

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

The identity building process of case management profession in France can be approached through professionals who early leaving their function

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Introduction: Health and social services integration is a recent policy in France (2008-2012 National Alzheimer Plan). One of the core components of this policy was the launching of a new professional field: case management. In a recent national based study 75% of case managers express a need for "recognition of the professional identity of case management". In previous work, the construction of a professional identity was described as a process based on four mechanisms: the individual, the training, the company and the membership of a group.

Methods: To study the professional identity of case managers, we supposed that there was a relationship between leaving the case manager function and the identity building process. In the aim to collect information on it, we called for participation in an online-survey via the web-based network of the French Association of Case Managers and a national survey delivered on February 2016. The online-survey included 24 closed and 2 open questions. Firstly, we did a descriptive analysis of the answers. Secondly, in view of studying the identity building process, we regrouped questions around the four previously defined mechanisms.

Results: Twenty-seven professionals answered the questionnaire. Of these, 74% were from sanitary work and 26% from social work. A large majority (91%) had a previous professional experience in coordination of care.

Concerning the four mechanisms:

- Individual: 56% had specifically looked for this particular professional position (case management). That's mean that the choice of this working position was probably made for "internal" motivation.
- Training: 87% were willing to be trained at the beginning of their job. Nevertheless, in 43% of cases the training course has not or just partially met expectations. On contrary, professionals for whose training met their expectations have exercised longer.

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- Company: 22% reported non-supportive working conditions and 56% were unsatisfied with their relationships with their direct supervisors (less frequently when these relations were frequent).
- Membership of a group: 87% adopted new professional practices using specific tools developed for this work. They judged the utility of the job to be positive in 65% of cases in the current context.

In open questions, some "specific" aspects of the professional field were underlined by respondents as important factors to take into account in their difficulties: solitude facing a person with complex needs, long distance journey, frustration feeling between expectations and reality.

Discussions: For professionals who leave early their case management function after being hired, factors defining the most this new profession seems to be the use of new professional practices particularly specific tools. We find the main mechanisms of identity building process even during the process leading to leave their function. A qualitative study coming after this first step, the interviewed case managers having let their email for being called back.

Conclusions: We have studied motivations of professionals leaving early case management after being hired. Our main results suggest, even if at this step, we can find elements of birth of identity building. A qualitative study is in progress and will be presented.

Keywords: case manager; professional identity; gerontology
