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Module Code: LCHS4001_BIRM

Module: Academic and employability skills

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Submitted on: 19/11/2025

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1: Written Report

1.1 Introduction

Social work is one of the most important professions that aims to improve people's lives, thereby helping them solve problems, enhancing their well-being, and promoting social justice and human rights in the health and social care sector. This role was selected out of a desire to help others and make a meaningful difference for people who are vulnerable or socially disadvantaged. Social workers act as advocates, problem solvers, and coordinators, ensuring that individuals and families receive the support and resources they need to live safely and independently. This report will explore the role of a social worker in a health and social care context. It will help in describing the main duties and responsibilities of the role, identify the essential skills needed to perform it effectively, and then outline strategies that can be used in developing each skill, using examples from real-world scenarios.

1.2 Description of, and background to, social worker in Healthcare

In the health and social care sector, a social worker supports and advocates for individuals, families, and communities. They work with individuals and families to assess needs, develop support plans, and coordinate care among health and community services (National Careers Service, n.d.). This role is often seen in hospitals, mental health services, community care settings, and local authorities.

1.2 Evaluation of the skills needed for social worker in Healthcare

A social worker requires many qualities in order to succeed, but three skills are essential which are communication, problem-solving, and empathy. Each skill directly affects how effectively a social worker can perform their duties and support clients.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Having strong communication is very important in social work practice. As a social worker, you need to communicate clearly with clients, families, and professionals, both verbally and in writing. Active listening simply means to carefully listen to clients and understand them fully in terms of needs, emotions, which is just as important (University at Buffalo, n.d.).

Good communication ensures that clients feel heard and respected. For instance, when a service user or patient expresses fear about going home or staying at home, it is the duty of

a skilled social worker to listen carefully, ask clarifying questions, and summarise the patient's concerns to show understanding. They will then clearly explain the available options, such as home care services or community support.

Written communication is very important as well. Reports, assessments, and care plans must be easy to understand. Miscommunication can have serious consequences, such as missed appointments or inappropriate referrals. Therefore, social workers must use clear and simple language while maintaining professional accuracy (University at Buffalo, n.d.).

Problem-solving

A social worker assists in pinpointing issues, developing solutions, and executing a viable plan. Social workers evaluate situations and make sound decisions, which often include navigating complex ethical dilemmas. They advocate for the needs of their clients, ensuring they receive the essential support they are entitled to.

Empathy and Cultural Competence

Empathy refers to the capacity to relate to and comprehend another person's experiences and viewpoints, enabling social workers to grasp and share their clients' emotions. According to the NASW, it involves perceiving, comprehending, experiencing, and responding to another individual's emotional state and thoughts. A social worker must possess cultural competence to effectively engage with individuals from a variety of backgrounds. It is crucial for them to respect and address their clients' cultural beliefs and practices. As noted by the NASW, they must reflect on their own cultural backgrounds and identities while pursuing the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to improve service delivery to individuals with diverse cultural experiences linked to race, ethnicity, gender, or class, fostering a non-judgmental attitude. Together, these two skills foster trust and respect between the social worker and the client.

In practical situations, empathy involves acknowledging the emotional distress and frustration a client may be feeling, rather than merely seeing them as a “case.” Meanwhile, cultural competence entails being aware of and sensitive to varying cultural values, beliefs, and communication styles. For example, a social worker assisting a refugee family must be mindful of cultural taboos and modify their communication to prevent misunderstandings. This method helps build rapport and guarantees that the support plan aligns with the family’s values (University at Buffalo, n.d.).

1.3 Strategies to improve the skills for a social worker

Developing professional skills is an ongoing process. The following strategies are recommended to strengthen communication, organisation, and empathy in social work practice.

There should be regular supervision sessions that allow social workers to discuss challenging cases, look at the communication style used, be able to identify areas for improvement. Reflective practice encourages workers to think about how their tone, word choice, or body language affected a client interaction, leading to more thoughtful communication over time.

Social workers should always participate in training workshops where social workers practise scenarios such as delivering difficult news or mediating family conflicts helps build confidence and adaptability. Also, feedback from peers will help in highlighting strengths and areas needing improvement, promoting active listening and clarity (University at Buffalo, n.d.).

The use of clear report templates and where written works are being reviewed by supervisors can improve documentation quality. Feedback on clarity, conciseness, and tone ensures written communication is professional and accessible to both colleagues and clients.

Using digital tools to track caseloads, deadlines, and appointments can make work more structured. For example, maintaining a spreadsheet or database with client updates helps prioritise urgent tasks and reduces the chance of errors (Indeed, 2025).

Attending professional workshops or using time-management techniques such as scheduling focused work blocks or daily task reviews helps balance heavy workloads. This leads to improved productivity and reduced stress.

Discussing caseloads regularly with peers or supervisors encourages reflection and shared problem-solving. Mentoring can also provide new methods for organising information and balancing administrative duties with client interaction.

Social worker needs to attend workshops on cultural competence, which will help to expose social workers to diverse perspectives and teach strategies for avoiding bias. Engaging in community activities, such as volunteering with multicultural groups, also increases understanding of clients' lived experiences (Skills for Care, n.d.).

Keeping a reflective journal after client meetings helps identify personal assumptions and emotional responses. Regularly evaluate your work, often through supervision, seeking feedback from clients about how understood they understood encourages continuous self-awareness and emotional growth.

Because empathy can lead to emotional fatigue, regular supervision sessions that include discussions about self-care, boundaries, and emotional responses are essential. Learning to manage emotions ensures empathy remains genuine but sustainable (University at Buffalo, n.d.).

1.4 Conclusion

The position of a social worker within health and social care is intricate, dynamic, and challenging. Social workers assist clients in navigating the overlap between healthcare requirements and societal circumstances, making sure that those in vulnerable situations obtain the necessary

support to live safely and with dignity. Social workers impact lives across all areas of society, covering both mental and physical health. To carry out this role effectively, social workers need to communicate effectively, remain organized, and show empathy along with a deep understanding of different cultures. By engaging in reflective supervision, participating in time-management training, and committing to ongoing education on cultural competence, social workers can continue to develop both personally and professionally. These approaches not only enhance social workers' skills but also improve the quality of care their clients receive. Ultimately, a social worker's effectiveness relies on their capacity to listen, empathize, and act with integrity, all while upholding professionalism in every facet of their responsibilities.

1.5 Reference List

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