

[Home](#) > [Vol 3, No 1 \(2002\)](#) > [Patchner](#)

In the Belly of the Beast: A Case Study of Social Work in a Managed Care Organization

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Abstract

The employment of social workers within managed care organizations is a new phenomenon. As such, this case study utilized an exploratory-descriptive design that assessed social workers as case managers within a Medicaid HMO. The semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and participant observation suggested that the use of case management services, delivered primarily by social workers, was effective in addressing the bio-psychosocial needs of Medicaid consumers within a provider-driven HMO. Study findings recommend specific knowledge and skills that social workers need in order to prepare for practice within managed care environments.

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[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

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