



**Prifysgol Cymru**  
Y Drindod Dewi Sant  
**University of Wales**  
Trinity Saint David

Name: Precy Pagtalunan

Student ID: 2532514

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Lecturer: Sam Parker MCs BSc FRSPH FRSA MCIEH

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## 1.1 Introduction

The field of health and social care focused on supporting individuals' physical, mental, and social well-being. It combines health services that treat illnesses and diagnose through clinical professionals like doctors, and nurses, while social services support daily living and independence for vulnerable individuals via carers workers, and social workers. It is a growing sector requiring a diverse, compassionate workforce that can offer both medical treatment and social support. Social workers play a vital role in health and social care because they support individuals, families and communities who are facing difficult situations their aim is to help them live safe, independent and satisfying lives.

## 2 Social Worker in the Health and Social Care Field

### 2.1 Description of Social Worker in Health and Social Care

The role of a social worker is important because they help protect and support people who cannot cope to their own. Without the help of social workers, many vulnerable individuals, such as older adults, children, and people with disabilities might not receive the protection and care they need. They give people a voice, social workers advocate for the rights, ensuring they are treated fairly and with dignity. In addition, social workers help improve quality of life by connecting them to essential services like housing, healthcare, and financial support.

The main duties of a social worker can be varied depending on the setting, but some responsibilities are common such as, assessment of needs, care planning, casework and intervention, safeguarding, multi-agency working, advocacy, record keeping and case management, and court work. To be able to perform effectively, social workers need a strong set of personal, communication, and professional skills, such as strong communication skills, empathy and compassion, problem solving skills, decision-making skills, organizational skills, teamwork, resilience and patience, and ethical awareness. Therefore, social workers are important because they promote equality, social justice, and human rights, helping to reduce inequalities and improve quality of life for those most in need.

### 2.2 Explanation of Most Significant Skills Needed for Social Worker in Health and Social Care

One of the three most significant skills required for a social worker is communication skills. Strong communication skills are the capacity to build rapport with people in difficult circumstances, and to communicate clearly in writing with professional audiences. This is essential because social workers need to listen carefully, ask the right question, and clearly explain information. They must be able to speak clearly with individuals', families and other

professionals. Good communication skills help build trust with clients and allow them to work effectively with other professionals, including those in the National Health Service (NHS) and other sectors.

The second most significant skills required for social worker is empathy and compassion, an ability to understand and share the feelings of another person and the desire and action to alleviate their sufferings. Being compassionate is beneficial because it improves mental health and physical health, strengthens relationships, and fosters a supportive community. Understanding how others feel, allows social workers to provide sensitive and respectful support, especially in challenging situations. Therefore, showing compassion as a social worker will help build trust, improve outcomes, emotional support for clients, and professional effectiveness, that lead to more positive results for individuals.

The third most important skills required for social worker is problem-solving skills. Solving the problem is important in social work because it directly affects a person's safety, wellbeing, and quality of life. Every case is different, and many involve complex challenges. Social workers need to assess situation and find practical solutions that improve people's safety and wellbeing. When problem is solved early, it can prevent situations from getting worse and reduce the need for more serious interventions. In addition, problem solving allows social workers to provide effective support by finding the best solutions tailored to everyone.

Lord Leming (2003) highlighted that failures in communication and lack of professional skills among social workers contributed to serious harm, showing the importance of effective safeguarding practices. This case showed when key skills, such as communication, safeguarding awareness, and decision making are not effectively used. Philip Geraci a social worker in the UK was dismissed and later banned from practice. This case was reviewed by Social Work England, (2025). responsible for regulating social workers and ensuring they meet professional standards. Key issue in this case is, abuse of power, breach of professional boundaries, lack of professional judgement, and safeguarding failure.

### 3 Strategies for Skill Improvement for Social Workers

#### 3.1 Three Strategies to Improve the Skills for Social Workers

These are the three most effective strategies that stand out because they directly improve day-to-day practice and decision making. First is Continuous Professional Development (CPD) being essential in social work for improving communication, compassion, and organisation skills. Continuous Professional Development enhances communication by developing active listening and clear reporting when working with service users and professionals. It also builds compassion by encouraging reflective learning and empathy, supporting person-centred practice. In addition, CPD strengthens organisation skills by improving time management, prioritisation, and accurate record-keeping (BASW, 2020). For instance, like the National Health Service, CPD ensures practitioners maintain professional standards and deliver effective, high-quality care.

The second choice is Reflective Practice using Gibbs' Reflective Cycles support the development of communication, compassion, and problem-solving skills in social work. The model's stages- description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan, enable practitioners to

critically reflect on experiences and improve future practice (Gibbs,1988). Through reflection, social workers can evaluate their communication with service users, consider compassionate responses, and identify effective solutions to complex situations. This process strengthens decision-making and professional judgement within organisations such as the National Health Service, ultimately improving outcomes for service users.

The third choice is diversity and equality strategies in social work rely on key skills such as communication, compassion, and organisational ability to ensure inclusive and fair practice. Effective communication enables social workers to engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds, reducing misunderstanding and promoting equality. Compassion supports culturally sensitive care by encouraging empathy and respect for different values and experiences. Organisational skills are important for implementing policies, managing diverse caseloads, and ensuring equitable service delivery (BASW,2022). Within organisations like the National Health Service, these strategies help reduce discrimination and promote equal access to care for all service users.

The combined strategies of reflective practice, continuous professional development (CPD), and diversity and equality all support the development of communication, compassion, and organisational skills in social work. By using Gibbs' Reflective Cycles, practitioners can evaluate communication, demonstrate compassion, and improve problem solving (Gibbs,1988). Continuous Professional Development strengthens skills through ongoing learning and professional development (BASW,2022). Diversity and equality strategies promote inclusive, compassionate practice (Thompson,2016). Inside the organisation like the National Health Service, these approaches improve professional competence and service clients' outcomes. Therefore, these combined strategies using all these key skills are essential and should be demonstrated professionally in the field of health and social care to promote excellent service.

## 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, effective social work practice depends on the continuous development of essential skills such as, communication, compassion, and organisational ability. Approaches like reflective practice, continuous professional development (CPD), and diversity and equality strategies support practitioners in adapting to complex and changing environments. Using frameworks such as Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

encourages ongoing learning and self-improvement, while CPD ensures knowledge remains current and relevant. Promoting equality and inclusion further strengthens ethical practice. Overall, these elements contribute to professional growth and the delivery of safe, effective, and person-centred care services like the National Health Service.

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