

COMPETENCE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN DESIGNING CASE MANAGEMENT

Wilya Achmad
Universitas Pasundan

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Competence, Social Worker, Case Management.

ABSTRACT

Case management is a crucial strategy within the field of social work that facilitates the resolution of social issues faced by both individuals and communities. The proficiency of social workers in formulating case management strategies is a crucial determinant of the efficacy of social interventions. The primary objective of this study is to examine and assess the proficiency of social workers in the development of case management strategies. This study employs a qualitative methodology, utilizing in-depth interviews and document analysis as data collection methods. The participants of this research are social workers who possess extensive expertise in several social settings. This study yields the conclusion that case management within the field of social work plays a significant role in delivering comprehensive assistance to individuals and families with intricate requirements. The case management process involves multiple stages that include outreach, needs assessment, service plan development, implementation, coordination, advocacy, reassessment, and case closure. Social workers must have strong competencies in communication, interpersonal skills, crisis intervention, and patient and family counseling to be successful in their work. Ethics and values are an important foundation in case management practice, and social workers must adhere to codes of ethics and professional guidelines. Additionally, they must be sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences and collaborate with various third parties involved in client care. With a deep understanding of a client's situation and appropriate skills, social workers can help individuals and families achieve greater well-being and overcome the challenges they face.

E-mail:

wilyaachmad@unpas.ac.id

Copyright © 2023 Economic Journal. All rights reserved.
is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0
International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)

1. INTRODUCTION

Enhancing individuals' well-being, enabling them to surmount obstacles, addressing societal issues and inequities – the pursuit of these objectives constitutes the fundamental essence of social service work, necessitating a comprehensive and multifaceted strategy (Husna, 2014). In order to provide appropriate support and resources to individuals in need, particularly those who are vulnerable and oppressed, professionals within the realm of social work assume diverse tasks (Sukmana, 2022).

The field of social work has witnessed substantial expansion in recent decades. Within the framework of dynamic social development and the escalating complexity of community requirements, the significance of social workers' involvement becomes paramount in endeavors to address a multitude of emergent social issues (Andari, 2020). According to Maatisya and Santoso (2022), social workers have a crucial role in comprehending, providing assistance to, and offering support for individuals and communities with various social difficulties. According to Ocktilia (2015), their approach is centered on the individual, with the aim of mitigating the effects of physical, behavioral, and mental health issues that may have an influence on the overall well-being of the community.

Social workers fulfill several roles, serving not only as suppliers of health services, but also as intermediaries who facilitate the resolution of health-related issues and facilitate the connection between clients and pertinent government programs and social services (Santoso et al., 2020). With a holistic approach, social workers are committed to ensuring that individuals get the support they need in various aspects of their lives. In a healthcare setting, for example, they can provide direct counseling to individuals facing physical or mental health problems, help identify available resources, and work with various parties to ensure clients get access to appropriate care (Rusyidi & Raharjo, 2018). Thus, the role of social

workers is very important in creating a healthier and more empowered society. Top of FormOne of the approaches used by social workers in carrying out their duties is case management (Abdiansyah, 2021).

Case management in the field of social work encompasses a systematic approach that entails the organization, facilitation, and documentation of social services and assistance in order to address the comprehensive needs of people, families, or communities (Rapp & Chamberlain, 1985). Case management in social work is a collaborative and client-centered methodology that seeks to facilitate the access of vulnerable populations to essential resources, support systems, and interventions, with the ultimate goal of enhancing their overall well-being and attaining favorable results (Netting, 1992).

Case management is a systematic approach that involves the strategic planning, coordination, and execution of organized social interventions with the aim of assisting people or groups in attaining predetermined objectives (Reilly et al., 2010). The aforementioned method plays a vital role in ensuring the efficacy and alignment of social services with the needs of clients. Case management is a fundamental component of social work practice, serving as a vital mechanism in assisting individuals, families, and communities in effectively maneuvering intricate systems and obtaining essential resources (Knei-Paz, 2009). Social workers specializing in case management possess a distinctive combination of skills that enables them to provide effective support and advocacy for their clients (Craig & Muscat, 2013).

Case management involves a series of steps, including identification of social problems, gathering information, planning interventions, implementing plans, and evaluating results (Moxley, 1989). Therefore, the competence of social workers in designing case management is the key to achieving positive results in social interventions. Social workers must be able to deeply understand the social problems faced by clients, identify relevant resources, and design appropriate and effective intervention plans (Poluakan et al, 2020). In addition, the ability to communicate with clients and collaborate with various stakeholders is also an important aspect of designing successful case management (Brun & Rapp, 2001).

Although case management has a very important role in social work practice, in-depth research on the competence of social workers in designing case management is still limited. The need for this research is increasingly urgent because of the dynamic changes in the social context that require an adaptive case management approach. Therefore, this study aims to explore and analyze the competence of social workers in designing case management, with the hope of providing better insight into the factors that influence the effectiveness of social interventions and the professional development of social workers in the context of case management.

Literature Review

Social worker

Zastrow (2007) states that social work as a profession that provides social services effectively and constructively needs to be based on knowledge, theoretical concepts, skills and important social values. According to Fahrudin (2012), a social worker is a person who tries to help individuals to improve their social functioning through activities by engaging in social interactions with each other. These social interaction activities aim to create new social relationships. Social workers have the ability to help individuals who have various problems, with their ability to provide help to other people, making social workers really needed.

According to Suharto (2010), there are five roles of social work in social guidance. These five roles are very relevant for social workers who will provide social assistance:

- 1) Facilitator. The vision of social work is that every change that occurs is basically due to the client's own efforts, and the role of the social worker is to facilitate or enable the client to be able to make changes that have been determined and mutually agreed upon.
- 2) Brokers. The role of social workers as brokers carries out transactions in social service networks. Social workers who become brokers' understanding of the quality of social services in their environment is very important in fulfilling their clients' desires to obtain maximum profits.
- 3) Mediators. Social workers often play the role of mediator in various relief activities. The role of mediator is needed especially when there are striking differences and lead to conflict between various parties.
- 4) Defender. Social workers seek to protect the rights and interests of clients and provide needed services, and develop programs. Several models can be used as a reference in carrying out the role of defender in social assistance.
- 5) Protector. In carrying out their role as a guardian, social workers act based on the interests of victims, potential victims and other at-risk populations. The role as a protector includes the role of various abilities related to: (a) power, (b) influence, (c) authority, and (d) social control.

Social Worker Competencies

Social Workers are now equipped with Competencies. Competency standards are provided and prepared by the Government so that social problems can be resolved properly. Competency standards for social workers are regulated in Minister of Social Affairs Regulation Number 12 of 2017 concerning Competency Standards for Social Workers promulgated in the State Gazette of 2017 on 11 July 2017 after the day before it was signed by the Minister of Social Affairs Khofifah Indar Parawansa on 10 July 2017. The social competencies include:

- 1) Knowledge is knowledge built from the concepts of behavioral science and social science and developed through research and practice.
- 2) Skills, are skills that Social Workers must have in carrying out social work practices, which are based on basic knowledge and values, general principles, and the code of ethics of the social work profession. Social Worker Skills consist of general skills and specific skills.
- 3) Attitude, is an attitude that is built from basic values, general principles, and the Social Worker's code of ethics.

Case Management

Case management skills are an approach in social work that aims to provide services to individuals who need assistance in certain situations. The main goal is to ensure that people with problems get all the services they need quickly and effectively. Therefore, a case manager must have the ability to analyze the client's problems and needs based on the results of the assessment conducted by the assessor (Saebeby, 1996).

With various types of problems faced by clients, a case manager must carry out various functions to ensure that the assistance provided is optimal. One very important function in case management is coordination, because its implementation always involves cooperation with various parties to access the resources available in the community. Case management often means assisting clients in accessing these resources by organizing and coordinating the resources available in the community (Lymbery, 1998).

Case management in social work has several objectives. Case management objectives include:

- 1) Guarantee the continuity of cross-sectoral services at a certain time or period
- 2) Guarantee service responsiveness to various client needs including service changes, if necessary for the lifetime of the client.
- 3) Helping clients gain access to needed services, solving accessibility barriers caused by affordability criteria, regulations, obligations.
- 4) Ensure that the services provided are in accordance with client needs, provided in an appropriate manner and are not duplicative.

2. METHOD

The employed research methodology is the descriptive qualitative approach. According to Moleong (2017), the primary objective of descriptive research is to provide research findings using descriptive language rather than numerical data, so enabling the obtained information to serve as the foundation for the research inquiry. According to Bogdan and Taylor as cited in Moleong (2017), qualitative approaches refer to research methodologies that generate descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words obtained from individuals and observable behavior. The utilization of descriptive research employing a qualitative technique is seen as more conducive and significant in addressing issues pertaining to the research focus (Sugiyono, 2011). The data collection process involves the utilization of interviews and documentation. The data analysis model utilized in this work is an interactive model. In the context of interactive analysis, the obtained data is carefully examined, investigated, and subjected to analysis, leading to the formation of an abstraction. Following the process of abstraction, the data is further organized into discrete units, with a concurrent assessment of the data's validity. The ultimate stage entails the interpretation of data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The importance of case management in social work

Social workers employ their expertise in case management to offer comprehensive assistance to individuals from various cultural and socioeconomic contexts. Rather than solely concentrating on health-related matters such as chronic illnesses, mental health problems, and co-occurring ailments, the authors also consider significant social and environmental factors that impact an individual's overall well-being (Raiff & Shore, 1993). For instance, a social work case manager may take into account the impact of limited availability of humanitarian assistance on clients' ability to effectively manage mental health

issues. According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the adoption of a person-in-the-environment viewpoint enables social workers to gain a comprehensive understanding of an individual beyond their mere "biopsychosocial status." This approach has been found to contribute to improved health outcomes.

Social work case management entails addressing the multifaceted requirements of individual clients and their families. It is imperative for professionals to do a thorough assessment of the patient's present circumstances, establish mechanisms for accessing social services, facilitate the coordination of care provision, and evaluate the outcomes resulting from their supportive interventions. Case management in the field of social work include an examination of the various factors that influence health outcomes, including both individual and societal factors. Interventions are implemented at both the individual client level and the broader system level. According to Greene (2017), it is imperative for social workers to possess robust interpersonal skills, a deep understanding of the case management process, and the capacity to sustain therapeutic alliances with their clients.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) places significant emphasis on eight distinct components of social work case management. These components are designed to address various stages within the client-social worker relationship:

- a. Outreach, referral, identification and client engagement are the initial steps in social work case management. At this stage, social workers reach out to clients who need services, refer them to appropriate services, identify client problems and needs, and initiate positive engagement with clients to build strong working relationships.
- b. Biopsychosocial and needs assessment is the next step, in which the social worker conducts a thorough assessment of the client. This includes an in-depth understanding of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of the client's problems, as well as assessing the client's needs in greater detail. This assessment helps formulate a service plan that fits the client's conditions and needs.
- c. Developing a service plan involves creating a specific plan of action to help clients achieve their goals. This plan should take into account the assessment results and client priorities, as well as identify the necessary resources and support.
- d. Implementation of the service plan is the stage where the social worker and client work together to carry out the plan that has been prepared. This includes providing necessary services, such as counseling, medical care, or social support, according to an approved plan.
- e. Coordinating and monitoring service delivery is an important step to ensure that all components of the service plan run smoothly. Social workers must coordinate with various service providers and monitor client progress regularly.
- f. Client advocacy and access to resources involves the social worker's efforts to ensure that the rights and interests of clients are safeguarded. They also help clients access resources and services that may be needed to support their progress.
- g. Reassessment of a client's status is the stage at which the social worker periodically evaluates the client's progress and adapts the service plan if necessary. This ensures that the service remains relevant to the changing client situation.
- h. Case closure occurs when the service is no longer required by the client. Social workers must approach cases carefully, observing that clients have achieved their goals and are ready to be independent or continue with more minimal support.

In addition to comprehending the constituent elements of case management, it is imperative for social workers to possess a comprehensive awareness of the standards and criteria that are specific to their particular field of practice. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is widely regarded as the foremost authority on social work best practices, rendering it a key resource for individuals seeking to enter the field. In light of the absence of a widely recognized definition of case management, it is imperative for social workers, as per the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), to adopt a multidisciplinary approach and tailor their methodologies to the unique circumstances of each individual case. Presented below is a concise exposition delineating several fundamental principles of social work case management as established by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW):

- Values and ethics. Social work is a highly collaborative field that is based on interpersonal connections between case managers and clients. In terms of professional conduct and responsibility, the NASW Code of Ethics acts as a guide for social workers. These guidelines might assist you deal with conflicts of interest and ethical quandaries that may emerge when performing case management obligations.

- Knowledge. Because social work case managers provide direct mental health services, they are expected to keep up with theory, practice methodology, policy, and industry requirements. Assessing, planning, and evaluating client service plans and progress is part of this. Adhering to new practice methodologies contributes to the consistency and quality of the case management process.
- Competence in cultural and linguistic matters. Working with various people necessitates cultural and linguistic awareness, especially in varied urban regions. The social work case manager is responsible for providing and facilitating access to social services in accordance with the client's language and beliefs. This ensures that all patients receive the same level of care and have equal access to government programs and support structures.
- Planning, implementation, and monitoring of services. Social workers form long-term connections with clients in order to assist them in achieving their goals and overcoming life's problems. The support plan may need to be changed over time to better meet the requirements of the patient and family. As a result, case managers must establish attainable and measurable goals that may be utilized to assess the impact of their recommendations on the client's well-being.
- Leadership and advocacy. Social work case managers are concerned with more than just physical, emotional, and social issues; they also advocate for their clients' rights. When human services are not evenly accessible, social workers advocate for legislative reforms that benefit marginalized areas. This includes making government programs, support frameworks, and other mental health resources more accessible.
- Recording. Case management actions must be documented in order to support clients' goals, monitor their progress, and assess the impact of social workers' suggestions. Professionals are obliged to take careful notes during therapy sessions, as well as on social service advice and other insights that may be pertinent to the client's condition. This documentation must also be kept safe in order to preserve the privacy of the people they care for.

These are only a handful of the NASW standards that social workers must be familiar with. Workload sustainability, professional growth, and inter-organizational collaboration are also important areas of focus. As their careers progress, professionals may opt to specialize in a certain area of practice, such as substance addiction or mental health rehabilitation. Whatever job route they select.

Competence of Social Workers in Designing Case Management

Case management in social work does have inevitable complexities. Each role in social work has unique responsibilities and varying levels of involvement in clients' daily lives. In a variety of contexts and specialties, social workers may tailor discharge plans for individuals who need to transition to a more supportive environment, while others may face more complex tasks, such as managing complex patient care or conducting long-term family interventions. Despite these variations, there are several core competencies that are considered key to a successful case management process.

a) Communication

Competence in communication is one of the most fundamental aspects of successful case management in social work. The ability to communicate effectively is not just a skill, it is the foundation of strong, productive relationships between social workers and their clients. In daily practice, social workers must be able to interact with a variety of stakeholders, including clients, family members, medical professional colleagues, and various third-party entities involved in the care process.

The importance of effective communication includes several key aspects. First, the social worker must have strong verbal language skills to be able to explain complex information to clients and other stakeholders in an easy-to-understand way. This helps in ensuring that all parties involved understand the patient's current situation and the ongoing care process. In addition, written communication skills are also very important in documenting sessions with clients and recording therapy recommendations or next steps. Accurate documentation is a key element in monitoring case progress and provides a solid basis for informed decision making.

However, communication is not just about speaking or writing, but also about listening. Good listening skills are an important component in building sustainable relationships with clients. Listening attentively and empathetically helps social workers to understand more deeply the feelings, needs and aspirations of clients, which in turn allows them to design more relevant and effective service plans.

b) Interpersonal competence

Interpersonal competence is another key aspect of successful case management in social work. Although effective communication is the foundation, interpersonal skills and other characteristics play an equally important role in forming healthy and rewarding relationships between social workers and their

clients. Successful social workers possess traits such as empathy and strong compassion. They approach problems from the client's point of view, seeking to understand the feelings, concerns and aspirations of the individuals they serve. In doing so, social workers can create deep and empathetic relationships, which allow clients to feel heard, accepted, and valued. This ability is especially important because clients often face complex challenges and difficulties, and the feeling that someone cares about them and is committed to helping them can be a huge source of support.

Besides empathy, other characteristics such as honesty, humility, and stoicism also play an important role. Social workers must be able to build trust with clients and earn their respect. When clients feel social workers can be trusted and relied on, they are more likely to be cooperative and open in the case management process. In practice, good interpersonal skills also enable social workers to find creative solutions to complex problems and support clients in taking steps that match their goals.

c) Crisis intervention

Competence in crisis intervention is another key aspect of successful case management in social work. Social workers are often faced with situations where they must help individuals overcome a sudden and potentially life-threatening crisis. Crises can cover a variety of scenarios, such as sudden divorce, loss of job, accident, or even a life-threatening emergency. In times like these, sensitivity and good time management are essential. Social workers must be able to recognize signs of crisis, respond quickly, and provide appropriate support. This could involve providing emergency counseling, connecting clients with necessary resources, or even coordinating medical or legal intervention if needed.

Extensive knowledge and experience in crisis intervention gives social workers a great advantage. The more they have encountered multiple crisis situations and have a deep understanding of effective intervention strategies and techniques, the better prepared they will be to provide the necessary support to clients in times of uncertainty and upheaval. In addition, the ability to remain calm and act professionally in dealing with crisis situations is very important. This helps create a sense of self-confidence in clients and reduces stress levels in stressful situations. Social workers competent in crisis intervention can not only help individuals through these difficult times, but can also help them develop strategies to overcome similar challenges in the future.

d) Patient and Family Counseling

Proficiency in patient and family counseling is a crucial skillset that contributes to effective case management within the field of social work. Social workers frequently assume the role of mediators in challenging dialogues involving clients and their immediate family members. They serve as facilitators in order to assist individuals and families in effectively communicating, resolving conflicts, and identifying solutions to intricate situations. In certain instances, social workers may be required to engage in the monitoring and evaluation of interactions, settings, and family dynamics in order to ascertain the presence of adequate social support systems for the patient's well-being. This may encompass the identification of many issues that could potentially impact the overall well-being of the client, including but not limited to instances of domestic abuse or disharmony within the family unit.

Family counseling requires a different skill set than individual therapy. Social workers must have a deep understanding of theory and practice related to family dynamics, group communication, and conflict resolution. They also need to be able to work with groups that may have different views and needs. Patient and family counseling is an important component of successful case management in social work. This helps ensure that clients not only receive individual support, but also have a healthy and supportive social network to support their recovery process. Social workers skilled in family counseling can help resolve conflicts, improve communication, and create a more stable environment for their clients, which can ultimately contribute to more positive outcomes in case management.

4. CONCLUSION

In this study, we can conclude that case management in social work has an important role in providing holistic support to individuals and families who have complex needs. The case management process involves multiple stages which include outreach, needs assessment, service plan development, implementation, coordination, advocacy, reassessment, and case closure. Social workers must have strong competencies in communication, interpersonal skills, crisis intervention, and patient and family counseling to be successful in their jobs. Ethics and values are an important foundation in case management practice, and social workers must adhere to codes of ethics and professional guidelines. In addition, they must be sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences and collaborate with various third parties involved in client care. With a deep understanding of the client's situation and the appropriate

skills, social workers can help individuals and families achieve greater well-being and overcome the challenges they face.

REFERENCES

1. Abdiansyah, T. (2021). Pembangunan kesejahteraan sosial: pemberdayaan masyarakat untuk menanggulangi kemiskinan bangsa indonesia dalam pendekatan pekerja sosial. *Jurnal Sosial Politik Integratif*, 1(1), 50-60.
2. Andari, S. (2020). Peran Pekerja Sosial Dalam Pendampingan Sosial. *Sosio Informa: Kajian Permasalahan Sosial dan Usaha Kesejahteraan Sosial*, 6(2), 92-113.
3. Brun, C., & Rapp, R. C. (2001). Strengths-based case management: Individuals' perspectives on strengths and the case manager relationship. *Social work*, 46(3), 278-288.
4. Craig, S. L., & Muskat, B. (2013). Bouncers, brokers, and glue: The self-described roles of social workers in urban hospitals. *Health & social work*, 38(1), 7-16.
5. Edi, S. (2008). Kebijakan sosial sebagai kebijakan publik. *Bandung: Alfabeta*.
6. Fahrudin, A. (2018). Pekerjaan Sosial Sebagai Disiplin Ilmu dan Profesi. *Asian Social Work Journal*, 3(3), 38-46.
7. Greene, R. R. (2017). Case management: An arena for social work practice. In *Social work case management* (pp. 11-26). Routledge.
8. Husna, N. (2014). Ilmu kesejahteraan sosial dan pekerjaan sosial. *Jurnal Al-Bayan: Media Kajian Dan Pengembangan Ilmu Dakwah*, 20(1).
9. Knei-Paz, C. (2009). The central role of the therapeutic bond in a social agency setting: Clients' and social workers' perceptions. *Journal of Social Work*, 9(2), 178-198.
10. Lymbery, M. (1998). Care management and professional autonomy: The impact of community care legislation on social work with older people. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 28(6), 863-878.
11. Maatisya, Y. F., & Santoso, A. P. A. (2022). Rekonstruksi Kesejahteraan Sosial Bagi Tenaga Kesehatan di Rumah Sakit. *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan)*, 6(3).
12. Minister of Social Affairs Regulation Number 12 of 2017 concerning Social Worker Competency Standards.
13. Moxley, D. P. (1989). *Practice of case management* (Vol. 58). Sage.
14. Netting, F. E. (1992). Case management: Service or symptom?. *Social Work*, 37(2), 160-164.
15. Ocktilia, H. (2015). Pekerja Sosial Fungsional: Kompetensi dan Permasalahannya (Suatu Telaahan Tentang Kinerja Pekerja Sosial Fungsional dalam Melaksanakan Pembangunan Kesejahteraan Sosial di Indonesia). *Pekerjaan Sosial*, 12(2).
16. Poluakan, M. V., Mulyana, N., & Rachim, H. A. (2020). Strengths-Perspective dalam Pengembangan Kebijakan Sosial. *Share: Social Work Journal*, 10(1), 40-50.
17. Raiff, N. R., & Shore, B. K. (1993). *Advanced case management: New strategies for the nineties* (No. 66). Sage.
18. Rapp, C. A., & Chamberlain, R. (1985). Case management services for the chronically mentally ill. *Social work*, 30(5), 417-422.
19. Reilly, S., Hughes, J., & Challis, D. (2010). Case management for long-term conditions: implementation and processes. *Ageing & Society*, 30(1), 125-155.
20. Rusyidi, B., & Raharjo, S. T. (2018). Peran Pekerja Sosial Dalam Penanganan Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan Dan Anak. *Sosio Informa*, 375.
21. Saleebey, D. (1996). The strengths perspective in social work practice: Extensions and cautions. *Social work*, 41(3), 296-305.
22. Santoso, M. B., Irfan, M., & Nurwati, N. (2020). Transformasi Praktik Pekerjaan Sosial Menuju Masyarakat 5.0. *Sosio Informa*, 6(2), 170-183.
23. Suharto, E. (2010). Pendidikan dan Praktek Pekerjaan Sosial di Indonesia. Bandung: STKS Press.
24. Sukmana, O. (2022). *Dasar-dasar Kesejahteraan Sosial dan Pekerjaan Sosial* (Vol. 1). UMMPress.
25. Zastrow, C. (2007). *The practice of social work: A comprehensive work text (8th ed.)*. Belmont CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole