Centre for Newcomers

What We Heard, What We Learned: Highlights from September 2026 Case Management Mentorship Conversations

ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE

This mentorship initiative is part of the IRCC funded National Case Management Project, which supports learning, peer mentoring, and knowledge sharing among case management practitioners across Canada.





WHAT WE ARE HEARING

Recent Case Management mentorship conversations brought together practitioners from different organizations and regions. Although local approaches vary, several shared practices, challenges, and lessons emerged. The following insights reflect what practitioners are trying, refining, and learning in their day-to-day work.

A SHARED DIRECTION

Across the conversations, one message came through clearly: client-centred Case Management is reflected in everyday practice.

It means asking rather than assuming, identifying strengths alongside barriers, focusing on what matters most, using the right supports, checking whether interventions are working, and helping clients build the confidence and skills to navigate systems more independently.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Do with the client, not for the client

Support clients to build the confidence and skills to navigate systems themselves. This can include showing clients how to find information, complete tasks, and access services, while gradually reducing support as their capacity grows.

Keep the client's voice and choice at the centre

Service planning should be collaborative. Explain processes, provide relevant information, and support informed decision-making while recognizing that clients make the final choices about their own lives.

Look at the whole picture, including strengths

Explore needs and barriers alongside skills, experience, family and household circumstances, community connections, and other strengths. Consider factors such as health, employment, language, transportation, digital access, caregiving, children's schooling, income, and available supports.

Prioritize urgent needs

When clients face several needs at once, identify what requires immediate attention and address those priorities first before moving to longer-term goals. Where urgent support is provided before other processes are completed, reconnect the client to the appropriate assessment or referral pathway.

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PROMISING PRACTICES

Match support to the level of need

Adjust the frequency and type of support according to the client's circumstances and complexity. Some clients may require frequent, hands-on assistance, while others may benefit from lighter follow-up as their stability and independence increase.

Keep follow-up visible

Use calendars, reminders, scheduled follow-ups, and caseload reviews to help ensure agreed actions are completed and clients are not overlooked.

Use ongoing assessment to adjust support

Review progress, changing circumstances, strengths, needs, and goals regularly. Update the service plan and level of support when circumstances change.

Follow through on referrals

A referral is not always complete once information has been provided. Check whether the client was able to access the service, whether it addressed the identified need, and whether another approach is required.

Use accompaniment purposefully

Provide accompaniment where language, transportation, system navigation, accessibility, or other barriers make independent access difficult. The level of assistance should reflect the client's needs while supporting greater independence over time.

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PROMISING PRACTICES (CONTINUED)

Work across programs and sectors

Complex needs may require support from settlement, health, housing, employment, education, and community services. Collaborate across programs and sectors while recognizing when another professional or organization has the appropriate expertise.

Know your local resources

Maintain current knowledge of community services, eligibility requirements, referral pathways, and available supports so that referrals are relevant and practical.

Build trust and communicate clearly

Clients may not disclose every important need during the first conversation. Use active listening, cultural humility, preferred language support where possible, and check understanding rather than assuming information is clear.

Support practitioner well-being and peer learning

Maintain professional boundaries and make use of supervision, peer support, mentorship, and opportunities to discuss challenging cases. Sharing approaches and practical solutions can strengthen practice across different service approaches.

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WHAT NEXT?

Continue the conversation with fellow Case Management practitioners. Join upcoming mentorship sessions to exchange ideas, explore promising practices, and learn from peers across the sector.

Interested in participating as a **mentor** or **mentee**? Contact ncmp@centrefornewcomers.ca.

THANKS TO OUR MENTORS

We gratefully acknowledge the mentors who facilitated the September 2026 Case Management cohort sessions and supported thoughtful discussion, peer learning, and the exchange of practical experience:

- **Murshed Hussain**, Regina Open Door Society, Saskatchewan
- **Husna Juma**, Catholic Social Services, Alberta
- **Israa Abdulrahem**, Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services, Ontario

Their contributions helped create the conversations from which the practices and insights highlighted in this newsletter emerged.

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