Identifying Effectiveness and Areas for Improvement in an Innovative Program Serving Medically Complex Individuals with Disabilities

Bittie Behl-Chadha
University of Massachusetts Medical School

*Et al.*
Identifying Effectiveness and Areas for Improvement in an Innovative Program Serving Medically Complex Individuals with Disabilities
Bitte Behl-Chadha, Kerri Ikenberry, Susan Brown, Theresa McGauley-Keaney, and Carla Hillerns

Background & Objectives
Community Case Management (CCM), a partnership between UMass Medical School and the state’s Medicaid program, serves children and adults with highly complex, chronic and challenging medical conditions/disabilities. It offers a single point of entry for members to receive coordinated services across a wide spectrum of needs. It is served by a Nurse Clinical Manager (NCM) in consultation with a pharmacist, social worker, and physical, occupational, respiratory, and speech therapists. It enables members to stay at home while reducing the burden of care on families. A satisfaction survey was conducted to monitor CCM’s effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

Methodology
The survey was conducted June–August 2014 and sampled all CCM members with at least 6 months’ program experience (N=667). Surveys were addressed to the CCM member and/or parent/guardian. Surveys were available for completion in print or online. Reminder phone calls encouraged participation. Overall response rate was 45.3%. The survey assessed members’ perceptions of CCM across a variety of topic areas, including members’ needs assessment, communication with and coordination of services by the nurse clinical manager, interaction with staff specialist, and overall perception of CCM.

Member Characteristics

**Age**
Over half of members are 10 years of age or under.

**Time in Program**
The majority of members have been supported by CCM for several years.

Members’ Perception of the Needs Assessment

**Interaction with the Nurse Clinical Manager:** Members report highly positive interaction with the Nurse Clinical Manager.

**Perceptions of the Assessment Process:** Regarded for the most part as clear and thorough, there is some room for improvement in ease of understanding.

Qualitative Feedback on the Assessment Process

**Positive Comments:** Members are appreciative of the Nurse Clinical Manager’s professionalism and perceive the assessment process as thorough and clear.

**Negative Comments:** The assessment process also draws criticism, particularly around its failure to capture all relevant factors and concerns around the accuracy and difficulty of assigning time to tasks.

Overall Perception of CCM

The vast majority of members are satisfied with CCM overall and believe that the program impacts their lives positively – only a small minority believe that the program has not had an impact on their life overall or on their ability to stay at home.

Overall Satisfaction with CCM

Impact of CCM on Member’s Life

Staying at Home if Not Supported by CCM

Additional Key Findings

**Coordination of MassHealth Services by CCM Staff**
At 91%, overall satisfaction with service coordination is very high, however, top ratings of “very satisfied” at 57% are a little lower than observed for other dimensions. Among the members who needed assistance with medical equipment and supplies, 77% report that the staff communicated with them about their needs (a gap of 23% to be bridged). Among those who needed assistance with physical, speech and occupational therapy services, 57% report that the staff communicated with them about their needs (a gap of 43% to be closed).

**Perceptions of CCM Staff Specialists**
Contact with CCM specialists is limited but for the most part positive. Among the members who have had contact with a CCM Pharmacist, 67% rate the pharmacist as very helpful. Among those who have had contact with a CCM Social Worker, 64% rate the social worker as very helpful.

Conclusions
The evaluation clearly indicates that the program delivers an invaluable service that makes it possible for members to live at home while having a highly positive impact on their lives. The evaluation also served to identify ways to further increase the program’s positive impact, particularly as CCM continues to grow its member base.

Needs Assessment
Overall satisfaction with the assessment process is very high; however, there is room for improvement.
- The needs assessment process is regarded as thorough, and members clearly understand how their service record is determined.
- Nevertheless, there is some desire for simplification – a holistic view of the member’s needs rather than detailed assignment of time to specific tasks.

CCM Staff
Members are highly satisfied in all their interactions with the Nurse Clinical Manager; however, there are some specific areas that can benefit from some improvement.
- Increased communication regarding members’ needs (e.g., in the areas of medical equipment and supplies as well as physical, speech, and occupational therapy).
- There is also some room for improvement in CCM staff’s coordination of MassHealth services.

Contact Information
Bitte Behl-Chadha, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Survey Research
University of Massachusetts Medical School
333 South Street, Shrewsbury, MA 01545
Phone: 508-856-4386
http://cpr.umassmed.edu/survey

Kerri Ikenberry
Director, Disability & Community Services
University of Massachusetts Medical School
333 South Street, Shrewsbury, MA 01545
Phone: 508-421-5901

![Poster template](https://www.ResearchAPHA.com/poster-template)

This template will help provide time for activities around your session.

**When is your poster session?**
- Monday (11/17) . . . . . 9:30am
- Tuesday (11/18) . . . . . 9:30am
- Wednesday (11/19) . . . . . 8:00am

**Research Poster Pick-up Hours**
- Monday (11/17) . . . . . 9:30am
- Tuesday (11/18) . . . . . 9:30am
- Wednesday (11/19) . . . . . 8:00am

**Sunday (11/16) . . . . . 2:00pm**
**BUT BEFORE 9:00PM PST ON NOVEMBER 6**
**WILL BE PUBLISHED AT RESEARCHAPHA.COM/APHA**

**For Orders Being Submitted After 5:00pm**
**UP Hours Will Be Published at ResearchAPHA.com/APHA**

**Reminder**
Surveys were addressed to the CCM member and/or parent/guardian. Surveys were available for completion in print or online. Reminder phone calls encouraged participation. Overall response rate was 45.3%.

**Stay at Home if Not Supported by CCM**

- 10%
  - Very difficult
  - Somewhat difficult
  - About the same
  - Somewhat easier
  - Much easier

- 34%
  - Not at all satisfied
  - Slightly satisfied
  - Slightly satisfied

- 6%
  - Very satisfied
  - Slightly satisfied
  - Very satisfied

- 18%
  - 0.5%