *semi-involuntary clients*.



As a staff member in one of MRS's local resettlement programs, you assess and review the biographical data and other information provided by MRS Processing Operations. You consider your program's capacity in the areas of language, available housing and employment, medical resources, and other resources the client needs. Then you decide whether your program can effectively resettle the client. For U.S. tie cases, you also consider the anchor relatives' ability and willingness to help. You consider how your program might effectively coordinate services with these relatives.

Assessment Process

The main purpose of your assessment is to collect information that will support the development of a resettlement plan. The ultimate goal, of course, is for clients to obtain economic and social self-sufficiency as soon as possible after their arrival.

First, you assess basic needs, including needs for housing, food, clothing, and household items. You then assess clients' needs in the following areas:

- Health and mental health
- Employability
- Education for children
- Guardianship for attached minors
- Orientation to U.S. laws and culture (including issues of family violence, abuse, neglect, and substance abuse)
- English-language training

Also, you assess special needs for those clients who are disabled, those who have suffered traumatic experiences or torture, and those who might need mental health services or other special services.

Many agencies have a written manual that incorporates step-by-step procedures for how to complete an assessment; this manual would be based on program and agency requirements and may have more specifics if the agency is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA).

III.3 Planning

The planning phase begins after your agency accepts an individual for case management services and a case manager completes the initial assessment. Planning is the link between assessment and intervention. (Intervention is discussed later in this section. Briefly, intervention is when the activities set in the plan are carried out.)

The planning phase is when you, as a case manager, and your client develop a resettlement plan and arrange for service delivery. The actual plan addresses *what* services will be provided, *how* they will be arranged, *who* will carry out the services, and by *when* (targeted date of completion). Your client's participation in this planning process is extremely important. He or she will need to identify with and accept the suggested services and desired outcomes.



Development of Service Plan

As a case manager, your involvement in this process is crucial. Consider these three components while developing a comprehensive resettlement plan: individual care, social networks, and mutual networks.

In general terms, the planning of client service delivery includes these steps:

a. Determine the client's needs.
b. Transform these needs into short- and long-term goals and objectives, to be met with service delivery and other social support.
c. Identify the roles and responsibilities of those involved in service delivery and social support.
d. Establish timeframes for clients to achieve goals (partial or final achievement).
e. Develop and establish indicators to measure effectiveness so that you, as a case manager, can monitor and evaluate your plan for services.
f. Develop a contract.

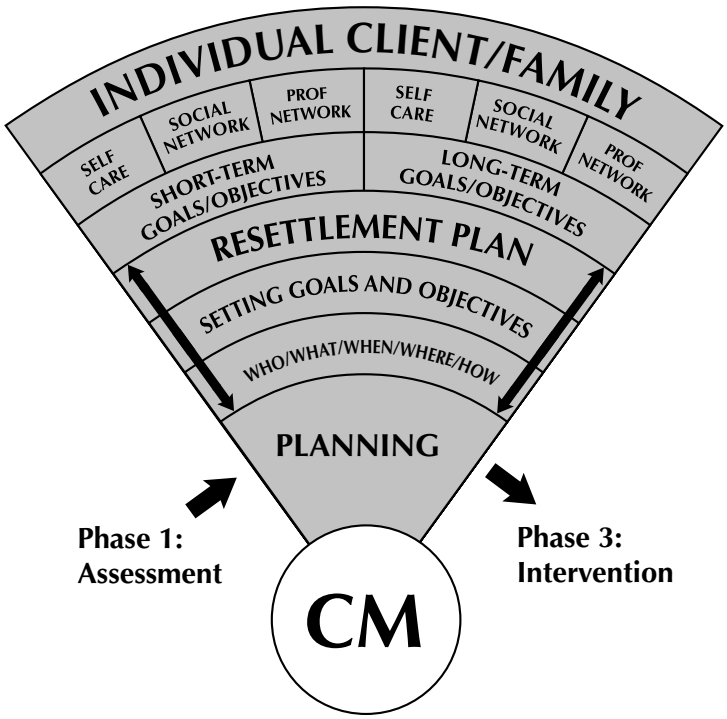


You provide a contract in order to follow the Code of Ethics that is reviewed in Section II of this manual. This contract, or agreement between you and the client, specifies which activities each person will conduct. It sets out a timeframe for action to be conducted or completed during the intervention phase and is signed by both you and the client. The agreement typically used in R&P programs is the resettlement plan. In other programs, this type of plan is often called an Individual Service Plan (ISP).

The **resettlement plan** should address the following:

- Problems and concerns
- Short-term goals and objectives for the intervention phase, and long-term goals for increasing the well-being of clients
- Activities to be conducted by the client
- Tasks to be performed by you (or by a third party) during the intervention phase
- Dates and timeframes for tasks to be completed
- Estimated date by which the intervention will be completed
- Schedule of time and place for particular activities
- Identification of other social and mutual networks (such as anchor relatives and volunteers) that are expected to participate, and clarification of their roles during the service delivery process

Phase 2: Planning



Each grant program has its own requirements for the development of a service plan. Since the individual service plan is the foundation of the case management model, USCCB/MRS strongly encourages each program to develop a separate resettlement plan for each member of the case for initial resettlement contracts (such as R&P and C/H). Although developing separate plans can be time-consuming, this practice is the only way to ensure the principles of case management are adequately implemented.



How do you develop a service plan in your work with refugees?

Service Planning

As a case manager, you must develop a written resettlement plan in a timely manner for each client. Your clients should be a part of the process of setting their own short- and long-term goals toward achieving self-sufficiency through employment as soon as possible after arrival. You should also inform your clients about different approaches and possibilities. They need to participate in the preparation of their own resettlement plans.

Both you and your client should understand and agree upon your roles in preparing and executing the plan. Place special emphasis on explaining the client's rights to confidentiality. Also, help the client continue to practice customs that preserve cultural identity.

The resettlement plan incorporates your assessment findings. It specifies which services you and your client have planned. It also includes service goals and objectives, timeframes, and expected outcomes. Each client should sign the finished resettlement plan. For a minor (under the age of eighteen), his or her designated guardian should sign.

Logistics for the Development of the Plan

All resettlement programs face certain challenges in the planning phase. Our funders already outline the services we must provide, and the core services checklist is the baseline for the services that refugee clients should receive. Our cooperative agreement details more requirements related to health, mental health, employment, and services to minors. So when developing service plans for clients, we must describe these required services to them.

Many agencies have a manual that incorporates requirements of a cooperative agreement (similar to USCCB program operations manuals) with agency requirements (and also incorporates COA requirements for agencies that are accredited). Check to see whether your agency has this helpful tool.

The Development of a Resettlement Plan

The resettlement plan is developed within the outline of program requirements and client needs. This process involves teamwork between you, the client, other professionals, and social network members. You can adjust the integrated plan as needed.

What other professionals might play a role? What do you mean by "other social network members"?

Examples of other professionals include

- Other staff from the resettlement program
- Medical doctors
- School teachers
- Eligibility workers in state welfare or social security offices
- Mental health professionals.

Social network members might be

- Volunteers
- Ethnic community representatives
- Church members
- Neighbors
- Anchor relatives

The appropriate development of a resettlement plan is one of the most important functions of the case management model. It defines how needs will be addressed, and it drafts for each client the steps necessary to fulfill their needs.

III.4 Intervention

What are your service functions (roles) in carrying out the case management model? Answering this question is important to understanding the intervention phase.

In each case, you, as a case manager, will have to determine the direct and indirect roles you will need to play in the implementation of the resettlement plan. The goal in case management is to enhance clients' ability to function independently. Remember that each client has a different capacity to fulfill this goal.

First, assess your client's skills. Then, adjust your roles and the written service plan accordingly. In all this, ask the help and support of your supervisor.



The Direct Function of Case Management

The direct function of case management, known as **micro-intervention**, is performed at a client level. In determining your **direct role**, understand that each client has a different capacity to function independently. Develop a good, trustworthy relationship with each client. This will give you more chances to appropriately assess what the client is able to do.

Build the plan around the assessment of the client's attributes. In this way, you will develop the most suitable plan to increase client independence and self-direction.

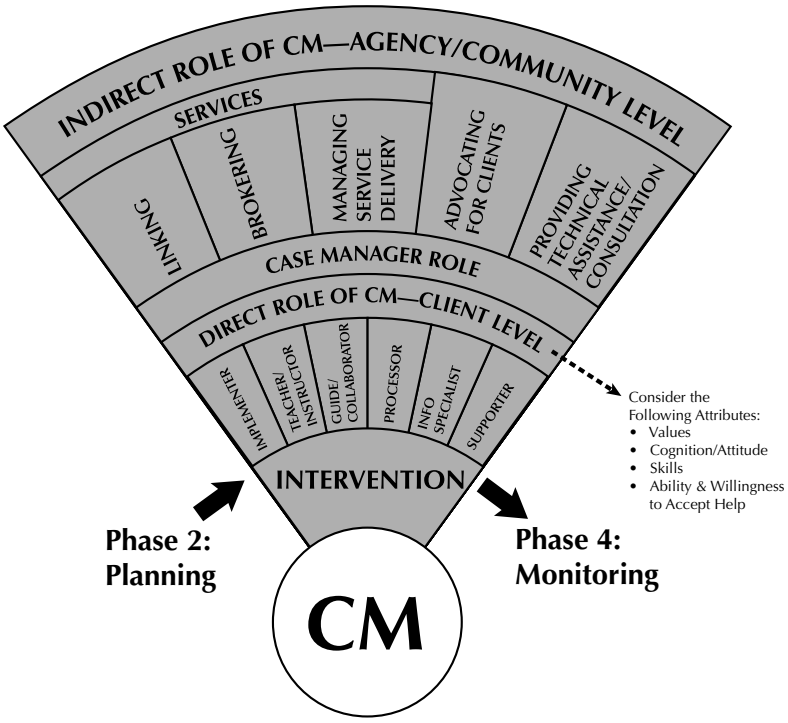
The following are four basic attributes you must consider in developing the plan:

- ***Values.*** Each client is a unique person with the ability to achieve set goals. Each client also has a particular value system. Develop your intervention with that system in mind. If you know the value systems of your client, you will better understand how to work with the client to achieve their goals.
- ***Cognition and Attitude*. Cognition** is a person's state of mind. It includes perceptions, reasoning, judgments, mindset, and attitudes. Consider the cognition of each client when developing your resettlement plan. The more accurately you can assess a client's cognition, the more appropriate your plan of intervention will be.
- ***Skills.*** Assess how well the client can use his or her cognitive and behavioral skills in order to function independently.
- ***Ability and Willingness to Accept Help.*** Assess the client's ability and willingness to accept your help in achieving the goals set in the resettlement plan.

You will engage in one or more **direct service** roles during the **service period**, or **intervention phase**, of case management. These roles will depend on the client assessment that you conducted using the four attributes listed above.

As a case manager, you need to understand the possible roles you may play in order to effectively help your clients. Six roles are discussed in this segment: implementer, teacher/instructor, guide/collaborator, processor, information specialist, and supporter.

Phase 3: Intervention





Implementer

As a case manager, you will have a different degree of personal involvement with each case. Overall, see yourself as a navigator: someone who guides clients and who ensures services are delivered as designed within the resettlement plan.

As an implementer, you keep track of deadlines. You evaluate whether your client has progressed appropriately towards achieving the set goals within the timeframes originally established. Continually evaluate obstacles, and adjust the plan as necessary, intervening when needed.



How might you, as a resettlement case manager, assume this role?

This is one of the most important roles when it comes to putting your resettlement plan into action. If you do not engage appropriately in this role, the best-developed resettlement plan will not succeed.

Any person moving to a new environment or culture would naturally have difficulties functioning independently after only a short period of time. Our clients face these difficulties, along with many other obstacles such as separation from family, the experience of trauma, and prolonged stays in refugee camps. Some may be unable to fully understand and fulfill the expectation set forth by the U.S. refugee program—economic self-sufficiency through employment as soon as possible after arrival.

As an implementer, you will need to establish a stable situation for your clients. At some point during the service period, you may need to re-evaluate the resettlement plan, especially if clients are not meeting the goals within established timeframes.

A successful implementer works to find the reasons why goals have not been achieved (for instance, whether expectations were set too high, or new obstacles have arisen). Then, he or she will work to reassess the four basic areas of client attributes (values, cognition and attitudes, skills, and willingness to accept help). Remember, it typically takes two to three months for most newly arrived refugees to fully comprehend the concept of the U.S. resettlement program and actively participate in resettlement activities.



Teacher/Instructor

In this role, you work directly with clients to help them develop skills that are useful in achieving a higher level of independence. Clients should be able to perform tasks as described in the resettlement plan. The five basic steps of teaching are (1) identifying, (2) explaining, (3) demonstrating, (4) practicing, and (5) evaluating.



How might you, as a resettlement case manager, assume this role?

The role of teacher/instructor is a very important component within the intervention phase. As a case manager, you may teach your clients how to do many things, such as shopping in a grocery store, paying rent, using public transportation, making appointments with doctors, and using appliances in the home.

In this process of teaching these activities, you carry out the five basic steps of teaching/instructing. You identify and explain the desired skill. You demonstrate how to use it effectively. Then you provide an opportunity for the client to practice using the skill. Finally, you evaluate and provide feedback to ensure that the client can practice the skill in daily life.

Remember, each client learns in a different way. Each client needs different explanations and levels of practice to fully understand what to do and how to do it. Before you teach or instruct, you must understand what your client needs to learn, and how he or she can best learn it. You will need to use different approaches once you recognize a client's level of familiarity with a certain subject.



Guide/Collaborator

In this role, you work directly with clients to identify the services, support, and resources they need. Then you guide clients through the process of obtaining these resources. In this relationship, you and your clients collaborate to obtain services and resources. This collaboration better equips clients to obtain support independently.



How might you, as a resettlement case manager, assume this role?

As a case manager, you prepare your clients to obtain resources and support for themselves. After guiding clients, you expect them to carry out various activities on their own. For instance, you expect clients to buy food and necessities, take the bus to work, pick up children from school, attend ESL classes, and visit community organizations.



Processor

In this role, you act as an advisor and provide technical assistance to clients, usually in the later stages of the service period. Clients must be able to identify their own needs and obstacles. They must have the ability to develop possible solutions. They may need your help in advising them of available resources, but then they should be able to access these resources on their own.



How might you, as a resettlement case manager, assume this role?

Many case managers may not have the opportunity to play this role. This is because clients first need to achieve a certain level of self-sufficiency and acculturation before this role is useful to them. For example, one year after arrival, clients may be ready to look for additional resources and support to find better employment, continue their education, move to a better apartment, or purchase a house or car. At this point, clients may turn to their former case managers for advice on the best way to achieve these goals.



Information Specialist

In this role, you refer clients to appropriate resources. You can use resource books, pamphlets, handouts, catalogues, and computer databases to find the resources. In this role, you also evaluate whether a client is able to access the opportunities that are available.



How might you, as a resettlement case manager, assume this role?

In most situations, you engage in this role when you help clients fulfill educational or vocational needs. This assistance usually is given when clients have achieved a higher level of acculturation and adjustment to life. Most newly arrived clients will not have this need or be able to fulfill the requirements for accessing various resources early on in their resettlement process.

For instance, many clients want to enroll immediately in university classes. However, before you provide information about possible opportunities in this area, you must be sure that the client can realistically enroll in classes at that time. For instance, make sure there are no constraints related to finances, language ability, or residential status.



Supporter

In this role, you promote a client's self-advocacy. You do this through strategies such as empathizing and empowering. You might engage in this role when a client has already achieved a high level of independence and has well-developed problem-solving skills that allow for effective decision making.



How might you, as a resettlement case manager, assume this role?

As a case manager, you engage in this role while working with clients who are well-adjusted and productive members of our society. Refugees will face many obstacles and frustrations with systems and organizations. When they encounter these obstacles, they may seek support from you.

For example, clients might need your support during accessing or recertification of certain benefits, such as medical coverage or food stamps. Often, eligibility workers might incorrectly determine the status of clients. Clients might also experience obstacles in obtaining certain loans—such as financial aid for university classes or a mortgage approval—due to misunderstandings, or perhaps because of problems with their travel loan repayment.

The Indirect Function of Case Management

When engaging in the **indirect function** of case management, you serve as the main contact in a complex network between agencies. The indirect function of case management extends beyond direct work with clients. It includes functions performed on a broader level within the organization and community.

Five indirect service strategies that are important for case managers to recognize

(1) Brokering services to meet client needs
(2) Linking clients to services and resources
(3) Coordinating delivery of services to clients
(4) Advocating for clients
(5) Providing technical assistance and consultation

These five strategies should be incorporated into the resettlement plan to ensure that all client needs are met.



1. Brokering Services to Meet Client Needs

Use this strategy to connect your clients to resources and services that can appropriately meet the needs outlined in their resettlement plans. Determine which agencies and community resources can best deliver the services needed by your clients.



How can you effectively apply this strategy to case management?

First, you will need to know the kinds of services that are available for clients. Then you will need to determine which services might be appropriate and accessible.

Know the service areas of the agencies that will provide services to your clients. In addition, be aware of the quality of services that agencies will deliver, and know each service provider's level of competence to address clients' needs. Finally, verify that clients will meet the criteria for eligibility to access those services.

As a case manager, you develop personal contacts with various agencies. You build relationships that create a professional network. For example, you stay in touch with people at state welfare agencies, hospitals, local voluntary agencies, and schools. You communicate with private doctors, leaders of

cultural communities, and other refugee service providers. You can connect your client with these people and organizations so that, in turn, they can provide the resources and services that clients need.



2. Linking Clients to Services and Resources

You connect clients to all sorts of services. As a case manager, you act as a mediator between the client and the identified agency when you provide a referral to a client.

Make sure that clients understand the purpose of a referral. Ensure that they do not object and do not fear using the selected resources to have their needs met. Also, work with the selected agency to make sure that referrals are accepted and that the agency can adequately serve clients' needs.

In order to ensure this strategy is effectively carried out, establish an appropriate monitoring system. Document follow-up visits (see Section IV of this manual, "Case Recording," for more on this task). Leave a written record showing that the client has been served and that his or her needs have been met.



How can you effectively apply this strategy to case management?

Already, you frequently link clients to services and resources. You refer clients to many outside organizations for services, but you also provide referrals within your own agency.

For instance, you link clients to social service organizations for food stamps or financial benefits. You send them to medical facilities for medical and mental health services. But often, your own agency may provide social adjustment and employment services.

As a case manager, you need to understand how to function effectively as a link to resources. Making a simple referral for services to any agency does not ensure that a service was delivered or that your client's need was adequately met. To make this determination, you will need to follow up with the client and/or agency. Also, make sure you adequately document each step of this process.



3. Coordinating Delivery of Services to Clients

You, as a case manager, make sure that clients receive all the services they were intended to receive. You regularly monitor the implementation of the resettlement plan. You ensure that everyone is involved as the plan states they will be, including formal service providers, informal supporters, and the clients themselves.

You will use four methods to coordinate client service delivery:

1. ***Information exchange and monitoring***, in which you ensure that all members of the client support network have the information they need (for example, leading a case coordination conference, or reviewing assessment data or progress reports)
2. ***Capacity building***, which includes developing competencies and skills related to working with clients (such as case consultation and joint training)
3. ***Adaptation***, in which you respond to changes in client needs (adjusting the resettlement plan to take into account a changing situation and the needs of the client)
4. ***Networking***, which helps to enhance or maintain the functioning of the client support network (consultation, educational sessions, informal social activities)



How can you effectively apply this strategy to case management?

You lead and coordinate efforts to provide initial resettlement services. You also ensure that services are provided according to the resettlement plan. Often, this type of coordination requires special conferences to ensure that everyone follows the plan you and your client have set.

Employment activities—such as vocational training, job readiness activities, and job placement—often impact the original resettlement plan, so ongoing coordination is critical in this area. You will need to continue to follow up and share information with service providers.



4. Advocating for Clients

Draw on this strategy when a service provider responsible for service delivery is not responsive to the client's needs. Figure out how to work within existing structures to initiate the advocacy process. This strategy sometimes may require you to involve those in positions of power and authority, who ultimately can resolve the issue.

You must aim to advocate without creating major conflicts, if possible. One approach is to work first with those immediately responsible for service delivery before involving higher-level decision makers.



How can you effectively apply this strategy to case management?

As a case manager, you know that you must advocate for clients continuously throughout the resettlement service period. In today's environment of negative attitudes toward immigrants and refugees, this strategy is especially critical as we work for equal access to services, linguistically appropriate services within mainstream organizations, professionally and culturally competent assessment of the refugee children within the U.S. school system, and non-discriminatory employment practices.



5. Providing Technical Assistance and Consultation

You utilize your knowledge, expertise, competencies, and awareness of client needs and service delivery problems when advising and providing assistance to clients. You engage in different approaches to technical assistance and consultation. These might include responding to an agency's request for assistance, educating an agency about unmet needs and relevant characteristics of your clients, or exploring approaches that might resolve problems with service delivery.



How can you effectively apply this strategy to case management?

You regularly participate in task forces with other members of the resettlement staff. Here, you discuss concerns or educate other service providers about newly arriving refugees. Ideally, these meetings also result in the development of new resources to meet the needs of refugees. Examples might include the development of new employment opportunities, special ESL and literacy classes, or engaging guest speaker/workshop presentations to recruit more volunteers and mentors.

III.5 The Monitoring Function of Case Management

To ensure effective service delivery, you must monitor the basic functions discussed so far (assessment, planning, and intervention). The planning phase is an important time for you to identify the indicators that you and other staff will use to monitor the client's progress in achieving the goals outlined in the resettlement plan.

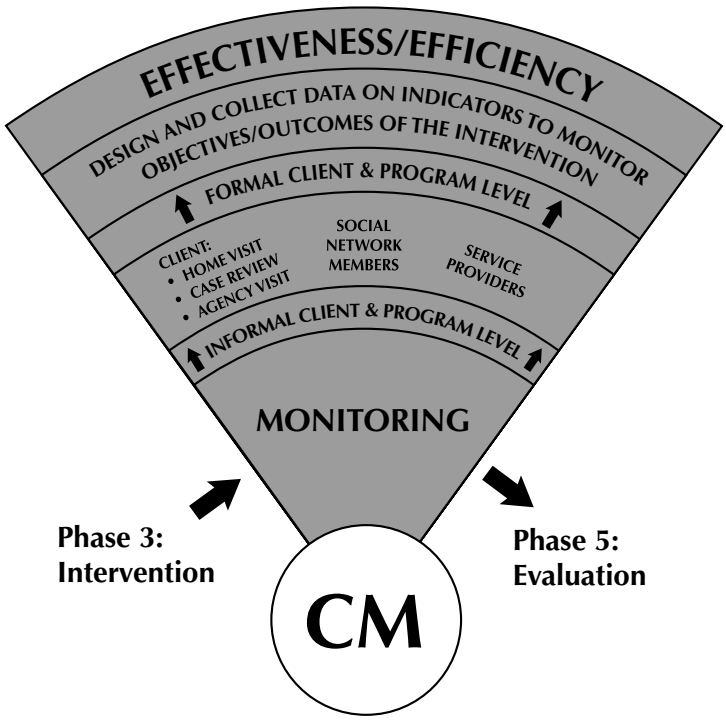
As part of monitoring, you must also review the progress of others involved in the implementation of service delivery, such as social and professional network members. You need to find out whether services have been delivered to your clients in an appropriate and timely manner.

When you carry out the monitoring function of case management, you should track the following:

- Whether the resettlement plan is being implemented in an appropriate and timely manner
- How the client is doing in meeting goals and objectives identified in the resettlement plan
- What services have been provided to the client and how the services have been delivered in order to address the client's needs (this tracking should allow for revision and redirection to improve the helping process)
- The service outcomes (these results, tracked over time, may show a need to revise the resettlement plan)
- Additional client needs, which, if identified, will require changes within the resettlement plan

The design, chosen techniques, and forms of the monitoring process come from two basic approaches: informal and formal. In the **informal approach**, you gather information and assess progress by communicating and observing. You use *qualitative* methods of monitoring, such as exchanging information with clients, social network members, and service providers. You review case records, and you visit with clients. These are all methods for informal monitoring.

Phase 4: Monitoring



The **formal approach** to monitoring is more structured. In it, you use *quantitative* methods and instruments to gather information and to evaluate outcomes of the planned intervention. Some monitoring indicators have already been developed. You might want to incorporate these tools into your assessment process. They can help you better monitor the progress your client is making.

How can you, as a case manager, effectively monitor the resettlement process?

Monitoring is an essential part of a successful intervention—it must not be overlooked or neglected. As a case manager, you should understand why monitoring is important.

As resettlement staff, you establish social and professional networks that are fundamental to the successful delivery of services to your clients. Yet you must also learn to navigate the helping process effectively. You can do this by using monitoring techniques to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the intervention.

Earlier in this section, you learned how effective the case management model is for providing services to clients. It is important to remember the larger picture and take a holistic approach. You can do this by focusing not only on the individual tasks you must complete, but on the larger picture. Often some tasks that can help your clients the most—such as case staffing with supervisors, or follow-up with refugee service providers and other resettlement staff—remain at the bottom of your to-do list. Try to remember that these tasks help your clients, even though they do not involve spending time with clients.

As a case manager, you sometimes will experience difficulty with moving clients towards goal achievement in a timely manner and reevaluating their needs. The process of helping clients function better on social and economic levels can become complicated and lengthy. The on-the-job, in-house training you receive does not always explain in detail the best ways to perform monitoring. At best, you may be using designed instruments to gather and evaluate outcomes of the resettlement process.

For Program Directors
All case managers need more formal, practical training about how to track each client's progress. The program director should organize appropriate training in this area. He or she should require case managers to receive coaching about how to perform monitoring techniques and about why they are so important.

You might use a weekly or monthly review system to assess a client's movement toward established goals. For instance, say you have a client with an established goal to start working within four months of arrival. As a part of your review system, you should be able to verify whether this client is, in fact, working. Depending on what you find out through your monitoring, one of several possible situations may arise:

1. The client may be working as scheduled. This means that the plan toward self-sufficiency is working well.
2. The client is not working due to some situation such as a newly discovered medical condition. This means that the plan toward self-sufficiency is not working. Adjustments are needed.
3. The client was working as scheduled but then was laid off. This means that the plan toward self-sufficiency is not working. Adjustments are needed.

III.6 The Evaluation Function of Case Management

The last section established that monitoring is an essential activity. Now, look at the data collected during your monitoring, and ask these questions:

1. How well has the intervention plan met the identified needs of the clients?
2. Were the goals achieved? Did we (the resettlement program, those involved in carrying out the plan, and I) make a positive difference in the areas of identified need?
3. Were the goals appropriately established? Should they be redefined?
4. Did the overall functioning of the client increase?

By addressing these questions, you can evaluate the following aspects of each case's management:

- ***The client service plan***—did it contribute adequately to the well-being of the client?
- ***The attainment of goals***—what overall outcomes did the case management process produce?
- ***The general effectiveness of case management services***—did they help to maintain or enhance the client's functional status?
- ***The client's satisfaction***—what does the client say about the effectiveness and usefulness of case management in meeting his or her needs? Overall, is the client satisfied with the delivery of services?

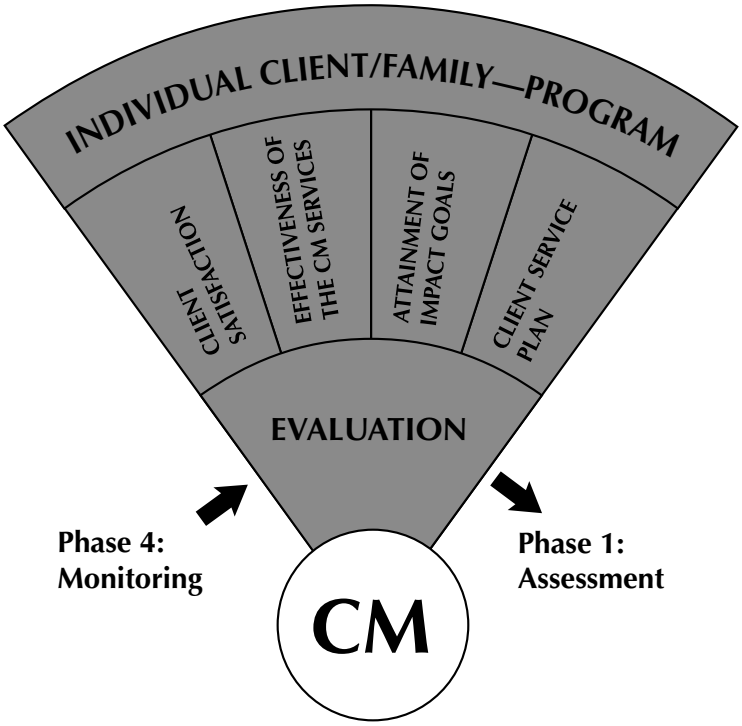


How can a resettlement program effectively evaluate each case?

Your program's evaluation examines the client's overall satisfaction with the services received. Often, you will be conducting the evaluation as part of the quality assurance process that assesses the program's overall goal attainments. In this case, the agency considers the evaluation to be a part of the larger program evaluation, not an assessment of the client's resettlement plan.

Many refugee clients do not understand the concept of "client satisfaction" surveys. Make a special effort to explain the important role these surveys play in evaluating the effectiveness and overall impact of services.

Phase 5: Evaluation



Program directors should advocate for the development of culturally appropriate and competent instruments within their own agency. You should use these instruments to evaluate overall satisfaction and goal attainment for clients. Often, quality assurance teams develop instruments to evaluate and compare outcomes within different agency programs. However, these instruments sometimes do not take into consideration the diverse nature of the resettlement program.

Other indicators or instruments that resettlement programs might use to evaluate outcomes include the following:

- USCCB or Department of State (DOS) monitoring and evaluation visits, and the instruments they use to evaluate programs (for example, the affiliate questionnaire)
- Pre- and post-evaluation of improvement in refugee family functioning, using the Likert scale (for example, a scale of 1 to 5)
- 120-day progress report for Match Grant clients



IV. Case Recording

Although the process of formulating a resettlement plan begins the intervention phase with our clients, an excellent assessment and written plan will not change a client's situation alone. To make a difference, you will need to put the plan into action and treat it as a living, evolving document.

While you must assess and evaluate your clients' progress in achieving various objectives, you will also need to monitor and evaluate the services delivered to clients, which includes case recording. This section of the manual will show you just how and why case recording is so important in social work. In short, good case recording protects you and your clients, and successful service depends on case recording.

Case recording is an integrated part of documenting case management activities. It is the method commonly used to justify the services delivered to clients. The case record constitutes an *official legal document*, which is the property of the agency within which the client receives services.

Although you would like to spend as much time as possible attending to your clients' needs, it is important for you to strike a balance. You must also meet the requirements of the various grant programs (R&P, MG, and others). While mastering this part of your job might always be challenging, some basic rules will at least allow you to know *what* you are supposed to record and *how* you might go about it.

At a minimum, your case files should document the following:

- Exploration into who the client is
  - — Initial intake
  - — Review of personal information and social history
  - — Assessment of needs and of resources available

- Formulation of service goal(s) in a resettlement plan
  - — What
  - — Who
  - — How
  - — When

- Implementation of the intervention
  - Updates on the client's situation
  - The impact of the provided services on the client's achievement of objectives and goals
  - Revisions of available resources
  - Plan goals
  - Activities and events
  - Reflection of service review
  - Correspondence
  - Documents

- Termination of services
  - Written summary of status
  - What follow-up is needed
  - Means and reason for ending services
  - Service activities
  - Recommendations

Case notes should demonstrate evidence of the following:

1. ***Service documentation***—including pre-arrival biographical data, government-issued identification documents, agency release of information, service delivery reports, and any other required documents
2. ***Case continuity***—a complete story of how the client was helped from the beginning of the service period through termination; should demonstrate regular contact and show steps taken to resolve identified needs and concerns
3. ***Inter-professional communication***—statements from you and other professionals relevant to the case, including medical reports, information from the welfare office, etc.
4. ***Supervisory and/or peer review***—documentation from a review panel designated to review cases periodically to ensure quality and completeness
5. ***Monitoring of case progress and the impact of services***—case notes reflecting your evaluation of the goals and objectives set for each client, including revisions and adjustments as necessary
6. ***Mode of service delivery***—notes on whether it was made in person, by phone, or by letter

Your responsibility as a case manager is to record four things promptly and completely:

1. A description of what took place
2. An assessment of the situation
3. Your immediate response
4. The plan for further action

In order to record these details, you will need to gather and analyze information about the client's situation and about the services being provided.

While there are several ways to record information on cases, most social workers use **narrative recording**. This means writing most information in sentence form.

Most refugee resettlement programs also require a narrative format of case recording, especially given that it complements the resettlement plan. Several models of recording might fit with narrative case notes, but to meet the requirements of the resettlement program, the SOAP method is recommended.

SOAP Recording Method



An approach used in social work for case recording and information gathering is called "SOAP." The SOAP format allows you to describe the proposed action and to tell why this action is being suggested. It also helps to identify a problem that requires intervention.

SOAP is an acronym based on the following types of information:

- **S stands for *subjective information***—data collected from clients and their self-reporting. The clients describe and discuss their perception of their needs, problems, and situations. Examples of subjective information might include the clients' values and beliefs, as well as their specific concerns and experiences as they describe them.
- **O stands for *objective information***—information that you and other professionals obtain. This information is based on observation, examination, and data collection that can be verified and confirmed. Examples of objective information might include records of the clients' medical conditions, educational transcripts, and professional histories.

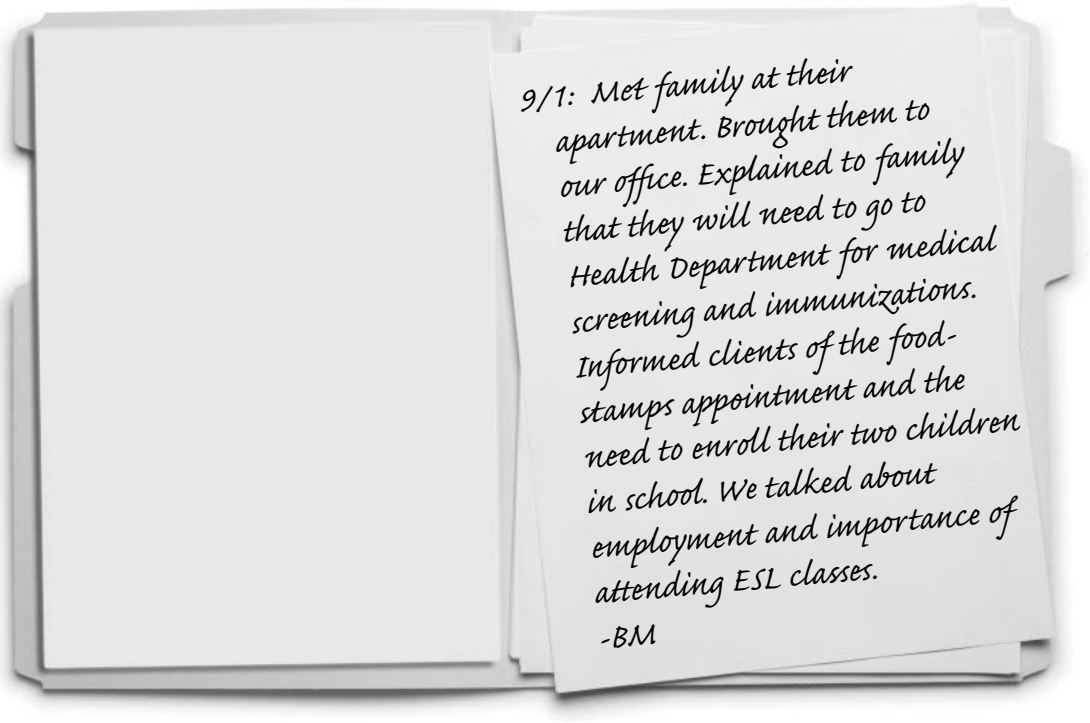
- **A stands for *assessment***—a summary statement of professional opinion (in this instance, your opinion) based on reviews of the subjective and objective information. The assessment is a professional description of the client's needs and the obstacles that prevent client independence and self-fulfillment.
- **P stands for *plan***—detailed information on how to help clients meet their needs and overcome obstacles discovered in the assessment. For you, this will be the resettlement plan. The completed resettlement plan should clearly show *what* service will be delivered, *when* (timeframes), *how* (method), and *who* will be involved in each step of the service plan. This resettlement plan is only useful if it is kept up to date and if it shows the continuity of the service delivery process.

Apply the following rules and principles when practicing narrative recording in the SOAP method:

- Record information that is significant and relevant to client needs and problems. This means you should ***record what is important to know*, not what is nice to know**. There are many reasons why this concept is important. For instance, lawyers in the United States are not required by law to share any information provided to them by their clients. But in most parts of the United States, social workers must provide information about their clients if a court requires it. Although the information your client shares with you is confidential, you should know that your agency may be required to provide a client case file for legal reasons.
- No matter what is recorded in the case file—or whether or not it is valid—no one can erase it, blacken it out, cover it with correction fluid, scribble over it, or in any way make it unreadable. If you make a mistake in a case note, or anywhere else in the file, draw a thin line through the mistake. Make certain that the original entry is still legible. Put your initials by this cross-through, and proceed to enter the correct documentation beside it. If your program uses computer software to record case notes, your agency should ensure that the system allows you to make corrections in accordance with this standard of case recording.
- Avoid using the names of other clients and service providers, to the greatest extent possible.
- Record entries in chronological order (that is, by date) to ensure an uninterrupted flow of information. This will also show continuity in the implementation of the resettlement plan and intervention(s) outlined in the plan.

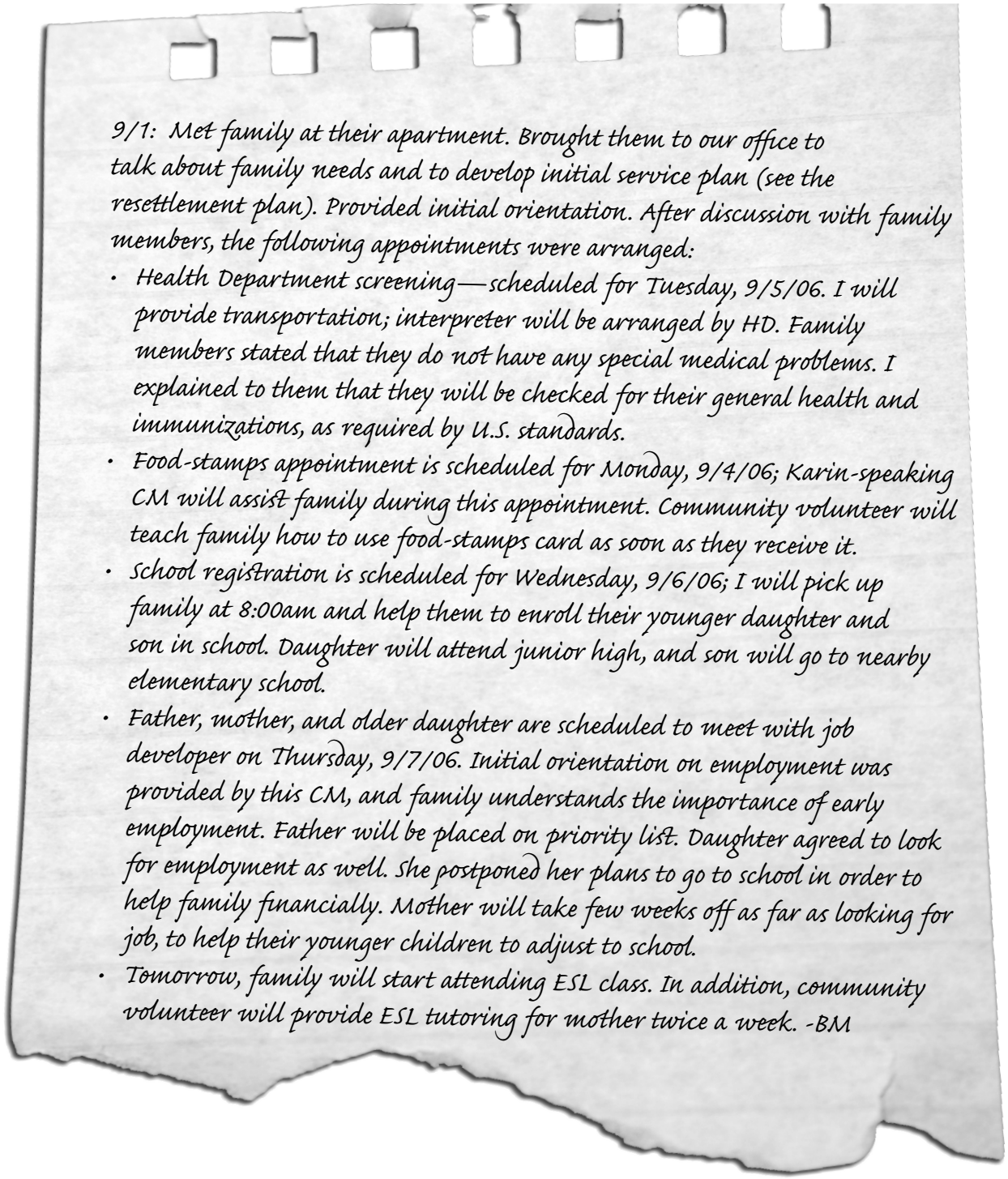
- Indicate the method or mode of service delivery.
- Record case notes promptly after service/intervention has been delivered. Prompt recording is the best way to ensure the documentation actually takes place. Furthermore, it is the only way to ensure real accuracy.
- Remember that your word that a service was delivered or that an incident took place is not a valid substitute for case recording. You have to record these activities to show that they took place and that program requirements are being met.

Now put what you have learned into practice. Review the following case notes and decide whether they meet the standards discussed above.



What is missing from this note? While this case note does state *what* should be done, the other components—such as *how*, by *whom*, and *when*—are missing.

Now take a look at this note:

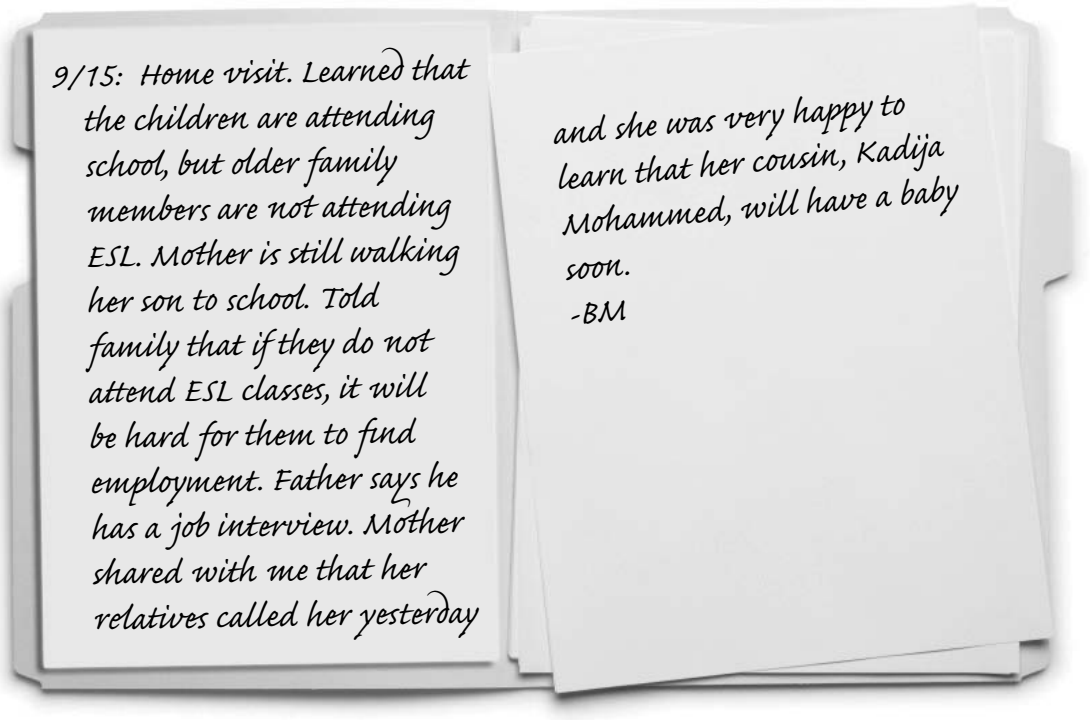


9/1: Met family at their apartment. Brought them to our office to talk about family needs and to develop initial service plan (see the resettlement plan). Provided initial orientation. After discussion with family members, the following appointments were arranged:

- Health Department screening—scheduled for Tuesday, 9/5/06. I will provide transportation; interpreter will be arranged by HD. Family members stated that they do not have any special medical problems. I explained to them that they will be checked for their general health and immunizations, as required by U.S. standards.
- Food-stamps appointment is scheduled for Monday, 9/4/06; Karin-speaking CM will assist family during this appointment. Community volunteer will teach family how to use food-stamps card as soon as they receive it.
- School registration is scheduled for Wednesday, 9/6/06; I will pick up family at 8:00am and help them to enroll their younger daughter and son in school. Daughter will attend junior high, and son will go to nearby elementary school.
- Father, mother, and older daughter are scheduled to meet with job developer on Thursday, 9/7/06. Initial orientation on employment was provided by this CM, and family understands the importance of early employment. Father will be placed on priority list. Daughter agreed to look for employment as well. She postponed her plans to go to school in order to help family financially. Mother will take few weeks off as far as looking for job, to help their younger children to adjust to school.
- Tomorrow, family will start attending ESL class. In addition, community volunteer will provide ESL tutoring for mother twice a week. -BM

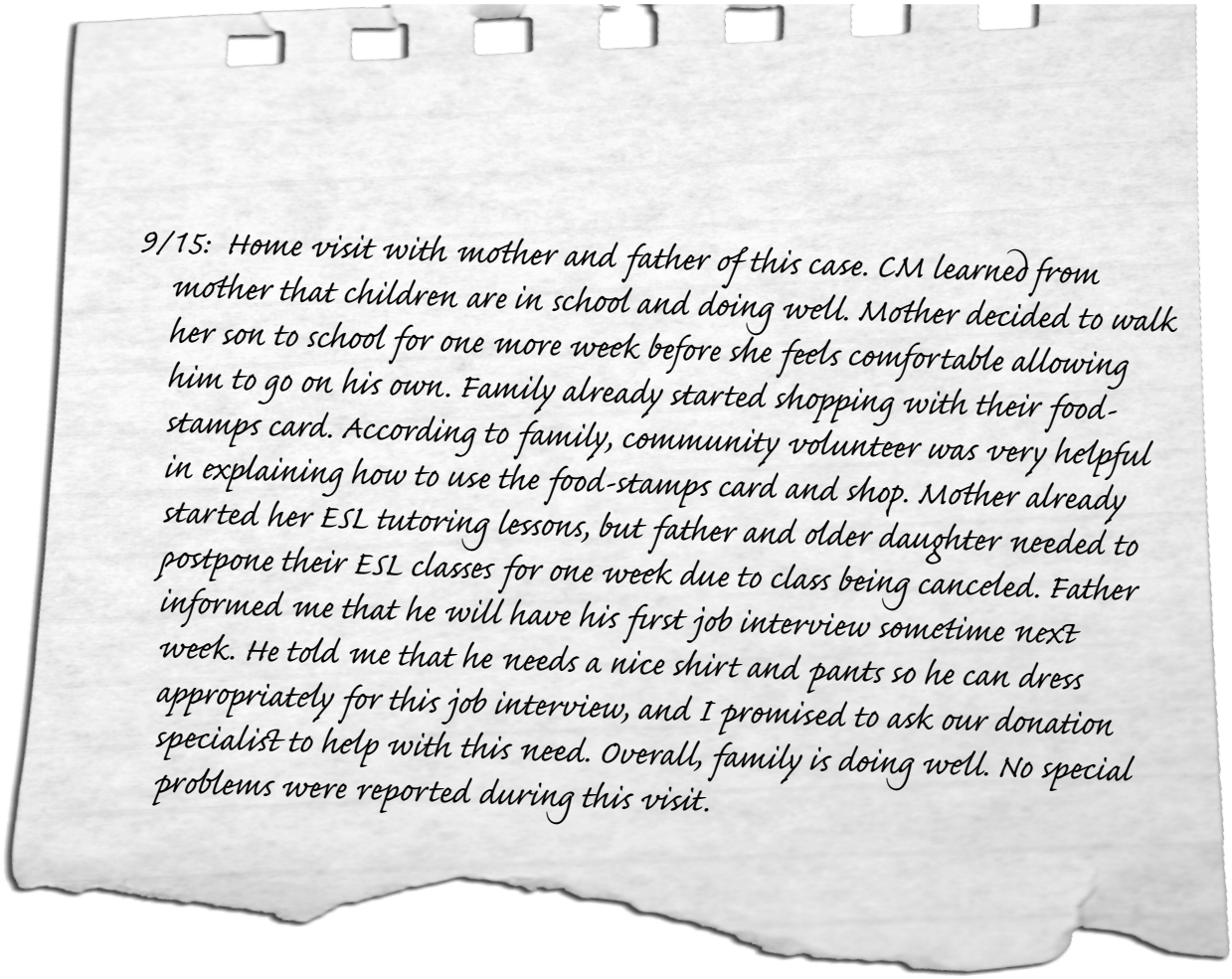
What do you think? Of course this note is much longer than the previous one—but longer is not necessarily better. More importantly, does it meet the standards? Yes! This case entry tells *what*, *how*, by *whom*, and *when* services will be provided.

Here is another example:



Although this case note provides information related to *what,* the note lacks continuity, and it is hard to identify just how or whether this family was helped with their needs. In addition, the note gives information about the mother's family member (including her name) that is not relevant to the resettlement plan of this family. It is "nice to know," but not essential.

Now here is a better way to document this home visit:



This case entry provides good follow-up information, and any reader can see a continuity of services delivered to clients. The case worker who wrote it will need to note follow-up in a future entry. For example, the case worker will need to note whether the donation specialist gave the father the clothes he needed.

Conclusion

By now, you are probably wondering, "How can I possibly meet these standards?" Do not worry. No case managers would say that the reason they continue working with refugees is because they love to write case notes!

Obviously, many challenges make this task difficult. The nature of the resettlement program is one of crisis intervention—often, you cannot predict or plan what your day might be like. Unexpected emergencies, including unplanned arrivals, can always happen. All social workers struggle with the dilemma: "Should I go to see my clients? Or should I stay in the office to write case notes and complete other paperwork?" Also, you may not feel comfortable writing in English, if it is not your first language. Even so, you can find a balance, and you can maintain your files so that they meet these standards.

Accountability is vital: not only to helping clients, but also to maintaining funding and accreditation. The federal government (Department of State and ORR), USCCB/MRS, and your agency are required to make sure that funding is being used appropriately and adequately. Documentation plays a major role in this process. In addition, if your agency is accredited, it must meet certain standards with respect to case recording.

But do not lose hope—the work you do is valued and extremely important. And remember, if you do it right the first time, you will save yourself a lot of time in the long run. Try also to remember that many of the standards outlined in this manual are there for your protection and for the protection of the client.

In the end, even case recording relates to helping our clients—and that is what our jobs in the USCCB/MRS resettlement program are all about.