

*Free Webinar Series
for Seniors and Caregivers*

Social Service Professionals and What They Do

Presenter:

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Thursday, April 15, 2021—10:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.



This Series is Being Hosted By:



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Social Service Professionals and How They Can Help

Doni Green

North Central Texas Council of Governments

April 15, 2021



Aging/Disability Challenge

- Few plan for disability because we fear losing independence
- Most of us plan while in crisis mode, when dealing with intense emotions and short timeframes
- Social service programs are complex and there's no single point of entry



What Are Social Service Programs?

- They include programs like home health, home modification, home-delivered meals, counseling, emergency financial assistance, and transportation
- Sometimes eligibility is based on income, but not always!



Social Service Professionals

- Information and referral specialists
- Case managers
- Discharge planners
- Benefits Counselors
- Social workers
- Counselors



Information and Referral Specialists

- Gather and organize information about federal, state, and local social service programs
- Trained to determine needs and identify resources that may be able to meet those needs

Information and Referral Specialists

- Resources may be limited to:
 - Those offered by non-profit agencies. This may limit options for people with higher incomes and resources.
 - Those offered by agencies that pay a referral fee. This may limit options for people with limited income and resources



Finding Information and Referral Specialists

- Call 2-1-1 (Texas Information and Referral Network) for general social service information and referral
- Call 1-855-937-2372 for information about long-term services and supports (e.g., home health, medical transportation)

Finding Information and Referral Specialists

- Several disease-specific organizations have information and referral specialists (e.g., the Alzheimer's Association HelpLine at 1-800-272-3900 and American Cancer Society Helpline at 1-800-227-2345)



Case Managers

- Help set up and monitor social and/or health services, on a short-term and/or long-term basis
- May pay for services in some cases
- May be social worker, nurse, or some other profession



Finding Case Managers

- Some programs (e.g., Medicaid) provide case management (or service coordination) upon request
- Some public agencies (e.g., Area Agency on Aging) provide case management on short-term basis to qualifying people at no cost



Finding Case Managers

- Some communities have private geriatric case managers, who charge a fee for assessing needs and arranging services



Discharge Planners

- Work for facilities such as hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and nursing homes
- Are required to arrange services that are necessary for health/safety after leaving facility
 - Options may be limited by lack of insurance/insurance limitations/inability to pay privately



Discharge Planners

- Primary responsibilities often involve arranging Medicare services (e.g., therapies and medical equipment)
- May be social worker or nurse



Finding Discharge Planners

- Ask facility doctor, nurse, or other staff person



Benefits Counselors

- Trained to help people understand public benefits, including Medicare and Medicaid, and choose benefits (e.g., Medicare Part D coverage) that best meet needs
- Do not promote any service or product, and must provide objective information



Finding Benefits Counselors

- Call 1-800-252-9240



Social Work Professionals

Lee Stark, MA, LBSW
Wellness Center for Older Adults
April 15, 2021



What is a Social Worker?

- A Social Worker is a professional who is licensed by the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners. This person typically has a bachelor's or master's degree in Social Work and has passed a licensing exam.
- Social Workers must follow a strict Code of Ethics that guide how they behave & interact with clients.

Licensure Levels

- Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker (LBSW)
 - Has a 4-year degree in social work or equivalent.
 - Cannot engage in clinical counseling.
 - Can only work independently with Independent Practice Recognition (IPR); otherwise, must be employed.
 - Work in hospitals, nursing homes, social service organizations, and state agencies.

Licensure Levels

- Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW)
 - Has a 6-year degree in social work or equivalent.
 - Can practice in a broader range of settings, including hospitals, mental health facilities, government, and management positions.
 - Can also obtain IPR, and can become an Advanced Practitioner (AP), the highest level of non-clinical licensure.



Licensure Levels

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
 - This is a Master Social Worker with additional training who is licensed to provide clinical counseling services.
 - Clinical counseling includes individual, family, and group counseling services.
 - Only a LCSW can work independently without an IPR.



Areas of Social Work Practice

- Micro Level (Intra- & Interpersonal)
 - Individuals and families.
 - People struggling with loss of jobs, homes or financial security.
 - Counseling for depression, anxiety, stress or other mental health issues.
 - Case management; dealing with scarcity issues (income, housing, food, etc.).
 - Medical social work; helping clients manage increasing health issues.
 - Staffed by all levels of Social Workers.



Areas of Social Work Practice

- Meso Level (Groups & Communities)
 - Schools, local organizations, and communities.
 - Working at community organizations like schools, food banks, cities, or counties.
 - Community development, social justice activism, or large-scale education or action campaigns.
 - Staffed by Baccalaurate or Master Level Social Worker.



Areas of Social Work Practice

- Macro Level (Systemic Issues)
 - Healthcare policies, law & legislation, advocacy or social work education.
 - These positions are usually in governments, national organizations, or colleges and universities.
 - Almost exclusively staffed by Master or Ph.D. level Social Workers.

Note: A Ph.D. in Social Work provides no additional social work licensing benefit.



Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council

- This is the overall State Agency that administers the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners.
- Allows the public to verify a social worker's license, locate social workers in their area, and fill an ethics complaint against a social worker.
- www.bhec.texas.gov/index.html
- (512) 305-7700



Contact Information

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