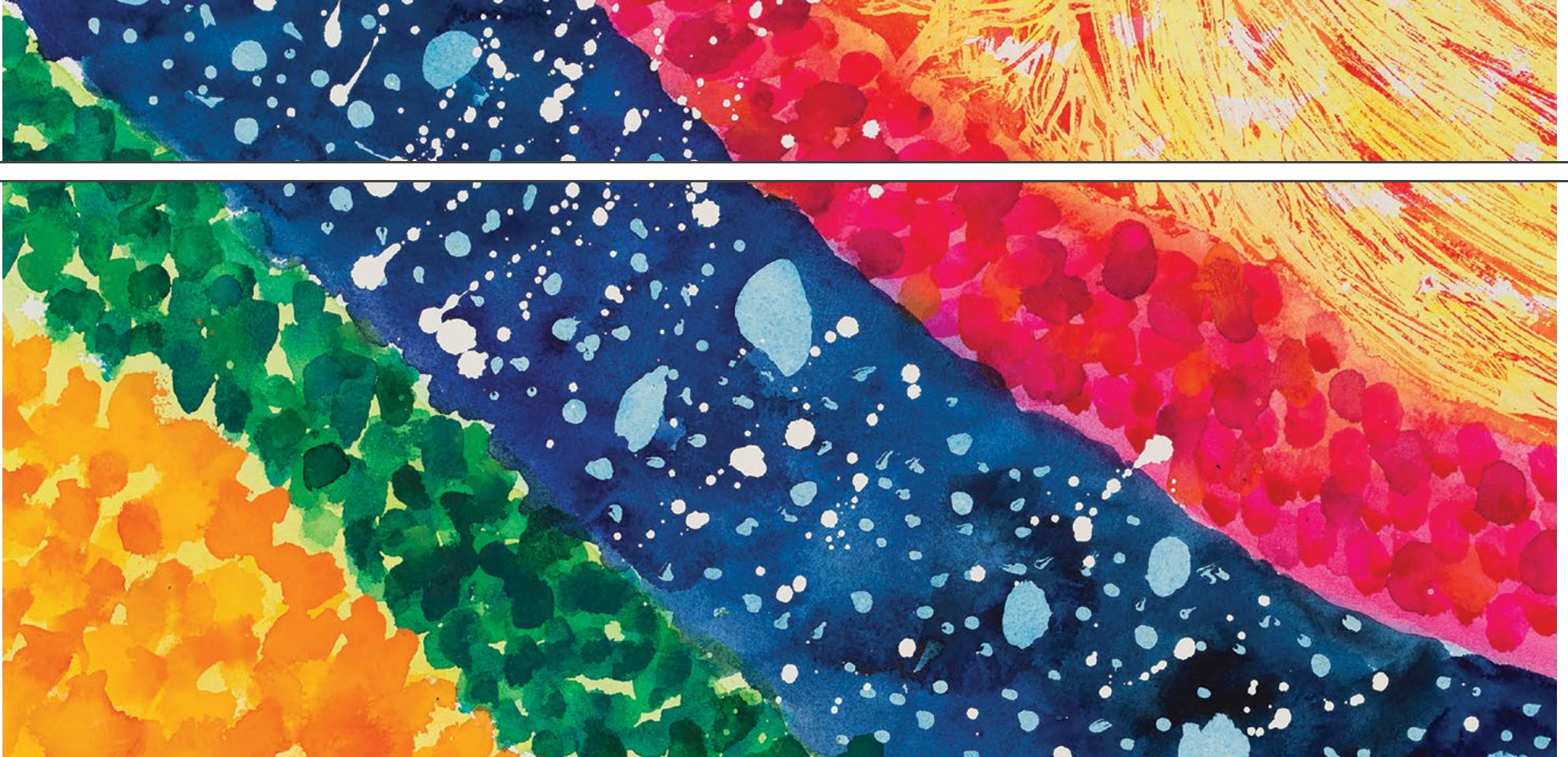


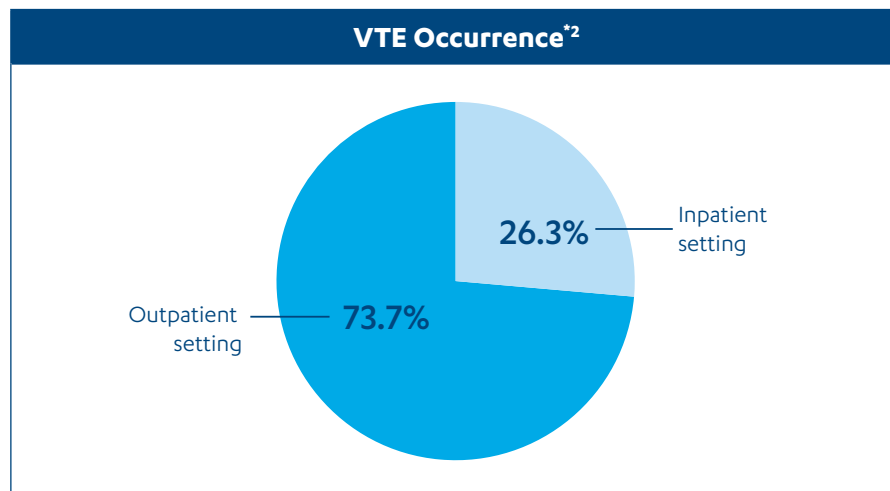
# **Optimizing the Role of the Case Manager** in the Treatment of Venous Thromboembolism (VTE)



Cliff Enright, *Starburst*

## The Threat of VTE

It is estimated that there are approximately 1 million Americans with VTE,<sup>1</sup> which includes pulmonary embolism (PE) and deep vein thrombosis (DVT). The risk of VTE continues after hospital discharge. In a population-based study, 73.7% of all VTE events occurred in the outpatient setting. Of VTE events occurring within 3 months of a hospitalization, two-thirds occurred within 1 month following hospital discharge.<sup>2</sup>



The 2016 American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) guidelines for Antithrombotic Therapy for VTE Disease recommend at least 3 months of anticoagulation therapy for most patients with VTE.<sup>3</sup>

These treatment recommendations mean case managers have an opportunity to follow at-risk patients from discharge and beyond.

## The Role of the Case Manager in Continuity of Care

The Case Management Society of America defines case management as a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's health needs. Through communication and available resources, case managers are patient advocates who work to promote quality health care and cost-effective outcomes.<sup>4</sup>

While case managers are a critical link in healthcare systems, their role is often underutilized.<sup>5</sup> In fact, case management varies among healthcare settings, but coordination and delivery of care are the central premise.<sup>6</sup>

As patients move quickly across the healthcare continuum, collaboration and effective communication among case managers in all care channels (acute care, managed care, and others) become increasingly important. This interaction is crucial to ensure that the care provided is efficacious, efficient, and of high quality.<sup>7</sup>

Complex treatment plans often require patients to interface with several different healthcare providers. While involvement of interdisciplinary teams brings great value, including increased communication, this model may result in confusion for the patient.<sup>5</sup>

Important case management tasks include

- Working collaboratively with patients to<sup>5</sup>
  - Improve self-care abilities
  - Provide important education on how to care for their condition
  - Coordinate necessary services
  - Integrate health promotion, wellness, and prevention
- Working collaboratively with interdisciplinary healthcare teams to coordinate care across the continuum<sup>6</sup>
- Understanding and working within the prescribed parameters of the health plan/organization to design an appropriate, high-quality, and cost-effective plan of care<sup>6</sup>
- Delivering timely and cost-efficient care to meet each patient's specific needs<sup>6</sup>

## How Case Managers Can Help to Make a Difference in VTE Treatment and Risk Reduction

Your role as the case manager is critical to effective VTE treatment and continuing patient care at time of discharge.

As the patient moves across the continuum of care, you are uniquely positioned to interact with the entire healthcare team, including the patient's:

- Specialist physician (eg, cardiologist)
- Primary care and attending physicians
- Hospital discharge planner
- Long-term or post-acute facility case manager
- Visiting nurse service
- Home healthcare service
- Pharmacist
- Occupational therapist/physical therapist
- Caregiver

Your involvement in educating patients about VTE and promoting compliance with the VTE treatment program for each patient can help support positive patient outcomes.



### References

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