

# THE FAMILY-IN-ENVIRONMENT PERSPECTIVE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CASE MANAGEMENT

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# PREAMBLE

- The Critical Nature of a Point of View.

Social and Ecological Systems.

Linear vs. Systems Thinking.

Transactions and Recursion in  
Ecological Systems.

- Defining the Family-in-Environment Perspective.

*The family as the original social welfare system.*

*What is a family? What is a family?*

*A social constructionist/functional approach to defining the “family”.*

# Guiding Principles of the Family-in-Environment Perspective

1. The family is a pivotal social institution.
2. Individuals define family.
3. Strengths perspective is essential.
4. Practitioners work with and on behalf of families.

- Applying the Family-in-Environment perspective in case management.

*Case management skills and values.*

*Engagement, assessment and planning.*

*The critical interface of resources, services and supports.*

*Resources: Tangible and intangible:*

*Allocation*

*Access*

*Utilization: Capacity and utilization.*

# CASE EXAMPLE: Individual/Linear vs. the Family-in-Environment Approach

- The case of Mrs. McGillan.

Ninety-two (92) year old widow living on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of a seven (7) story tenement building in a moderate crime blue collar area of a major city. She has lived there for 42 years. She has no living relatives. Her MD, without her knowledge, has contacted Adult Protective Services as he is concerned about her frailty and some deterioration of her capacity to ambulate. A case worker is sent to assess the situation.

- Policy and Organizational Challenges.

*Resistances to change.*

*Politics, power and public policy.*

*Categorical vs. integrated services.*

*Future prospects of Family-in-Environment Practice.*

- Final Questions and Answers.
- Evaluation.

THANK YOU!!