



Your Extended Family.

The Role of a Community Health Worker in Managed Care

Molina Healthcare of Washington
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A background image showing a large, leafy tree on the right side, with a green field and a blue sky with light clouds extending across the top of the slide.

Agenda

- Overview of Managed Care
- Community Connector role in Managed Care
- Video – member success story (social determinants)
- Snohomish County Jail project overview
- Q&A

What is Managed Care?

Managed care is a system of medical managed programs in which members, purchasers, administrators, and providers are linked together.

Common goals:

- Improve the delivery and quality of healthcare while reducing costs

Managed Care Organizations (MCOs):

- Contract with state and federal agencies to manage Medicaid, Medicare and Marketplace members
- MCO funding is from these state and federal agencies

MCO Regulations

- MCOs are regulated by CMS at a national level, as well as the Department of Human and Health Services (HHS) at the state level
 - For Washington this is the Health Care Authority (HCA)
- In addition to following CMS regulations, Molina also follows the standards developed by NCQA, which is the accrediting body for all insurance companies

Benefits of Managed Care

Care Coordination:

- A member centered, team based approach to facilitate the appropriate delivery of healthcare services

Navigation:

- Assistance navigating an often confusing healthcare system. Working with all disciplines to ensure the member's needs are met and receives the highest quality of care.

Access:

- Access to a high quality and collaborative healthcare network to support members through a seamless continuum

Cost Savings:

- Cost savings without sacrificing quality, is the aim of managed care. This is accomplished by contracting with healthcare providers who deliver services to members at a discounted rate



MHW Care Management Department

CHWs at Molina are titled: “Community Connectors”

Community Connectors work with the following departments at MHW:

- Case Management
- Disease Management
- Transitions of Care
- Specialty Programs
 - Transplant, bariatric and Patient Review & Restriction programs
- Health Homes
- Molina corporate High Risk Maternity program

Care Management Goals

All goals set with members are member driven and member centric.

- What does the member want to work on? What is their highest concern?
 - Community Connectors can be an integral part in helping determine this.

Department objectives:

- Improved care coordination
- Access to the right care, at the right time and at the right place
- Decrease barriers to care
- Improved member participation in their own healthcare
- Healthier members requiring less inpatient and emergency department use

What is a Community Connector?

The Community Connector role is patterned after the **Community Health Worker** model...

A Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served.

This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve quality and cultural competence of service delivery

A CHW also builds individual capacity by increasing health awareness and self-sufficiency through a range of services: outreach, social support and advocacy.

The Community Connector Program

The Community Connector program started at Molina Healthcare of Washington in 2013

- It began at Molina of New Mexico several years prior
- Program started out of a project with Molina and the University of New Mexico



Molina Community Connectors

Community Connectors are non-clinical/non-licensed personnel

- College level education is not required at MHW
- Some Community Connectors have degrees such as bachelor's of social work or bachelor's in public health degree

Referrals to Community Connectors come from:

- Internal Molina care management staff
- Providers in the community
- Other sources

Molina Community Connectors by County

- Whatcom
- Skagit
- Snohomish
- King
- Pierce
- Clark
- Spokane
- Chelan
- Douglas
- Kittitas
- Grant
- Yakima
- Benton
- Spokane



The Community Connector Role

Community Connector staff live and work in their local communities

- Knowledgeable on community resources
- Support for members
- High-touch face to face contact
 - Meet the members where they are:
 - Home, shelters, community settings etc..
- Cultivate strong partnerships with community agencies

The Community Connector Role

Community Connector's support enhances the member's ability to advocate for themselves

They work together with members to link them to the resources they need such as:

- Food
- Housing
 - Per county resources
- Support groups
- Government phones
- Transportation



Social Determinants

People must be secure in their basic human needs before they can focus on their health & relationships



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
(Simply Psychology, 2018)

Social Determinants

Community Connectors are skilled at:

- Identifying member's social determinant needs
- Networking with the resources available in the community
- Linking the the member to those resources
- Increasing the member's security with their basic human needs.

Community Connector's Impact

Molina video about our member Gayla

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPti1HRKKiY&t=2s>

3:22 minutes

The Community Connector Role

Community Connectors are able to attend healthcare provider appointments with members in a *supportive role*

- Write down questions for provider visits
- Help to engage or reconnect member with their providers
- Role play effective communication skills with healthcare providers



The Community Connector Role

Provides members with the necessary tools to navigate the healthcare system.

Examples:

- Utilize their transportation benefit
 - Or how to use public transportation
- Emergency department alternatives
 - Urgent care and virtual urgent care
- Education on their healthcare benefits
- When to call Molina member services for assistance

The Community Connector Role

Community Connectors assist Molina's clinical staff by locating members

- When unable to contact for staff
 - Go to last known address, visit shelters, etc...



Community Connectors

- Community Connectors are the “eyes and ears” in the community
- Communicate regularly with their referral source
- Molina’s plan of care may be altered based on the Community Connector input
 - Ex: Unsafe housing, no food, hoarding, environmental hazards, CPS & APS concerns
- Community Connectors are a valuable member of Molina’s Interdisciplinary Care Team

Goals for Community Connectors

Improve
access to
care

Decrease Care
Costs



ED visits



Hospitalizations



Readmissions

Promote
healthy
members
and healthy
communities

Snohomish County Jail (SCJ) Project

Molina and other WA MCOs are working with the Snohomish County jail. MHW process:

- A MHW Community Connector has meetings scheduled at the jail every 2 weeks
- The SCJ Health Benefits Facilitator identifies member scheduled to be released back into the community soon (within the next 2 weeks)
- MHW Community Connector meets with the inmates that are on MHW (insurance is “suspended” while in jail).
 - Provides the inmates resources to access once released



Snohomish County Jail Project

Goals of the project:

- Reduce recidivism at the jail
- Reduce member's use of the emergency department post jail release
- Increase the ability for the member to successfully transition back into society



Building Trust

Community Connectors work hard to establish trust with members who often are not willing to trust other people

- Active listening skills
- Non-judgmental
- Maintaining professional integrity
- Achieving results
 - Follow through

Why is Trust Important?

- Members need to have a safe place to talk, even if they feel vulnerable
- Confide and share their stories
- Move past previous hurts in a trusting relationship
- Get the help and assistance they truly need



Member Story: Angelique*

17 y/o girl with end-stage renal disease

- Medical lab tests showed she was not taking her medications
- Angelique and her mother insisted she was taking her medications
- Case Manager and MD were unable to make progress with this member
- MD removed her from the transplant list due to noncompliance
 - Devastating for her mother

* Not her real name

Member Story: Angelique (cont..)

Molina Community Connector was brought in on the case.

- 1st visit at the home, mother and member indicated she was taking her meds
- Community Connector worked on trust and set up a meeting to see them in 2 days and strongly encouraged the member to be truthful
- 2nd visit at the home – member broke down and admitted to spitting out her pills every time
 - Mother was not aware



Member Story: Angelique (cont..)

Truth was told, once trust was established

- Angelique's cousins had been texting her telling her *"your kidney's are rotten, why don't you just die"*

Outcome:

- Angelique started taking her medications
- She began behavioral health counseling
- She was put back on the transplant list
 - Her MD was amazed at the progress the community connector was able to accomplish
- Angelique has a new positive outlook on life

What Benefits do Community Connectors Offer?

- Improved health outcomes
- Increased provider satisfaction
- Decreased healthcare costs
- Increased member satisfaction
- Increased member engagement in care management services



References

Simply Psychology, 2018. Retrieved from:

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Abbreviations:

MCO: Managed Care Organization

MHW: Molina Healthcare of Washington

CMS: Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services

NCQA: National Center for Quality Assurance