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**Jeff Susman, MD**  
Editor-in-Chief

## There's no substitute for a family physician

I was so “pleased” when the letter arrived from my personal care manager, informing me that she was “dedicated to effectively meeting my health care needs.” The letter writer promised to help me find more energy to devote to hobbies, manage my pain, achieve a healthy weight, and get a handle on stress.

And to think, I didn't know I was in pain or overweight.

Three letters later (the care manager assigned to me is quite persistent), I find my stress level increasing just from trying to keep up with her relentless campaign on my behalf. What little time I did have for hobbies is now taken up with opening mail from my new best friend. The FAQs that accompany her letters explain that “since doctors may be hard to reach ... we work with your health care providers to reinforce their prescribed plan of care.” Of course, my care manager is only available Monday through Friday 9 to 5 Eastern Standard Time. And, as far as I can tell, Myrna (Is it OK to call my care manager by her first name?) has yet to contact *my* busy doctor. I guess she's busy, too.

**I really don't  
want a faceless  
care manager  
of unknown  
competence to  
assist me.**

Perhaps you could help me break the news to Myrna and the outreach company that employs her that I really don't want a faceless care manager of unknown competence to assist me. That I already have to work with a pharmacy benefit manager who has reached out beyond numerous time zones to speak with me (but whom I can barely understand) and a prior authorizations specialist whose thick local “accent” is not much easier to decipher.

And that I'm happy as pie to have my family physician and his health care team manage my care.

So, Myrna, I hope you won't mind if I ignore your missives, save time for a walk, and continue to rely on the best care manager in the world: my family physician.

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