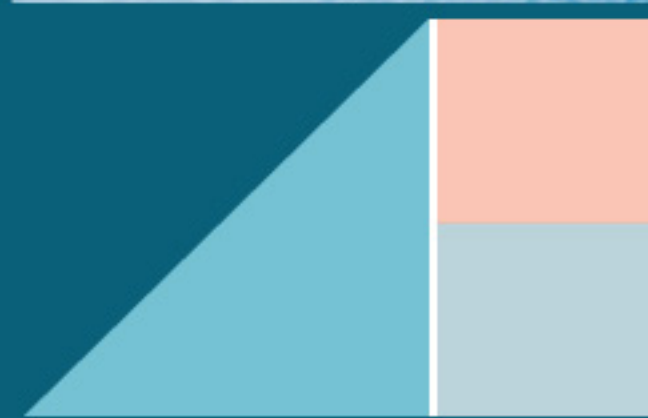


CASE MANAGEMENT INSIGHTS

*Success Stories from Case Managers
at American Sentinel University*



Case Managers play an important role in the holistic care of patients. Seasoned case managers and nurses interested in case management can benefit from continued education in their field. American Sentinel University offers a Master of Science Nursing degree specializing in case management as well as short (one course!) graduate-level digital credentials. Whether you want a full degree program or a quick credential to increase your knowledge and skills, American Sentinel has you covered.

The following stories detail the personal journeys of some of our case management students. Discover if American Sentinel is the right fit for you.

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Texas Soldier Readiness Case Manager Works Toward MSN Case Management

As the daughter of a soldier, Karen Rose moved to El Paso, Texas, during grade school, where she volunteered as a candy striper for two years. “I really liked the hospital setting, and decided I would pursue nursing in college,” says Karen, who started her career in medical-surgical nursing after earning the BSN at the University of Texas El Paso in 1999. She did travel nursing for three years thereafter, and eventually ended up working for the Department of the Army. Her husband has served in the military for nearly 35 years.

Wounded Warrior transition brigade

In 2007, Karen became a permanent employee with the federal government and she joined the Warrior Wounded Transition Brigade from 2011 to 2014. “I really like working with patients who have been through something difficult and having the opportunity to help them and their families,” she says. She spent time as a nurse clinical case manager for the William Beaumont Army Medical Center and held several roles with the Veterans Health Care Clinic as well.

Time for a challenge

In early 2017, Karen decided it was time to challenge herself in a new way: by going back to school.

“It’d been in the back of my head for many years, while my husband was deployed, that I might earn a master’s degree, but the timing wasn’t ever right,”

says Karen. However, once her husband took a position in the Pentagon in Virginia, she started thinking more seriously about the idea. At a case management conference, she encountered American Sentinel University.

“American Sentinel was great from the start,” says Karen, who had even started an MSN program

at a different online university in 2016 but was finding its platform to be less than user-friendly. “My student success advisor was patient and wonderful and walked me through everything.” In January 2017, she started her first class in the MSN Case Management program. She hopes to graduate in late 2018.



Karen Rose

Planning her future

With her work experience and MSN degree, Karen hopes to pursue management as her career goes forward. “I think with master’s credentials I’ll be more prepared to do that and to make a greater difference for the patients we serve,” she says. In fact, it was that inspiration that pushed Karen to take a nurse case manager position with Sterling Medical in Fort Bliss, Texas, in December 2017. “This job is different than any other I’ve ever had, but I really enjoy it. We help soldiers get ready for worldwide deployment and those returning with medical concerns or conditions. It feels like an important role.”

Enjoying the learning stage

Now more than halfway through her MSN Case Management, Karen says she’s enjoying the program so much, she just might keep going when she graduates. “We’ll see how I feel, but I surprised myself with how much I’m liking being a student again,” she says. “My view is that this MSN will help me no matter what, but it’s also something that nobody can ever take away from me. Education is never wasted, opens many doors and create many opportunities.”



Arlene Gonzalves

As a young girl growing up in the Philippines, Arlene Gonzalves always dreamed of working in the medical field. At the influence of her grandmother, she decided to pursue nursing school, attending the San Juan de Dios Educational Foundation's nursing school and earning a BSN in 1991. Soon thereafter, she moved to the United States.

A long journey toward the RN

Beginning her nursing career in California was complicated, so Arlene decided to become a Certified Nurse Aide as well as a Licensed Practical Nurse and challenged both exams successfully. For several years, she worked in pediatrics and rehabilitation. That's when a manager encouraged her to become a Registered Nurse. "I had planned a few times before that to take my boards so I could become an RN, but I became pregnant with my first two children and set it aside," says Arlene. Finally, with her boss's support, she finally earned her license in 2004.

Arlene's first RN position was on the medical/surgical unit of Kaiser Permanente in Sacramento, where she specialized in treating neurological, stroke and oncology patients. After having a third child, she sought a daytime schedule, so she took a position at an outpatient clinic serving active-duty and retired military.

A fortuitous move

Arlene's building also had a Veterans Affairs Medical Center, so when she saw a job posted for the vascular surgery department as a case manager, it was immediately intriguing. "I was

Sacramento VA Nurse Pursues MSN, Case Management

looking for a new challenge and loved the idea of working with the VA," she says. She joined the

"It is becoming more and more competitive in the world of nursing, and the BSN is now expected. I wanted to be even better. I wanted to show my kids no matter what age you are, you can always go back to school. Education is your tool to have a better foundation and future in life."

Sacramento VA Medical Center in 2009.

Several years later, Arlene began thinking about improving herself. she says.

Searching for the right program

An online search for an MSN program with a case management specialization led Arlene to American Sentinel University. "I really liked the program and the case management classes," she says. Although she was scared of online learning initially and especially the statistics class, Arlene started in October 2016 and has learned more than she even hoped in each and every class.

"The professors are great and the many resources make it easier for me as a student," she says. Arlene hopes to graduate in October of this year. "It's been on my bucket list to earn a master's degree and with each class, I get so excited that this dream will become a reality soon."

Opening doors of opportunity

As the only case manager in the vascular surgery department, Arlene is excited for the opportunity that having an MSN will bring. "I am all about providing better patient care and making our processes more efficient," she says. Arlene even started a program at the VA that the organization expanded nationally, following the American Nephrology Nurses' Association Save the Vein

program. The program encourages hemodialysis patients to wear a wristband alerting medical professionals to protect their arm's blood vessels.

The effort is an example of the type of advocacy Arlene would like to practice going forward in her

career. "School inspired me in lots of ways," she says. "I've been wanting to earn my MSN for over five years, but it just wasn't meant to be yet. I really believe everything happens for a reason and I'm so glad I found American Sentinel."

New York Nurse Earns BSN, Begins MSN, Case Management

When Marina Rogova received a student exchange Visa to come to the United States from her home country of Ukraine, she was in the middle of college at Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University studying international economics. "I took the opportunity to come here to experience something new," says Marina, who spent a year in South Carolina before moving to New York City. There, she waitressed for five years before making the decision to return to college—but this time, to nursing school.

Next stop: City University of New York

Drawing on a longtime interest in the medical field, in late 2014, Marina applied and was accepted to the Associate Degree of Nursing program at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York. She graduated in 2016. To gain experience, she earned her Certified Nursing Assistant credential and worked for a short time in an adult daycare center in Brooklyn before getting a foot in the door at a gastroenterology and tropical medicine office in Manhattan. Marina started as an intern, worked as a medical assistant while in nursing school, and became a staff nurse in August 2016 after graduating—a role she holds today.

Bolstering her experience with the BSN

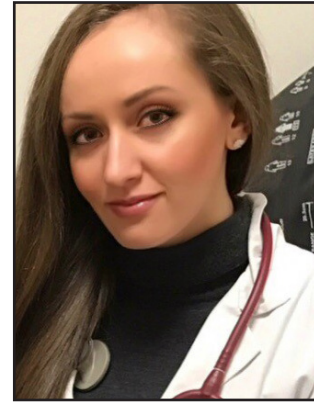
When her coworker at the gastroenterologist's office encouraged Marina to explore American Sentinel University, where she had recently

finished a BSN, Marina was immediately interested. "I got a good feeling about the university and was impressed with its reputation," she says.

"The classes looked perfect for me, and I liked the eight-week sessions and the fact that I could earn the degree on my time." Within a month of graduating with the associate degree, Marina started the BSN. She was awarded the Yes You CANN scholarship from American Sentinel. Marina graduated in August 2017 with an impressive 4.0 GPA.

Onward for an MSN

Marina decided last summer she would continue on for an MSN in case management and based on her great BSN experience, she considered only one school: American Sentinel. "Today, the MSN is strongly encouraged if you're planning to move up in nursing," she says. Although her current practice is small, she feels that a case management specialization will help her manage patient care more effectively and prepare her for future roles. "I really like the MSN program so far, and the classes are energizing. I think this is a specialty that will add to my skill set." Marina plans to graduate in November 2018.



Marina Rogova

An eye on the future

Once she graduates from the MSN program, Marina hopes to enroll in a Nurse Practitioner program. “I love what I do, and I work with a smart, amazing doctor who I learn so much from,” she

says. She dreams of having a private practice of

her own one day. “The ability to plan your patients’ plan of care is something I really enjoy. With a BSN, MSN, and down the road, the Nurse Practitioner, I’ll be able to do more as a nurse.”



Kim Oanh Kazim

came to the United States at the age of seven in 1975 after the fall of Saigon. Although the experience could have been traumatizing, to Kim, it was an adventure. She lived in Arkansas for three years before her family moved to Houston, Texas, where she’s lived ever since.

“It was probably junior year of high school that the idea of working in health care caught my attention,” says Kim, whose grandmother was hospitalized around that time. “I remember seeing great nurses as well as some who weren’t as caring. It made me think, ‘I want to be a nurse.’ And it wasn’t just to care for patients, but their families as well. I envisioned myself as someone who would become a compassionate caregiver like so many of the nurses who cared for my grandmother.”

Off to college, starting her career

Kim completed her nursing prerequisites at Houston Community College, then transferred to Prairie View A&M University, graduating in 1992. She joined St. Joseph Medical Center as a part-time cashier in the gift shop before a director gave her an opportunity to become a Nurse Aide. After

Houston Case Manager Earns MSN Case Management

graduating, she moved out of state and joined Osteopathic Medical Center as a staff nurse on the medical-surgical floor before returning to Houston—and St. Joseph—in 1998.

Opportunities to grow

Kim worked in medical-surgical at St. Joseph’s until her director noticed her propensity to keep taking on new responsibilities. When opportunities opened up for Kim to become interim director in the skilled nursing unit and rehab unit, and later, a nurse manager in the Transitional Care Unit, she jumped at them. For 10 years, Kim was the minimum data set (MDS) coordinator at St. Joseph. “I just enjoyed trying new things, helping my directors where they needed me,” she says.

Eventually, Kim was encouraged to apply for a case management position. “I like being able to help patients move from the hospital to placement in rehabilitation or skilled nursing,” she says. “I like getting things together for the patient, making things happen, then transitioning them to home, where they belong.”

MD Anderson Cancer Center

In 2015, a former colleague of Kim’s who had moved to the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center encouraged her to check out an opening for a case manager. “I’d been at St. Joseph for 20+ years so at first I couldn’t imagine

it, but realized I should think about what else is out there,” she says. She applied, interviewed and was hired for the role. “I like MD Anderson because it is a place that values patient interaction. They want you to be active with patients and understand what they need.”

Pushed toward further education

At MD Anderson, Kim was encouraged to go back to school for a master’s degree—something she had been wanting to do for many years. But with seven children and a full-time job, she never saw how it could be feasible. “A few colleagues and I decided to go back together, and I learned about American Sentinel University from them,” she says. “My employer generously helps with tuition and I was so impressed by what I learned about the MSN program and the flexibility of online learning.”

Big plans for the future

Kim earned the MSN case management specialization in April 2019. She hopes that the degree will equip her to continue in her case management career and improve patient outcomes at MD Anderson. She’s making plans to establish a professional association for Vietnamese case managers. Kim recently became an Accredited Case Manager.

Overall, Kim says, the MSN was worth the effort.

“I know an MSN will help me advance my career,” she says. “It is a commitment, but it can be done. You can work full time and have a life, and you can afford it. If I did it, others can too. Above all, I couldn’t have done this without the grace of God and the support of my coworkers, friends and family.”

Careers in Healthcare: Case Management: More than meets the eye

Case management is a collaborative process of coordinating complex, unrelated patient care services to meet the needs of the patient while controlling the costs of services.

Why is case management important?

While case management has been practiced since the late 1800’s in the United States, it has risen in prominence just over the last decade. Case management emerged as a response to the need to maximize outcomes of the competing demands of patient care, availability of services and healthcare financing.

Many conditions pose significant challenges to providing the right care, especially when they occur simultaneously:

- Physical limitations
- Financial issues
- Advances in medical science and biotechnology
- The rise of more complex and severe illnesses
- A complicated health insurance environment.

What is the role of a Nurse Case Manager?

According to the American Case Management Association, a case manager's responsibilities include:

- Advocacy & Education
 - ensuring the patient has an advocate for needed services and any needed education.
- Clinical Care Coordination/Facilitation
 - coordinating multiple aspects of care to ensure the patient progresses.
- Continuity/Transition Management
 - transitioning of the patient to the appropriate level of care needed.
- Utilization/Financial Management
 - managing resource utilization and reimbursement for services.
- Performance and Outcomes Management
 - monitoring, and if needed, intervening to achieve desired goals and outcomes for both the patient and the hospital.
- Psychosocial Management
 - assessing and addressing psychosocial needs, including individual, familial, environmental, etc.
- Research & Practice Development
 - Identifying practice improvements and using evidence based data to influence needed practice changes.

How can you become a case manager?

A case manager position requires experience in a hospital, and the post is usually filled by a nurse or social worker. Many of the basic skills can be learned on the job, although continuing education is available. Plus, the movement toward degree programs in this specialty, such as an MSN with a specialization in case management, is gaining momentum.

Certification is also becoming a desirable standard. The American Case Management Association, the Case Management Society of American, and the American Nurses Credentialing Center offer certifications for case managers.

What are the career prospects for a Case Manager?

Case managers are employed by hospitals, HMOs, health insurers, employers, or they can be self-employed. With our country's aging population and pending changes in healthcare, the prospects for a career in case management are excellent. There is an ever-growing need and demand for case managers.

About American Sentinel University

American Sentinel University delivers accredited online degree programs in nursing (BSN, MSN, and DNP) and healthcare management (MBA Healthcare). Its affordable, flexible bachelor's and master's nursing degree programs are accredited by the Commission for the Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), of One Dupont Circle, NW Suite 530, Washington, D.C., 20036. The DNP program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) of 3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, Ga., 30326. The University is nationally accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC), of 1101 17th Street NW, Suite 808, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 234-5100, www.deac.org, and regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), of 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604, www.hlcommission.org.