Role of the Case Manager

Case managers help tenants identify and achieve their goals and meet their needs by providing access to various services. A case manager addresses the physical, psychological and socials needs of the person and helps him/her to obtain and sustain stable housing. This position does not provide all the direct services a tenant might need but makes referrals and linkages with appropriate community-based services, and helps provide transportation when needed. Roles and responsibilities of a case manager in a supportive housing project might include:

- Working with a tenant to create an individualized service plan and assisting the tenant in meeting those goals.
- Helping to coordinate mental health/substance abuse treatment appointments and/or physical health care appointments.
- Facilitating access to educational services and employment services.
- Supporting tenants' recovery from substance abuse.
- Helping manage crisis.
- Supporting tenants in the development of life skills such as budgeting, cleaning and cooking.
- Providing education about medications and medication management support.
- Assisting tenants to connect with and develop support in the community, including reuniting with family members.

Additionally, a case manager will negotiate, advocate, inform, coordinate and serve as a liaison to other professionals and supportive services. Some of the linkages that case managers access to help people meet their goals include education and employment services, medical providers, entitlement centers, advocacy groups, substance use treatment, psychotherapists and psychiatrists.

A Case manager may choose to define his/her role as that of:

- An ally
- A problem-solver

As an ally, a case manager may choose to provide the following kinds of support:

- Help person to locate opportunities to give or use their gifts and skills.
- Expand the person's imagination.
- Tell stories of what it is like to "get to the other side."
- Stand by the person emotionally and physically.

As a problem-solver, a case manager may choose to emphasize a step-by-step approach:

- Identifying the problem.
- Establishing the goals.
- Developing the plan.
- Implementing the plan.
- Evaluating success — and the plan's impact on the problem.