

Accessing case management practices for training student case managers

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Introduction

Patients at the Worcester Free Clinics face a host of social and health insecurities, including inadequate food, housing, transportation and health insurance. While the Worcester Free Clinic Coalition (WFCC) is able to provide temporary health services to alleviate a few of these challenges, our ultimate goal is to support patients in establishing long-term care independent of the free clinics.

However, UMassMed student CMs do not have established standards of practice. Therefore, services provided by individual CMs may be variable and incomplete. We seek to shadow and interview Worcester community case managers to establish standards of practice in the field and develop training modules for UMassMed student CMs that will be implemented this upcoming fall for training new CM volunteers.

Materials & Methods

Qualitative data was analyzed from shadowing and semi-structured interviews with 7 case managers and/or social workers¹, over the course of 3 days, in Worcester and Boston-area hospitals. Shadowing experiences were conducted by authors and documented using questions such as: What, if anything, did CMs mention about patient's concerns when seeking out resources?; What, if anything, did CMs mention about health insurance?

Literature review of barriers to access to healthcare were also conducted to develop training modules for incoming CM volunteers, in areas such as transportation and food insecurity (Figure 2).

Results

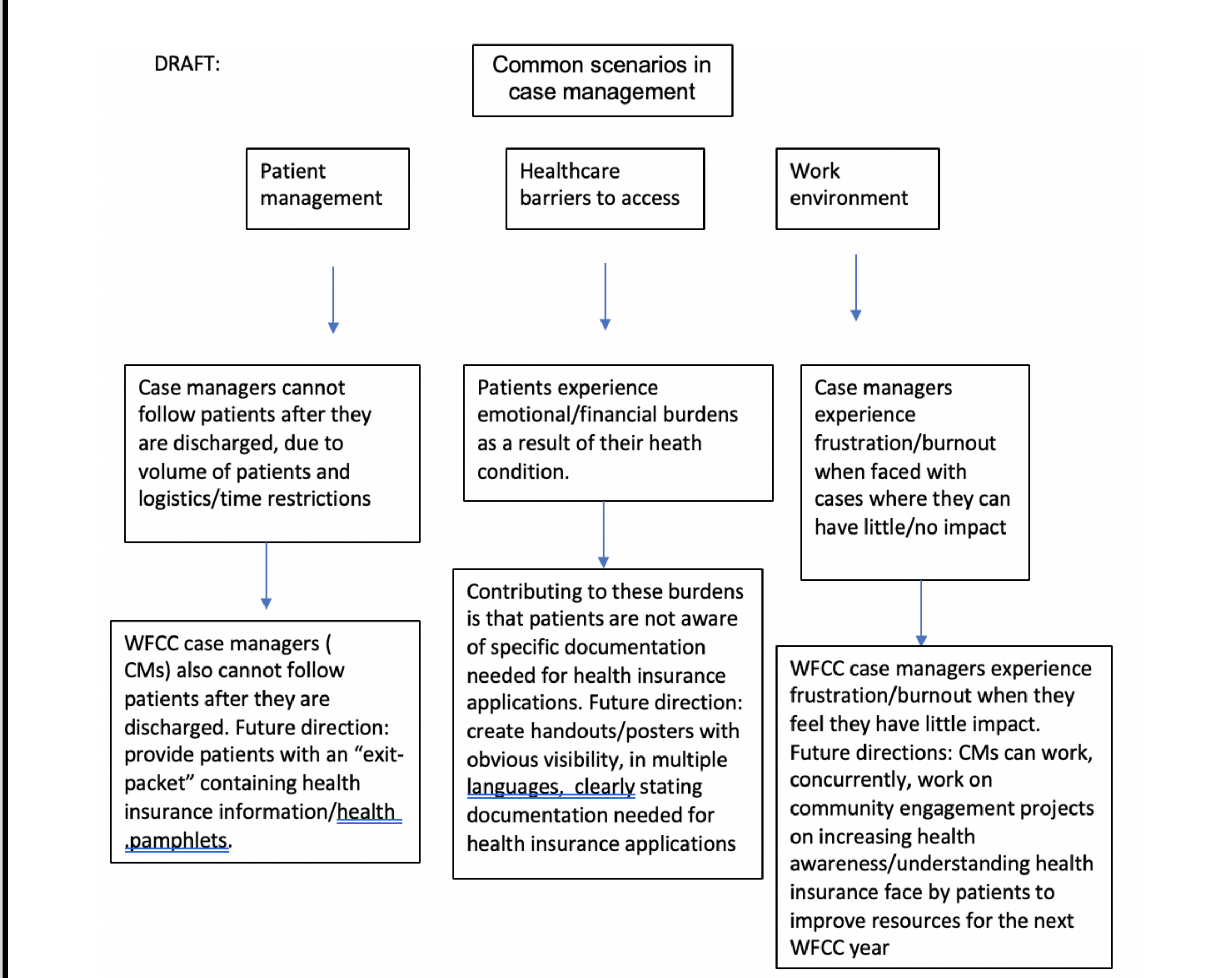


Fig. 1: (LEGEND) For establishing standards of practice, common scenarios were identified from shadowing documents via the following three themes: 1) patient management 2) barriers to access 3) work environment. Explanations of how each theme applies to standard case managers and implications for WFCC case managers are outlined.

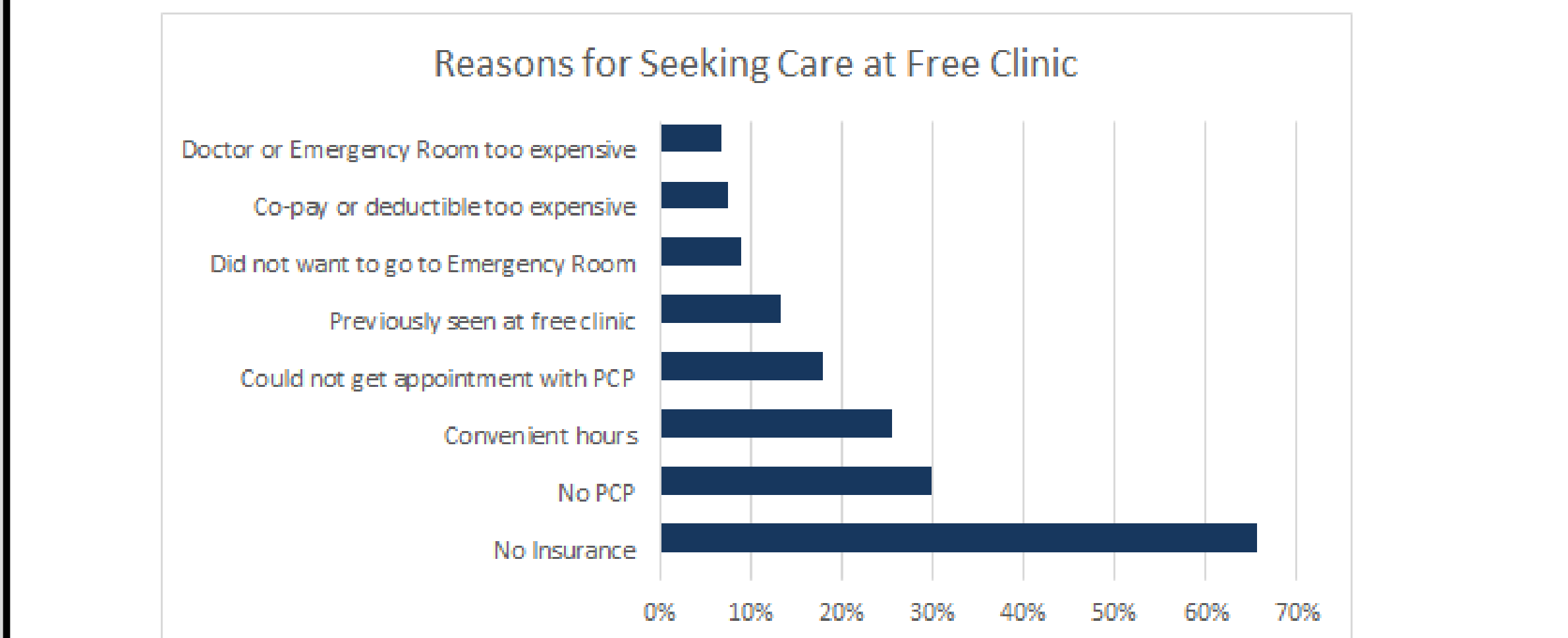


Fig. 2: (LEGEND) Survey results from 145 free clinic patients in response to why they chose to seek care at the free clinic on the evening of their visit. Blank or "other" responses were excluded from this chart and totaled 23 survey participants.

Discussion & Conclusion

Case managers provide patients with access to long-term health care via navigation of health insurance applications, referrals to resources to address barriers to healthcare access, as well as other services to support patient well-being and management of health conditions. In order to improve WFCC CM training, we will update the CM training module with the following:



References

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