

*Editorial***HAPPY CASE MANAGEMENT WEEK**

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I would like to remind you about Case Management Week. It is a special time and it honors case management in all types of facilities and all areas of practice. All over the world, case managers are working to provide patients and their families with the best care possible. Case management is especially valuable in rural and underserved areas in this and other countries of the world. Case managers maximize resources and access every day.

Case managers in today's health care setting come from diverse educational and clinical settings. Historically, many case managers came from the worker's compensation and disability area. Other early case managers came from the field of social work and had a significant role in many behavioral health programs.

Today increasing numbers of case managers address health and wellness within disease management and wellness programs. Due to the increasing complexity and coordination responsibilities in emerging case management roles, the kind of experience and education that nurses possess becomes important (Mullahy, 2004). Case management involves a greater depth and intensity of involvement than traditional nursing especially in the rural community. Therefore, the case manager of the future will need to be very experienced and graduate prepared. The potential for case managers to tailor health care in rural resource poor environment is unparalleled.

Perhaps a day will come when managing the care of the chronically ill in rural areas will be most cost-effective if coordinated by graduate prepared nurse case manager who can be reimbursed for his or her services. It is a growing area of practice within nursing. This week we honor case managers and the potential new arena they can provide for advanced practice in professional nursing.

REFERENCES

Mullahy, C. (2004). *The case manager's handbook*. Sudbury, MS: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.