

Handbook of Research on Medical Interpreting

What Social Workers Do About this section

Child and family social workers protect vulnerable children and support families in need of assistance.

Social workers help individuals, groups, and families prevent and cope with problems in their everyday lives. Clinical social workers diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional problems.

Duties

Social workers typically do the following:

Identify people and communities in need of help

Assess clients'™ needs, situations, strengths, and support networks to determine their goals

Help clients adjust to changes and challenges in their lives, such as illness, divorce, or unemployment

Research, refer, and advocate for community resources, such as food stamps, childcare, and healthcare, to assist and improve a client's™ well-being

Respond to crisis situations such as child abuse and mental health emergencies

Monitor clients' situations, and follow up to ensure that they have improved

Maintain case files and records

Provide psychotherapy services

Social workers help people cope with challenges in their lives. They help with a wide range of situations, such as adopting a child, being diagnosed with a terminal illness, or preventing and treating substance abuse.

Some social workers get involved at a broad level to help community organizations and policymakers develop or improve social programs, services, and conditions. This is sometimes referred to as macro social work.

Advocacy is an important aspect of social work. Social workers advocate or raise awareness with and on behalf of their clients and constituents. Additionally, they may advocate for the social work occupation on local, state, and national levels.

Social workers who are licensed to diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional disorders are called clinical social workers (CSW), licensed clinical social workers (LCSW), or have a similar title; specific titles vary by state. They provide individual, group, family, and couples therapy; work with clients

P

to develop strategies to change behavior or cope with difficult situations; and refer clients to other resources or services, such as support groups or other mental health workers. Clinical social workers may develop treatment plans with the client, doctors, and other healthcare workers and may adjust the treatment plan if necessary based on their client's progress. They may work in a variety of specialties.

The following are examples of types of social workers:

Child and family social workers protect vulnerable children and help families in need of assistance. They help families find housing or services, such as childcare, or apply for benefits, such as food stamps. They intervene when children are in danger of neglect or abuse. Some help arrange adoptions, locate foster families, or work to reunite families.

School social workers work with teachers, parents, and school administrators to develop plans and strategies to improve students' academic performance and social development. They help students with problems such as aggressive behavior or bullying. Additionally, school social workers meet with families to discuss issues such as access to special education resources or frequent student absences.

Healthcare social workers help clients understand their diagnosis and adjust their lifestyle, housing, or healthcare. For example, they may help people transition from the hospital to their homes and communities. In addition, they may provide information about services, such as home healthcare or support groups, to help clients manage their illness or disease. Social workers help doctors and other healthcare workers understand the effects that diseases and illnesses have on clients' mental and emotional health. Some healthcare social workers specialize in geriatric social work, hospice and palliative care, or medical social work.

Mental health and substance abuse social workers help clients with mental illnesses or addictions. They provide information on services, such as support groups and 12-step programs, to help clients cope with their illness. These workers often are licensed clinical social workers.

Reference

[The Theory and Practice of Item Response Theory \(Methodology in the Social Sciences\)](#)

[AP® Biology Crash Course, Book + Online: Get a Higher Score in Less Time \(Advanced Placement \(AP\) Crash Course\)](#)