



Chiropractic Case Management

This presentation will explore the benefits of utilizing Case Management Flow Sheets to streamline your chiropractic practice and improve patient care.

 **by Dr. Mark Sanna**

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Shooting From The Hip



Common Case Management Stumbles

"I'll see you two to three times over the next two to three weeks and then we'll see how you are doing."
Doesn't communicate certainty or inspire confidence.


Individualistic Approach

Many practitioners approach patient management individually, relying on their own experience and intuition.

Evolving Practices

The traditional, "shoot-from-the-hip" approach is shifting towards more standardized, evidence-based methods.

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Success is a System


☐ **Recipe Analogy**

Just like a recipe ensures consistent results, a standardized system streamlines patient care.

☐ **Structured Approach**

Case Management Flow Sheets provide a structured approach to managing patient cases.

3



Systems Create Synergy

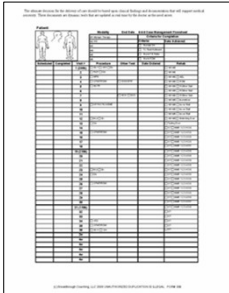
Template Advantage
 Utilizing template Flow Sheets promotes consistency and high-quality care.

Streamlined Care
 These templates simplify the process of managing individual patient cases.

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Treatment Protocols

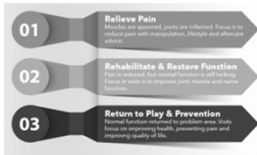
- Structured Care**
 Standardized treatment schedules ensure that everyone in the office is on the same page.
- Consistent Care**
 These schedules promote consistent care throughout the duration of a patient's case.
- Team Awareness**
 Treatment schedules keep the entire team informed about the patient's progress.



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Understanding the Phases of Chiropractic Care

- Acute Phase**
 Intensive care (3x/week) to reduce pain and inflammation.
- Corrective Phase**
 Moderate frequency (2x/week to 1x/week) to restore function and mobility.
- Maintenance Phase**
 Periodic adjustments (biweekly to monthly) to sustain health and prevent relapses.



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Benefits of a Decreasing Frequency Care Plan (DFCP)

Gradual Strengthening

Frequent adjustments initially help stabilize the spine. As healing progresses, the body adapts, requiring fewer adjustments.

Long-Term Correction

Chiropractic care addresses dysfunction, not just pain. A step-down approach ensures deeper, lasting healing.

DECREASING
FREQUENCY
CARE PLAN

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Benefits of a DFCP

Prevention of Relapse

Spacing out visits allows the chiropractor to assess whether the patient is maintaining progress independently.

Affordability & Sustainability

Patients avoid unnecessary treatments while maintaining long-term health benefits, making care more cost-effective.

↓ RELAPSE
↑ SUSTAINABILITY

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Scientific Support for Decreasing Frequency

1 Dose-Response Relationship

Studies show that higher visit frequency initially leads to greater pain relief and functional improvement.

2 Spinal Ligament Healing

Research indicates that soft tissues and ligaments take time to remodel after spinal adjustments.

3 Neurological Adaptation

Chiropractic adjustments impact the central nervous system, improving proprioception (body awareness) and neuromuscular control.

VISIT FREQUENCY
NEW PATIENTS
1st Visit
2nd Visit
3rd Visit
4th Visit
5th Visit
6th Visit
7th Visit
8th Visit
9th Visit
10th Visit
11th Visit
12th Visit
13th Visit
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98th Visit
99th Visit
100th Visit

9

Why Begin at Three Visits Per Week?

Spinal and Musculoskeletal Adaptation

The spine and muscles have likely been in a dysfunctional state for an extended period before care begins. Adjustments help restore proper alignment and function, but muscles and ligaments tend to revert to their misaligned positions. Frequent adjustments retrain the body by reinforcing proper movement patterns and allowing soft tissues to adapt to the corrected posture.

Neurological Reprogramming

The spine is directly connected to the nervous system, which controls muscle function, pain perception, and overall movement patterns. Misalignments (subluxations) interfere with nerve signaling, leading to pain, inflammation, and restricted movement. Adjustments create neurological input to reset proper movement patterns, but consistent reinforcement (3x per week) is necessary to establish new nerve pathways.

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Why Begin at Three Visits Per Week?

Inflammation and Healing Response

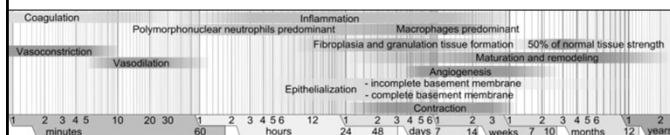
Many patients start care with acute pain and inflammation in their spine or joints. Chiropractic adjustments reduce inflammation and improve circulation to the affected areas, accelerating the healing process. More frequent adjustments in the early phase help break the cycle of pain and stiffness by promoting mobility and reducing muscle guarding.

Ligament and Connective Tissue Remodeling

Ligaments and connective tissues take longer to heal than muscles. Studies suggest that ligaments can take 6-12 weeks to remodel after injury, meaning early, frequent care is critical for long-term stability. Without consistent adjustments, ligaments may not fully heal in their corrected position, leading to chronic instability.

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The Healing Calendar



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Understanding Patient Severity Levels

Categorizing patient conditions by severity helps us determine appropriate care frequency and duration. The Council on Chiropractic Guidelines and Practice Parameters (Clinical Compass) and other scientific sources guide our approach.

We'll explore five severity levels, each with distinct pain intensity, functional limitations, symptom duration, and care recommendations. This framework helps us provide personalized and effective treatment plans.



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Level 1: Minimal Severity

☐ Mild Discomfort

Patients experience minimal discomfort with little impact on their daily routines. They can perform most activities without assistance.

☐ Short-Term Symptoms

Symptoms typically last less than a week, with infrequent occurrences and long periods of remission.

☐ Short-Term Care

Low-frequency visits are recommended, focusing on patient education and self-management strategies.



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Level 2: Mild Severity



Mild to Moderate Pain

Pain is present, but moderate in intensity, affecting some daily activities. Some limitations in movement or function may require occasional assistance.



Symptoms Up to Two Weeks

Symptoms persist for up to two weeks, with occasional episodes that have a noticeable impact on daily life.



Short-Term Care

Moderate-frequency visits are recommended, with an emphasis on manual therapy and exercises to improve function.



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Level 3: Moderate Severity


- 1 **Significant Pain**
Moderate pain significantly impacts daily activities and work, making it challenging to perform most tasks.
- 2 **Noticeable Limitations**
Patients experience noticeable limitations in movement or function, often requiring modifications to their daily routines and occasional assistance.
- 3 **Intermediate-Term Care**
Higher-frequency visits are recommended, combining manual therapy, rehabilitation exercises, and patient education to address the underlying condition.



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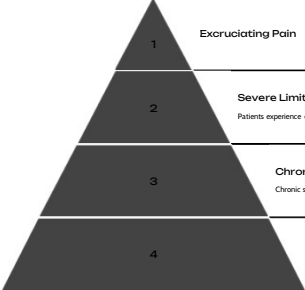
Level 4: Severe Severity

- 1 **Intense Pain**
Severe pain significantly limits daily activities, often causing sleep disturbances and impacting overall well-being.
- 2 **Significant Limitations**
Patients experience significant limitations in function, making it challenging to perform daily activities and often requiring assistance.
- 3 **Longer-Term Care**
Frequent visits are recommended, involving intensive manual therapy, advanced rehabilitation exercises, and possible interdisciplinary collaboration with other healthcare professionals.



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Level 5: Very Severe Severity



- 1 **Excruciating Pain**
- 2 **Severe Limitations**
Patients experience constant pain, rendering them largely dependent on assistance for most daily functions.
- 3 **Chronic Symptoms**
Chronic symptoms persist for more than three months, with minimal or no periods of remission.
- 4 **Comprehensive Care**
A multidisciplinary approach is required, including frequent chiropractic visits, advanced pain management strategies, and potential referral for specialized medical interventions.

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Tailoring Care Plans for Optimal Outcomes

Severity	3 visits/wk	2 visits/wk	1 visit/wk	Monthly
Minimal	2	2	2	PRN
Mild	3	3	3	PRN
Moderate	4	4	4	PRN
Severe	5	5	5	PRN
Very Severe	6	6	6	PRN

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Conclusion

Optimal Spinal Health

Decreasing frequency care plans provide a personalized approach to achieve lasting pain relief, improved mobility, and long-term spinal health.

Evidence-Based Practice

This method aligns with the body's natural healing process and is supported by scientific evidence.

Patient Empowerment

Patients are actively involved in their care, transitioning from passive treatment to actively maintaining their spinal health.

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Case Management Flow Sheet

1

Communication Tool

These flow sheets ensure clear communication of the doctor's case management decisions.

2

Patient-Centric Care

They outline the care process that best meets the patient's treatment needs, based on objective measurements of their function.

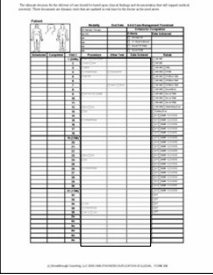
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Team Collaboration

Flow sheets promote seamless collaboration among all members of the practice team.

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Case Management Flow Sheets



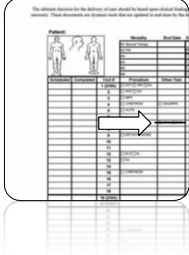
- 1 Reverse Case Management**
These flow sheets ensure that all medically necessary procedures are provided.
- 2 Dynamic Tools**
Flow sheets are dynamic tools that are updated in real-time by the doctor.
- 3 Team Follow-up**
They promote efficient team follow-up and patient response.
- 4 DC & MDP**
DC: Forms 006-0010
DC/PT/MD: Forms 011-015
DC/PT: Forms 016-020

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Flow Sheets: Reverse Protocol

Flow Sheet Review
The Case Management Flow Sheet is reviewed at each visit.


De-Selection
Unnecessary procedures are de-selected from the flow sheet.



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Case Management Flow Sheets

- 1 Care Plan Selection**
The clinical team selects the recommended care flow based on patient information.
- 2 Weekly Care Outline**
The flow sheet lays out major events in the care plan on a week-by-week basis.
- 3 Progress Tracking**
Completed procedures are marked on the flow sheet to track progress.
- 4 Chart Placement**
The flow sheet is placed in the patient's chart for easy access.

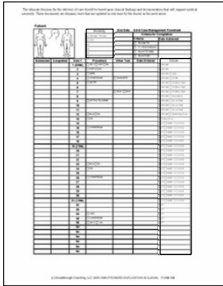


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Passive vs. Active Care

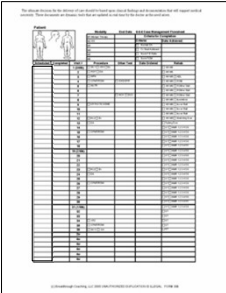
Modality Prescription
The doctor prescribes modalities and procedures, indicating them on the flow sheet.

Passive Modalities
Passive modalities are typically used for acute symptoms and completed within the first month of care.



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Track the Patient's Visits Accurately



1

Scheduled Visits

2

Completed Visits

The Front Desk CA completes the "Scheduled" column after the initial schedule of care is established.


The doctor completes the "Completed" column after writing the Daily Notes, indicating completion with a check mark or date.

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Plan of Care Tracking

Medical Necessity
Care decisions should be based on clinical findings and documentation that support medical necessity.

Dynamic Updates
Flow sheets are updated in real-time by the doctor as needed to reflect care adjustments.



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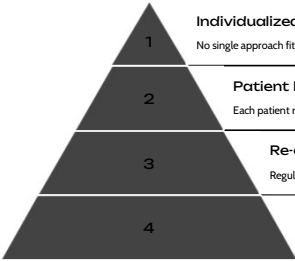


Intelligence Imposes Order

1	2	3
Practice Efficiency	Improved Care	Stress Reduction
To function effectively, your practice needs a clear and intelligent order.	A Criteria for Care-driven practice brings order and improves patient care.	The structured approach eases the stress and chaos associated with practice.

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No One Size Fits All



1	Individualized Care No single approach fits all patients.
2	Patient Response Each patient responds differently to care.
3	Re-evaluation Regularly reassess clinical progress through re-exams and re-checks.
4	Flow Sheet Modification Modify the flow sheet as care progresses.

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