



Australian Government
**Department of Immigration
and Multicultural Affairs**

Case management in DIMA





INTRODUCTION

Case management, underpinned by a national framework, is being implemented as a client service delivery approach for vulnerable clients in the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA).

What is case management?

Case management as a **service delivery approach** in DIMA means holistically managing clients, particularly those who have complex circumstances and/or are vulnerable. Case management is premised on an early intervention model of service delivery.

Key characteristics and features

Case management is characterised by the **early identification** of vulnerable clients or those with exceptional circumstances and the **individualised and proactive provision of services to clients** through active coordination, integration and management of services drawn down from key service providers.

This individualised and active provision of services is clearly documented in a case or service plan which is based on a **comprehensive assessment** of the client's needs determined in consultation with them.

Other key features of case management are that it:

- ensures that clients are managed in a fair, lawful, reasonable and timely manner
- ensures a complete client view across multiple service providers
- provides clear actions and review timeframes for all identified services
- provides clear lines of accountability for managing client outcomes
- fully involves clients and carers/service providers in the development of actions
- seeks to provide seamless service delivery for the client; and
- monitors both the immigration and health and welfare outcomes for clients.

PURPOSE OF CASE MANAGEMENT



Case management seeks to ensure that an immigration outcome is reached for clients in a timely, lawful, fair and reasonable manner.

It will do this by proactively managing cases, where clients have triggered various risk indicators, through a series of interventions to achieve an appropriate immigration outcome.

The client experience

For the majority of clients their experience with the immigration system is quite straightforward. Their experience is characterised by simple transactions that allow large numbers of people to visit Australia and return home with minimal interaction with DIMA.

For others though, their experience is more complex.

For these clients, multiple DIMA service providers may be involved in managing their immigration process, including different providers at the state/territory and national levels.

There may also be a number of external service providers working with them to resolve their immigration, and/or health and welfare issues.

Case management will coordinate, integrate and actively manage these services. It will ensure that we don't lose sight of clients as they pass through the immigration process.

HOW WILL CLIENTS BE CASE MANAGED?



Indicators are used to identify clients that may require individualised service provision and to refer them to the **case management service** within the relevant state or territory.

The case management service then undertakes an assessment of a client's needs to determine if they require:

- engagement of a case manager for comprehensive assessment, development of an individual service or case plan and service coordination, integration and management
- closer monitoring and regular reassessment by the case management service; or
- systems based monitoring with no active intervention at that time.

Expected outcomes

The case management service delivery approach is expected to lead to:

- quicker resolution of clients' immigration outcomes; and
- fair and reasonable dealings with clients as they progress along their immigration pathway.

Cases will be resolved in a timely, fair, lawful, reasonable and accountable way because:

- a single person, working with others, will be responsible for ensuring an immigration outcome for each client
- cases will be managed more proactively
- the assessment of a client's immigration and other issues will occur up-front
- all options and services applicable to a client's situation will be explored from the outset; and
- progress in achieving a client's immigration outcome will be reviewed regularly.

DIMA'S NATIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



Case management will be integrated with the provision of other DIMA services through a National Case Management Framework. The case management framework is being developed specifically to:

- assign responsibility for ensuring that an immigration outcome is reached for a client
- enable the early identification of the likely immigration pathway for a client
- ensure that all options and services applicable to a client's circumstances are identified from the outset
- identify all the service providers (internal and external) that are linked to a client
- coordinate, integrate and actively manage the client's case to ensure that service providers are progressing their aspect of a case according to the schedule and goals outlined in the client's case plan
- escalate the case where there is limited progress and /or barriers to resolution of the immigration process
- maintain a holistic and up-to-date view of what is happening with a client
- enable a client's case to be reviewed regularly to ensure its timely progression to an appropriate immigration outcome and that it is under control; and
- pinpoint gaps in available services and where possible, facilitate alternative services.

WHAT ARE CASE MANAGERS RESPONSIBLE FOR?

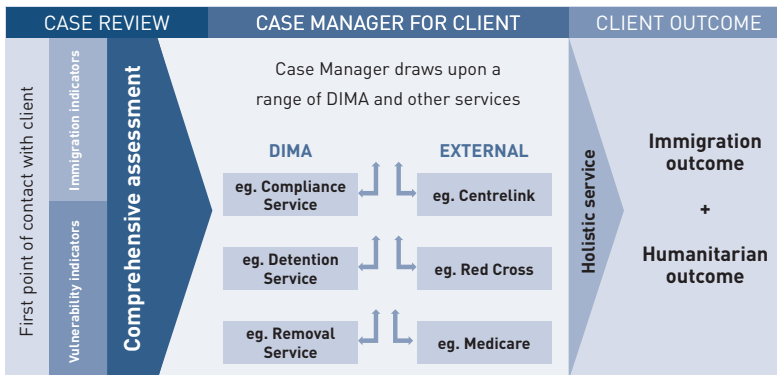


Within DIMA's National Case Management Framework, Case Managers will be responsible for:

- ensuring that an immigration outcome is reached for a client in a timely, lawful, fair and reasonable manner
- assessing individual client needs
- developing a service or case plan for each client assigned to them
- drawing upon the identified services to be provided by all service providers both inside and outside DIMA
- keeping the service plan up to date as the client's circumstances change
- coordinating, integrating and actively managing the delivery of services
- ensuring that services are delivered and decisions made within stated timeframes
- monitoring the delivery of services to ensure that they are appropriate; and
- regularly reviewing progress toward immigration outcomes.

The diagram below shows how case managers will access assistance from a range of service providers from both within DIMA and external to DIMA to ensure that a client's:

- immigration outcomes are achieved in a timely, lawful, fair and reasonable manner; and
- health and welfare needs are being addressed.



WHAT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE WILL CASE MANAGERS HAVE?



Case managers will be skilled in the management of both immigration issues and/or health and welfare issues.

Given the complexity of the role, case managers will generally either be:

- experienced officers who have a very good understanding of immigration options with experience and training in resolution of immigration outcomes, coordination and integration of services, management of complex and sensitive cases, debriefing, crisis intervention or a similar skill base; or
- from a social work, psychology, social science or equivalent background who have a formal qualification or are studying in one of these fields, have case management experience and a good understanding of immigration options and associated legislative provisions.

Implementation of case management

Stage One of the implementation of case management is due for completion by the end of the 2005/06 financial year. It encompasses:

- The development of a national case management framework.
- The gradual engagement of case managers within the State and Territory offices starting in NSW and Victoria and eventually moving to every State and Territory office.
- The development of an interim case management system.
- Establishment of indicators for the screening of clients to ensure that no clients with exceptional circumstances are overlooked.
- The development and implementation of training and resource materials.

Stage Two will encompass:

- recruitment and training of a further 37 case management staff
- evaluation of Stage One including a preliminary evaluation report; and
- establishment of performance reporting arrangements.

Need more Information? Email: case.management.NatO@immi.gov.au

