

APPENDIX 11 Professional Development & Competent Practice

Introduction

Social workers must maintain their skills are in keeping with current knowledge and practices in the field of social work through a minimum 40 hours of professional development annually. Section 11 sets the Standards for professional development In order to maintain competency.

<http://nscsw.org/practice/standards-of-practice/standard-eleven/>

Relevant Code of Ethics.

Value 4: Integrity of Professional Practice

Social workers demonstrate respect for the profession's purpose, values and ethical principles relevant to their field of practice. Social workers maintain a high level of professional conduct by acting honestly and responsibly and promoting the values of the profession. Social workers strive for impartiality in their professional practice, and refrain from imposing their personal values, views, preferences, stereotypes/assumptions on clients and seek to understand the lived experiences of those whom they serve. It is the responsibility of social workers to establish the tenor of their professional relationship with clients, and others to whom they have a professional duty, and to maintain professional boundaries. As individuals, social workers take care in their actions to not bring the reputation of the profession into disrepute. An essential element of integrity in professional practice is ethical accountability based on the CASW Code of Ethics, as amended for NSASW (1994), the CASW Code of Ethics (2005), the IFSW Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles (2004), and other relevant provincial standards and guidelines. Where conflicts or uncertainties exist with respect to these resources of ethical guidance or with respect to the interpretation or application, social workers are encouraged to seek advice, including consultation with their regulatory body.

Value 6: Competence in Professional Practice

Social workers respect a client's right to competent social work services. Social workers analyze the nature of social needs and problems, and encourage innovative, effective strategies and techniques to meet both new and existing needs and, where possible, contribute to the knowledge base of the profession. Social workers have a responsibility to maintain professional proficiency, to continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills, and to apply new knowledge in practice commensurate with their level of professional education, skill and competency, seeking consultation and supervision as appropriate.

Concepts Related to Standard

- Describe the impact of long-life learning on your approach to social work practice.

- Identify your strengths and gaps of knowledge and skills related to your area of practice.
- Develop plan to achieve your professional development goals based on assessment of strengths and gaps of knowledge.
- Examine the importance for a social worker to be registration.

Activity Examples

- a. Read: Dunlap Ashely (2017), 10 Skills Every Social Worker Needs. Social Work Helper. Retrieved from <https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2013/08/06/10-skills-every-social-worker-needs/>

- a. Use a self-assessment process to thoughtfully and reflectively assess your current knowledge and skills.
- It is important to know where you have been and where you are as a professional in order to plan where you want to go in your life and career;
 - There two options available for your self-assessment.
 - i. Use the **Self-Assessment form** as a guide in determining strengths and areas for growth. This option consists of four separate professional development areas;
 - Organizational Practice,
 - Professional Practice,
 - Ethical Practice,
 - Self-Care.
 - ii. The second option is to complete a Narrative, which is usually 300 to 500 words in length. This option invites you to address professional development areas in your own words.
- b. You should focus on the skills and knowledge that are needed to practice your desired area of practice. It might be helpful to ask yourself what actions are required to maintain or enhance knowledge base and skill-sets; this is in order to practice ethically within your existing area of practice or to broaden your scope of practice to include new areas of social work.
- i. It may be helpful to review this general list of non-exhaustive social work skills to help with your assessment

A – G	H - M	N – S	T - Z
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Listening • Advising • Advocacy • Advocate for Individual Clients • Advocate for the Community • After Care Services • Assessment • Boundary Setting • Care Planning • Case Management • Case Planning • <u>Collaboration</u> • Collect Patient Information • Communication Skills • Community Organizing • Community Based Participatory Research. • Connecting Individuals to Resources • Consultations • Continuum of Care • Cooperation • Coordinate Clinic Care • Coordination • Coping • Counseling • Crisis Intervention • Critical Thinking • Developing Action Plans • Discharge Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Visits • Identifying Issues • Individualizing Plans of Care • Implementation • Intake • Interdisciplinary Work • Interpersonal • Intervention • Interview Families • Interview Students • Knowledge of Community Resources • Knowledge of Community Services • Maintain Professional Relationships • Mental Health Services • Microsoft Office • Monitor Home Placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessment • Observation • Persuasion • Planning • Problem Assessment • Problem Resolution • Problem Solving • Program Development • Project Planning • Record Keeping • Recovery • Reporting • Resource Coordination • Referrals • Referral Services • Rehabilitation • Self-Awareness • Situational Abuse • Social Media • Supporting Counseling • Support Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Suicide Prevention • Time Management Skills • Transfers • Treatment • Treatment Coordination • Treatment Planning • Treatment Updates • Verbal Communication • Written Communication



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documentation• Elder Care• Empathy• Engaged• Establishing Goals• Evaluation• Facilitation• Family Care• Follow Up Services• Fund Development			
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b. With your mentor present your self-assessment. Review the following questions

- What aspects of personal and professional life contribute to competence as a social worker?
- What areas of social work practice remain a challenge?
- What areas do they wish to explore?

2. Read: **Nissen, L., Pendell, K., Jivanjee, P., & Goodluck, C. (2014). Lifelong learning in social work education: A review of the literature and implications for the future. Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 34(4), 384-400.**

a. Additional Resources:

[The Inner Life of Rebellion- Parker Palmer + Courtney Martin](#)

Campbell, C., & Baikie, G. (2013). Teaching critically reflective analysis in the context of a social justice course. *Reflective Practice*, 14(4), 452-464.



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- b. Through an active learning exercise; demonstrate your understanding of lifelong learning by discussing the following questions with your mentor.
- Reflect on your area of practice: are there continuing pressures to attend to economic pressures around social work delivery? What role does this pressure play in eroding the values base of the social work profession?
 - Given this pressure, what role does the acquisition of new knowledge play in connecting and rooting an understanding of the accumulated historical perspective of social work practice with the current and emerging evidence informed practices?
 - What role does evidence based knowledge play in connecting back to the core values and principles of the profession? How can acquiring new knowledge in your service area help to create broader change within your area of practice?
 - What role do professional ethics play in lifelong learning? How do our professional values help us cultivate a Critically Reflective Analysis of research and practice?
 - How will you seek out new and relevant knowledge for practice? How will you locate relevant and sound information, both formally in scholarly literature and informally by way of cultivating relationships with community members?
 - What role does the community and cultural context of your service area play in your plan?
3. Complete a Learning Plan using the learning plan template. Check in with your mentor every 6 months on the status of the learning plan.
4. Read: McGarrigle, T., & Walsh, C. A. (2011). Mindfulness, self-care, and wellness in social work: Effects of contemplative training. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 30(3), 212-233.

a. Additional Resources:

[Let's Talk About Burnout, Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma-
youtube](#)



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[Drowning in Empathy: The Cost of Vicarious Trauma | Amy Cunningham - youtube](#)

b. With your mentor reflect on the following questions.

- What role does self-care play in your ability to balance personal, professional, emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual components in order to live in a balanced, energized manner that assists one in coping with day-to-day stressors?
- With your self-care regiment is there space for contemplative practices that promote, thinking, questioning, discussing, reflecting, and concentrating on self, all of which are aimed at cultivating a deepened level of awareness and insight?
- How do you currently process moments of stress and do you monitor your behavior for signs of vicarious trauma?
- Is there space for mindfulness practice in your current service area? How might you create more space or welcome your colleagues and peers into that space?

5. Building a Personal Framework for on-going and sustainable self-care. Examine the self-care wheel. Take a long hard look at the Wheel's Six Dimensions and realistically and honestly assess your current situation, where would you like to go, how do you picture your self-care activities and how will you plan to maintain it. (adapted from 6 Dimensions of Vicarious Trauma Free Life
<http://www.olgaphoenix.com/wpcontent/themes/olg/pdf/vt%20Starter%20Kit.pdf>)

a. The questions below will help you with this process.

- Examine the wheel closely, then mindfully and non-judgmentally listen to your body and mind, and write down the thoughts that come.
- What are your hopes and goals in regards to your self-care and wellness journey?
- What are your fears about your self-care and wellness journey?



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- What do you already know about your life and work habits that require your immediate attention?
- How does your life feel? What seems to be working well? What seems to be challenging?
- Who is your current support group? Who would you like to enlist to become a part of your support group?
- After you identified your support group, it's valuable to reflect on your saboteurs. It could be your inner critic, an unsupportive colleague, your overly packed schedule, or even an unhealthy habit. Here it's important to reflect on the fact that no matter who or what your saboteurs are, you and your support group can tackle them in no time!
- Looking at the Physical Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Physical Dimension of the Wheel?
- Looking at the Psychological Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Psychological Dimension of the wheel?
- Looking at the Emotional Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Emotional Dimension of the Wheel?
- Looking at the Spiritual Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Spiritual Dimension of the Wheel?
- Looking at the Emotional Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Emotional Dimension of the Wheel?
- Looking at the Personal Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Personal Dimension of the Wheel?



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- Looking at the Professional Dimension of your life, what are the activities that work well for you currently? What are the things you would like to do more of? Less of? Any specific activities you would like to try from the Professional Dimension of the Wheel?
 - b. Fill and complete your own wheel.
 - c. With your mentor imagine yourself once you 've created, tried, and mastered your own, personal, sustainable, and preventative self-care and life balance plan! How do you feel about yourself?
6. The Candidate is asked to prepare a Journal Entry or Blog on the importance of Lifelong learning to competent social work practice
The Journal or Blog should include:
- a. Discuss lifelong learning in social work practice, be sure to address the role of social work education, values, skills and knowledge, and your own fundamental values, assumptions and beliefs.
 - b. Reflect on the role that the economic and political factors in your community are playing. Discuss how they are shaping the way you deliver ethical social work practice.
 - c. Develop what lifelong learning looks like for you? What role will it play in your ability to learn new knowledge, skills and to help integrate professional ethics into practice.

Resources

1. [Dunlap Ashely \(2017\). 10 Skills Every Social Worker Needs. Social Work Helper. Retrieved from https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2013/08/06/10-skills-every-social-worker-needs/](https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2013/08/06/10-skills-every-social-worker-needs/)
2. [Nissen, L., Pendell, K., Jivanjee, P., & Goodluck, C. \(2014\). Lifelong learning in social work education: A review of the literature and implications for the future. Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 34\(4\), 384-400.](#)
3. [The Inner Life of Rebellion- Parker Palmer + Courtney Martin](#)
4. [Campbell, C., & Baikie, G. \(2013\). Teaching critically reflective analysis in the context of a social justice course. Reflective Practice, 14\(4\), 452-464.](#)



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5. [McGarrigle, T., & Walsh, C. A. \(2011\). Mindfulness, self-care, and wellness in social work: Effects of contemplative training. Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought, 30\(3\), 212-233.](#)
6. [Let's Talk About Burnout, Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma-youtube](#)
7. [Drowning in Empathy: The Cost of Vicarious Trauma I Amy Cunningham –youtube](#)
8. [Dimensions of Vicarious Trauma Free Life: <http://www.olgaphoenix.com/wpconte>](#)

