National
Voluntary Organizations
Active in Disaster

COOPERATION | COMMUNICATION | COORDINATION | COLLABORATION

TOOLS FOR STATE VOADs TO PREPARE
FOR DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

Audience for document

- State and Territory Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) disaster case management (DCM) organizations and partners

- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD) member organizations providing disaster case management (DCM) in long-term recovery and related DCM personnel

INTRODUCTION

Every organization and agency working with those touched by disasters tries to provide consistent, quality care within their own missions. Several State and Territory VOAD member organizations provide DCM as part of their mission. Members regularly use the four overarching principles of National VOAD - cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration. By following these principles, it allows organizations to deliver quality services from a distinct point of view. The goal of this document is: (1) to assist **State and Territory VOAD members** to prepare to implement a DCM program; and (2) to prepare members to discuss DCM in a unified manner with external partners.

This document does not try to give guidance for state or federal agencies on the implementation of a DCM program. It is intended to be used by voluntary member organizations as they jointly implement and coordinate DCM activities. This may be in combination with state or federal partners, community partners or funders. The material in this document is flexible and applies to both small and large disaster events. This guidance serves as a companion piece to the document, "National VOAD Disaster Case Management - Guidelines." http://www.nvoad.org. See "Resource Center".

The structure and definitions of the terms contained herein were originally published by the National VOAD, and were built upon the foundation of services provided by our member agencies. Please do not reproduce, store in a retrieval system, or transmit in any form or by any means, electrical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without acknowledging the National VOAD which represents the long history these agencies have of providing services through all phases of disaster.

DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT POINTS OF CONSENSUS

National VOAD has created several documents to reflect membership viewpoints. One of these is the "Points of Consensus," (www.nvoad.org. See "Resource Center"), which covers a range of topics related to DCM. All National VOAD members agree to the ideals stated in these documents. The Disaster Case Management Points of Consensus is the foundation for implementing DCM among VOAD members.

The following is the definition of Disaster Case Management (DCM) used throughout this document as agreed by the VOAD members.

> Disaster case management is a time-limited process[1] by which a skilled helper (disaster case manager) partners with a disaster affected individual or family (client) in order to achieve realistic goals for recovery following a disaster. This comprehensive and holistic approach to recovery extends beyond providing relief, providing a service, or meeting urgent needs. The DCM process includes outreach and screening, intake for case management services, assessment, recovery planning, advocacy, monitoring progress, and closure.

State VOAD DCM organizations must work together with community partners to overcome barriers. These barriers may prevent clients from accessing resources needed for recovery. Disaster case managers and organizations respect each client's right to privacy. They protect each client's confidential information, and maintain appropriate confidentiality when information is shared. Sharing of information is often done through data collection systems. These systems reduce service and resource duplication, and facilitate coordination among organizations. These systems should be used whenever multiple organizations provide disaster case management.

ACTION STEP: Identify a database, which is the system of record for disaster case management in your state. This will be used when State VOAD member organizations work together in a disaster case management program.

STRUCTURING STATE AND TERRITORY VOADS FOR DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

The State and Territory VOAD works on preparedness and capacity building year round. They can prepare for DCM during this time as well. Activities that a State VOAD should consider as they prepare for DCM are:

A. Building bridges and strengthening relationships between the State VOAD members and community-based organizations, long term recovery groups, social service agencies, and local governments. Providing guidance to regional or community voluntary organizations and groups on how to implement DCM.

B. Advising state/territory and local governments regarding structuring and implementing DCM in partnership with VOAD members.

C. Acting as a catalyst for state and local planning for DCM.

D. Educating government and community organizations regarding DCM.

E. Advocating for equitable assistance and necessary recovery resources as determined by the voluntary organizations.

F. Inform local community organizations/agencies about State VOAD members' activities.

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1   The Disaster Case Management PROCESS: Outreach, Screening and Intake, Assessment, Recovery Planning, Action and Advocacy, Monitoring, Closure

G. Providing a platform for members to collaboratively market their capacity for DCM and related services to funders

These activities are manageable when subject matter experts from the VOAD membership work collaboratively together to tackle them.

> **ACTION STEP**: Bring a group of Disaster Case Management, subject matter experts from the State VOAD membership together to work collaboratively on these tasks in this document.

ASSESSING YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY FOR DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

Some voluntary organizations will have existing capacity for DCM. Each organization should thoroughly assess their internal capacity to implement or participate in a DCM program. Further, each organization should consider the opportunities and implications of such a program prior to involvement as a grantee or contractor. The tool *Attachment 1: Voluntary Organization Internal Assessment for Implementing a Disaster Case Management Program* can act as a guide to the questions which should be asked before an organization embarks on the journey of a disaster case management program.

> **ACTION STEP:** Each organization should thoroughly assess their internal capacity to implement or participate in a DCM program. These assessment reports should then be shared with other State VOAD members to create a comprehensive assessment of the VOAD membership abilities.

As organizations look at their capacity to run a DCM program, they should look for opportunities to interact with external partners. It is rare that a single organization has the full range of program support services, and/or resources to implement a disaster case management on its own. It is often necessary to reach out to partners who are outside of the organization, or collaborative of organizations for specific areas of expertise. The tool in *Attachment 2: Voluntary Organization External Engagement Assessment* provides some discussion points to assess whether your organization may benefit from a partnership with another organization, agency, or entity outside of the National VOAD network for a specific resource. Once these internal and external assessments are completed, results should be analyzed and shared with other State VOAD members. This will help to build a collective voice to implement disaster case management.

> **ACTION STEP:** Look for opportunities to interact with external partners.

DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT COORDINATING ORGANIZATION

Definition

The *coordinating case management organization* is an organization from the voluntary sector that functions to harmonize DCM services wherein more than one organization is providing DCM in a disaster-affected community or region.[2]

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2   In the spirit of National VOAD's mission and values, voluntary organizations prefer a cooperative and consensus-building approach in identifying an organization to provide leadership in case management. Therefore, the term "*Coordinating Case Management Organization*" is preferred to "Lead Case Management Agency."

Purpose

The *coordinating case management organization* serves as the primary resource for developing, promoting and standardizing cooperative service delivery for DCM on the local, regional or state level. The coordination of multiple organizations providing DCM:

- minimizes duplication of case management services and resources;
- links survivors with available case managing organizations;
- links survivors with the most appropriate service provider for identified recovery needs;
- bridges service delivery gaps, especially for vulnerable, marginalized or special needs persons;
- facilitates community cooperation working toward a common goal; and
- promotes timely and equitable service delivery to individuals and families.

Criteria for Identifying the Coordinating Case Management Organization[3]

Where two or more voluntary organizations will be involved with provision of DCM, a coordinating case management organization should be identified. Organizations should assess their capacity for this role before committing to serve in this job. The State VOAD membership can identify a coordinating disaster case management organization before the disaster occurs. This will help to establish structure as well as direction to the planning for DCM in the state. It will also be pre-positioned when disaster strikes and DCM is needed. There may be more than one organization interested in serving in this role. The collaborative should use the criteria found in ***Attachment 3: Assessing a Potential Coordinating Case Management Organization*** to determine which organization best fits this role.

ACTION STEP: Select a coordinating disaster case management organization before disaster strikes.

RESOURCING DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

The key for resourcing a DCM program is to have a plan and process for resource coordination between the members of the state VOADs on a year round basis. This coordination is conducted by the coordinating case management organization. There is an ever-changing flux of resources in disaster recovery. Some examples of this are, social service agencies may change their daily mission to support immediate needs; community-based organizations may scale-up with additional resources; new or unexpected entities may emerge during or shortly after the disaster. A coordinating case management organization understands this changing environment, and has the capacity to adapt and adjust accordingly. It is the State VOAD members' role to support this coordinating effort. This ensures that goods, materials, cash, knowledge, personnel, volunteers, vehicles, equipment and other resources are used efficiently and appropriately.

ACTION STEP: Create a plan among the State VOAD members that outlines resources available to support disaster case management.

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3   The purpose of this section is to provide the criteria for identifying the coordinating case management organization. These criteria serve as guidelines 1) to enable organizations to determine for themselves whether they have the capacity to serve in this role, and 2) to enable voluntary organizational groups (such as State VOADs or long term recovery groups) to agree upon which organization is the appropriate coordinating organization.

TALKING TO YOUR EXTERNAL PARTNERS ABOUT DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

The State and Territory VOAD members are ready to discuss DCM with their external partners when they have completed the above activities. Often, there is a challenge in communicating with partners because of the difference in definitions; especially between DCM and social services case management.

Case management in on-going social services and healthcare programs has some similarity with DCM. Both are time limited, and depend on resources to complete the work with the client. Yet, there are striking differences. While all case management is time limited, the work done in DCM is in context of rapidly changing needs and resources. Realistic goals for recovery are therefore dependent upon a host of community variables, including scope of need, available resources and available options. *The focus of DCM is on the client's recovery from the disaster. DCM does not seek to work through or provide solutions to pre-existing social issues.* DCM programs have a defined end date. All client cases will eventually be closed, regardless of outcomes. However, on-going community social services programs continue, even after individual client cases are closed. DCM, as provided by voluntary organizations, often relies heavily on volunteer labor. The context of DCM is, therefore, significantly different as it is dependent upon the availability of resources, both human and material, which are relevant to help the client with their recovery. The disaster case manager is acutely aware of disaster programs, changing environments, resources and trends that impact clients. It is important to communicate this difference effectively so that the partners value what the VOAD member organizations can bring to the table in disaster case management.

Partners may want to know more about the State and Territory VOAD member organizations' collective ability to implement DCM after a disaster. The membership should be able to give a general sense of their abilities to partners. This information should be taken from the internal and external assessments they have completed on their organizations. In **Attachment 4: Talking to Partners about Disaster Case Management** several simple statistics are offered which may help partners understand the capacity of the organizations providing this service.

ACTION STEP: Hold a meeting or workshop between State VOAD DCM member organizations and partners, to clearly outline what disaster case management is and does.

CONCLUSION

The State and Territory VOAD members, with disaster case management experience, are the collective voice of expertise in DCM. Sharing this information with external partners familiarizes them with the State VOAD's mission. They learn the capacity and breadth of services the VOAD member organizations can offer in DCM throughout the recovery process. This lays a foundation for a strong partnership between government and non-government, traditional and non-traditional agencies and organizations. Over time, these partners become champions of the State VOAD and the work of its members.

Each State VOAD can achieve these goals through their consistent use of the 4 Cs - cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration. Actively practicing these principles enables our organizations, though different in individual mission and vision, to achieve the common goal - to provide quality and consistent care for our disaster affected populations.

Attachment 1:

Voluntary Organization Internal Assessment to Implement a Disaster Case Management Program

Organizations differ by capacity and expertise. There is no "one size fits all" approach. Each organization's internal assessment should be tailored to the specifics of that organization. This tool is created for each organization to discuss and determine their ability to implement a DCM program. This list is not exhaustive, and should be used to begin discussion. The discussions should be analyzed and a report compiled based on the results of the discussion.

- Mission fit:
    - ☐ The mission of the DCM program is consistent with the overall mission of the organization (its core values and service philosophy are in line with DCM).
    - ☐ DCM complements the mission; it does not compete with or otherwise detract from the organizational goals and/or direction.
    - ☐ DCM offers the organization an opportunity to expand into a new sector or build towards the future.
    - ☐ The organization (if a VOAD member) embraces the National VOAD DCM Points of Consensus and related guidance.

- Impact to other programs:
    - ☐ The DCM program does not distract organizational resources from other programs within the organization.
    - ☐ The organization is able to structure a time-limited DCM program alongside other on-going programs and services which are not disaster-related.
      Note: Consider finance management, grant/contract reporting, personnel/human resources management, and the time commitment for launching, implementing, and closing disaster programs.
    - ☐ The organization is willing to accept the demands on its resources/personnel, allowing for the services related to DCM.

- Management capacity:
    - ☐ The organization's management has the capacity (time, skills, etc.) to implement and manage the DCM program.
    - ☐ The organization has the capacity to identify leadership roles for a DCM program.
      Note: Consider whether leadership roles like the program manager and/or finance manager would be staffed from within the organization, or filled by short-term employees.

- Board support:
    - ☐ The board is aware of the opportunities and implications of a DCM program.
    - ☐ The board is supportive of pursuing a DCM program. The conditions are clearly defined and understood if/when the DCM program is accepted.
    - ☐ The organization has 501(c)3 status.
    - ☐ The organization has an up-to-date audit completed.
    - ☐ Licenses, certifications, charters, and/or other legal documentation are current and available for review.
    - ☐ The organization receiving a grant or contractual monies from other organizations, states or federal agencies has its certifications, licenses and other legal documents current. This allows the organization to do business as a contractor or grantee.
    - ☐ The organization is aware of funder requirements including State and Federal requirements. For example, fringe benefit percentages, Indirect Cost Rate agreements and budgeting requirements that might impact decision-making.

- Expansion capacity:
  - □ The organization has the capacity to expand operations for a DCM program.
  - □ There is a threshold for the size of DCM program in order to make it "worth it" to the organization. This threshold is clearly defined with a minimum/maximum size.

- Expansion implications:
  - □ The organizational implications of short-term staff growth are discussed and understood.
  - □ The staff growth can be achieved according to expectations.
  - □ The agency is prepared to manage the short-term nature of human resources needed for the program, e.g. all personnel hired for the program will end on a certain date.
  - □ The constraints of physical space for this expansion are defined. Options for other short-term alternatives are discussed.

- DCM experience:
  - □ The organization explores its DCM experience by assessing its experience in case management programs, DCM programs and/or disaster programs.

- Financial considerations:
  - □ The organization has a plan for fundraising implications on other program or organizational needs.
  - □ The organization has a funding source to sustain itself if there are delays in transfer of grant funds.

- Budget considerations:
  - □ The implications of the DCM program to the organization's direct costs are understood.
  - □ The indirect costs agreement for State and/or Federal grant programs are discussed and understood.
  - □ Both allowed and disallowed costs for a DCM program budget, if there are grants or contractual funds involved, are clarified.

- Compliance capacity:
  - □ The organization has the staff capacity and is willing to comply with the requirements of a DCM program, e.g. grant writing, report writing, invoices, and audits, necessary to manage a DCM program, especially if there are grants or contractual monies involved.
  - □ The organization has experience as a subcontractor or sub-grantee.
  - □ The organization is willing to use a DCM program-specific database and understands it may have to invest in this system to serve clients.

Attachment 2:

Voluntary Organization External Engagement Assessment

As organizations look at their capacity to run a DCM program, they should look for opportunities to interact with external partners. It is rare that a single organization has the full range of program support services, and/or resources to implement a disaster case management on its own. It is often necessary to reach out to partners who are outside of the organization, or collaborative of organizations for specific areas of expertise. This tool is created for each organization to discuss and determine their ability to implement a DCM program. This list is not exhaustive, and should be used to begin discussion. The discussions should be analyzed and a report compiled based on the results of the discussion.

- Non-profit status - 501(c)3:
  - ☐ If your organization does not already have 501(c)3 status, there are partner organizations that may choose to provide the nonprofit status as an umbrella organization for DCM.

- Networking and partnerships:
  - ☐ The organization has existing partnerships with a state entity managing a DCM program.
  - ☐ The organization has an existing partnership with the identified lead agency.
  - ☐ Discuss and clarify networking opportunities that come from new and/or existing partners in the DCM program.
  - ☐ Explore partnerships which may develop into grant or contractual relationships in the future.

- Fiscal coordination:
  - ☐ A coordinated DCM program may pose an opportunity for jointly accessing long term recovery or DCM resources.
  - ☐ Collaborative fundraising may be coordinated and organized by VOAD members to benefit needs of clients as identified through the DCM process.
  - ☐ Assess your organization's ability to write for future grants.

- Human Resources:
  - ☐ Determine if there are enough case managers in your local area to do DCM.
  - ☐ Determine if the local pool of case managers is sufficient to meet the need for DCM.
  - ☐ Identify local sources to meet your human resource needs.
    Note: Sources may include professional associations, faith-based groups, colleges/universities, and/or service clubs

Attachment 3:

Potential Coordinating Case Management Organization Assessment

The Coordinating Case Management Organization is a foundation for the success of the Disaster Case Management Program. It is important the organization can adequately fulfill the roles and responsibilities that are needed during implementation of the program. This tool can be used to assess whether an organization has the capacity to fulfill the role. If an organization cannot fulfill these roles and responsibilities it should not be a coordinating organization. A successful Coordinating Organization:

- ☐ promotes DCM services in accordance with National VOAD's relevant guidance and points of consensus;
- ☐ works collaboratively to develop or promote a single point of entry to identify and screen applicants;
- ☐ supplies standardized forms for use by the case management cooperative or consortium for the full scope of case management from intake through case closure;
- ☐ promotes a method to ensure there is no duplication of services and resources;
- ☐ arranges opportunities for relevant training;
- ☐ provides opportunities for disaster case managers to discuss meet and share information about resources, deadlines, and recommendations for systemic change;
- ☐ develops, in cooperation with community partners, a plan for assigning cases to case managing organizations;
- ☐ develops, in cooperation with community partners, a plan for prioritizing applicants for case management services, especially in circumstances where there are more applicants for case management then caseloads allow;
- ☐ promotes manageable workloads/caseloads for case managers to effectively address the planning and recovery needs of clients;
- ☐ promotes a minimum data set for reporting on the case management services of the collaborative or consortium;
- ☐ advocates for systemic change and/or needed recovery resources as identified by the collaborative or consortium of providers;
- ☐ works closely with community partners—voluntary organizations and government agencies--to achieve recovery goals for individuals and families in as timely a manner possible;
- ☐ promotes closure of the community's DCM services when appropriate;
- ☐ assists in identifying and resolving ethical and process dilemmas.

The role of the *coordinating case management organization* may include the following duties. This is decided based on the scope of the disaster, the capacity of the case management provider(s), and the expectations of the funder/grantor/contract:

- ☐ promotes standardized client tracking technology;
- ☐ provides opportunities for peer supervision and caregiver support;
- ☐ provides opportunities for supervisor and/or program management conferencing;
- ☐ develops staffing plans;
- ☐ monitors effectiveness of case management collaborative or consortium providers;
- ☐ drafts aggregate reports for all of the case management organizations;
- ☐ monitors organizations' service capacity and distributes cases appropriately ;
- ☐ leads the development and sharing of a recovery resource guide;
- ☐ drafts and distributes program guidance;
- ☐ agrees to grantor/contractor program requirements;
- ☐ serves as link with long-term recovery group(s);

- ☐ acts as the point of contact between the funding entity and subcontractors related to compliance reporting and invoice requirements;
- ☐ communicates and provides technical assistance to subcontractors/sub grantees in fulfilling reporting and invoicing requirements.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the various functions of a coordinating case management organization. Additional roles and responsibilities may apply as determined by the VOAD members, funder, grantor or contract.

In addition to fulfilling the above roles, responsibilities and duties, the Coordinating Case Management Organization should:

- ☐ agree to implement services in accordance with National VOAD DCM guidance;
- ☐ demonstrate no conflict of interest that would call into question the integrity of the cooperative organizations;
- ☐ have the necessary certifications, licenses, and 501 (c)3 to act as an umbrella organization as necessary
- ☐ have the capacity to provide services throughout the recovery phase;
- ☐ have the capacity to support the DCM personnel;
- ☐ have the capacity to meet applicable state and federal laws for hiring, retention and termination of staff relative to the time-limited nature of disaster recovery; and
- ☐ have demonstrated a cooperative and collaborative approach to leadership in disaster recovery.

Attachment 4:

Tool for Talking to Partners about Disaster Case Management

Partners may want to know more about the State and Territory VOAD member organizations' collective ability to implement DCM after a disaster. The membership should be able to give a general sense of their abilities to partners. This information should be taken from the internal and external assessments they have completed within their organizations.

- Provide statistics such as:
  - "X% of the counties can be covered by VOAD members providing DCM."
  - "X number of clients can be served with our services in X time frame."
  - "X number of disaster case managers will have been trained to provide services in these areas."
- Present accurate costs of your proposed program
  - State your costs clearly. "If we were able to receive a grant of $$, we could provide X case managers for X weeks/months/years."
  - Plan for administrative costs: direct services costs vs. your program costs.
- Communicate the State and Territory VOAD members' capacity for DCM implementation
  - Partners often want the assurance that the population will have some form of support and assistance.
  - Present your capacity to the best of your knowledge. This capacity may depend on funding. Members need to know their capacity if additional funding is available.
- Report progress towards program goals
  - Use data points which members agree to collect/record/report on as a whole.
  - Discuss unique characteristics of the DCM programs and how they differ from state social services programs.
- Discuss client record management and resource database management
  - Determine whether data points requested by funders can be provided by the system.
- Establish quality assurance in the DCM process
  - Review monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure they meet industry standards
  - Assess whether your DCM is able to pass an independent audit review according to National VOAD guidelines.

Discuss National VOAD DCM guidelines with partners. Following these guidelines and adhering to them assures funders there is high level of supervision, quality, and consistency in the member DCM programs.