Case Management in 2012: Half of Case Managers Embedded in Care Sites

INDUSTRY PULSE FROM THE HEALTHCARE INTELLIGENCE NETWORK™
Results of HIN monthly e-survey on trends shaping the healthcare industry.

Executive Summary of Third Annual Survey

To adequately prepare for 2012 and beyond, healthcare companies are utilizing case managers in greater numbers to help identify and manage high-cost, high risk patients. Whether in the health plan office or out at a care site, case managers are having a positive impact on service utilization, management of chronic illness and healthcare spend.

The third annual Healthcare Case Management e-survey conducted in February 2012 by the Healthcare Intelligence Network sought to once again document the efforts and contributions of case management across the care continuum. This year’s survey probed for specifics in three new areas: trends in embedded case management, including work locations of co-located case managers and the greatest challenges and benefits of embedding case manager at the point of care; clinical conditions targeted by case managers, and preferred case management certifications.

Responses provided by 153 healthcare organizations indicate that while the level of case management activity remained constant from 2010 to 2012, half of responding organizations are installing case managers at care sites. There was a dramatic rise in the embedding of case managers at primary care offices — a practice that quadrupled over the last 12 months.

Survey Highlights

✓ Four times as many case managers are co-located in primary care in 2012 as they were last year —58 percent this year versus 14 percent in 2011.

✓ In response to new queries on the clinical conditions of most importance to case management programs, 66 percent said individuals with diabetes are the patients most frequently targeted by case management interventions. Their efforts are rewarded: diabetes is also the condition that responds best to case management outreach, say 29 percent.

✓ For the third consecutive year, 90 percent of respondents use case managers.

✓ While still the top population targeted by case managers, patients with complex comorbid conditions are getting a little more attention this year from this year’s respondents — 84 percent versus 80 percent last year.

✓ Frequent utilizers of health services (73 percent) and patients newly discharged from the hospital (63 percent) round out the top three populations targeted by case managers in 2012.

✓ Advocating for patients and managing care transitions are the top responsibilities of case managers in 2012, say 85 percent of respondents.
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Key Findings

✓ Program Components:

- The telephone is still the primary tool for communicating with patients, say 86 percent of respondents, but interacting with patients in a care setting is nearly as frequent, say 67 percent.
- More case managers are carrying average monthly case loads of between 50 and 99 patients, say 42 percent of respondents, up from 35 percent in 2011. Reports of monthly case loads of 150 to 199 dropped to 2 percent in 2012 from 7 percent in 2011.
- Assessment by a case manager is the top method of identifying individuals for a case management program, say 70 percent of respondents.

✓ Results and ROI from Healthcare Case Management Programs:

- Patient satisfaction is still the key factor to consider when evaluating case management performance, say 72 percent of respondents, followed by case audit results (64 percent) and improved clinical status (52 percent).
- Patient satisfaction is also the metric most heavily impacted by case management programs, with 82 percent attributing an increase in patient satisfaction to case management efforts. Increases in care plan compliance (73 percent), medication compliance (70 percent) and self-management (69 percent) were also noted.
- Approximately 14 percent of 2012 survey respondents report program ROI levels of between 3:1 and 4:1.

✓ Sampling of Most Effective Case Management Tool, Workflow or Protocol:

- “VES -13. We apply this test to patients in our practices when they come in to see the doctor. This helps us predict potential decline within 2 years.”
- “Completion of a Level of Need Assessment in the patient’s home that determines risk and need in 11 functioning areas. This is also shared with the Primary Care Physician and helps the team monitor health status and progress.”
- “One tool - phone! One Protocol - phone and e-mail communication with referring physician.”
- “Disease management discharge planning and coordinating medication procurement for those who are financially limited.”

About the Survey

This e-survey on healthcare case management was administered in January 2012 via the Healthcare Intelligence Network Web site at http://www.hin.com. Respondents were invited to take the survey via e-mail, e-newsletter and social networking reminders throughout the month. A total of 153 healthcare companies responded to the survey. The survey asked 29 questions on case management, with multiple responses possible on some questions. Some questions were open-ended, inviting participants to write in their responses. Not all surveys were fully completed. Survey results were compiled by the Healthcare Intelligence Network.
Respondent Demographics

Responses to the January 2012 Healthcare Case Management survey were submitted by 153 organizations. Of 85 respondents identifying their organization type, 19 percent were managed care organizations, 15 percent were health plans, 15 percent were hospitals, 9 percent were physician organizations and 11 percent categorized their organization type as 'Other.'

About the Healthcare Intelligence Network

The Healthcare Intelligence Network (HIN) is an electronic publishing company providing high-quality information on the business of healthcare. In one place, healthcare executives can receive exclusive, customized up-to-the minute information in five key areas: the healthcare and managed care industry, hospital and health system management, health law and regulation, behavioral healthcare and long-term care.

Related Resource

Case Managers in the Primary Care Practice: Tools, Assessments and Workflows for Embedded Care Coordination examines two promising pilots in embedded case management: Nurse Navigators working alongside physicians in Bon Secours Health System's Advanced Medical Home program, and Nurse Case Managers at the heart of CDPHP’s Enhanced Primary Care effort.

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