



Medical and Public Health Social Worker

Course Overview: Focuses on careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): (21-1022) - Social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people's lives. Social workers help people function the best way they can in their environment, deal with their relationships, and solve personal and family problems. Social workers often see clients who face a life-threatening disease or a social problem, such as inadequate housing, unemployment, a serious illness, a disability, or substance abuse. Social workers also assist families that have serious domestic conflicts, sometimes involving child or spousal abuse.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)	<p>Curricular Experiences: *** Health Occupations Students of America</p> <p>Career Learning Experiences: Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing Clinical Rotations Certifications Clinical Volunteer Work (local hospitals & medical facilities)</p>	<p>Extracurricular Experiences:*** Language Immersion Programs National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook</p> <p>Service Learning Experiences: Boy/Girl Scouts Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Medical Mission Trips Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring Special Olympics</p>		
High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology			World Geography Foreign Language I Physical Education or Athletics	<p>COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES -- High School</p> <p>Students should take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Advanced Technical Credit (ATC), or locally articulated courses (Tech Prep), if possible. List those courses that count for college credit on your campus.</p>
		Career-Related Electives:	Principles of Health Science				
	10th	Courses:	English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry			World History Foreign Language II Elective	
		Career-Related Electives:	Medical Terminology and Pathophysiology				
	11th	Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics			United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech	
		Career-Related Electives:	Health Science				
12th	Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective Elective				
	Career-Related Electives:	Practicum in Health Science					

Postsecondary	How to Become a Social Worker			<p>Carrer Options (Sample of reported job titles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Worker • Medical Social Worker • Clinical Social Worker • Director of Social Services • Social Work Case Manager • Nephrology Social Worker • Oncology Social Worker • Renal Social Worker • Director of Social Work • Psychiatric Social Worker 	<p>Professional Associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Association of Social Workers • Center for Clinical Social Work • Association of Social Work Boards 	
		Clients talk to social workers about challenges in their lives and social workers must listen to and understand their clients' needs. A bachelor's degree is required for most direct-service social work positions, but some positions and settings require a master's degree.				
		Texas Southmost College	South Texas College			Texas State Technical College
		Social Work (AA)	Social Work (AA)			
	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American				
		Social Work (BS)				

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures). *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.



Medical and Public Health Social Workers

TEA Industry Cluster	Health Science
SOC Code	21-1022
Identified by	TWC LMCI; Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	24%
BISD Magnet School Available	Yes

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated *June 27, 2012*

Description

Social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people's lives. Social workers help people function the best way they can in their environment, deal with their relationships, and solve personal and family problems. Social workers often see clients who face a life-threatening disease or a social problem, such as inadequate housing, unemployment, a serious illness, a disability, or substance abuse. Social workers also assist families that have serious domestic conflicts, sometimes involving child or spousal abuse. Social workers often provide social services in health-related settings that now are governed by managed care organizations. To contain costs, these organizations emphasize short-term intervention, ambulatory and community-based care, and greater decentralization of services. Most social workers specialize. Although some conduct research or are involved in planning or policy development, most social workers prefer an area of practice in which they interact with clients.

What Social Workers Do

Child and family social workers protect vulnerable children and support families in need of assistance. There are two main types of social workers: direct-service social workers who help people solve and cope with problems in their everyday lives, and clinical social workers, who diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues.

Duties

Direct-service social workers typically do the following:

- Identify people who need help
- Assess clients' needs, situations, strengths, and support networks to determine their goals
- Develop plans to improve their clients' well-being
- Help clients adjust to changes and challenges in their lives, such as illness, divorce, or unemployment
- Research and refer clients to community resources, such as food stamps, child care, and healthcare
- Help clients work with government agencies to apply for and receive benefits such as Medicare
- Respond to crisis situations, such as natural disasters or child abuse
- Advocate for and help clients get resources that would improve their well-being
- Follow up with clients to ensure that their situations have improved
- Evaluate services provided to ensure that they are effective

Social workers help people cope with challenges in every stage of their lives. They help with a wide range of situations, such as adopting a child or being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Social workers work with many populations, including children, people with disabilities, and people with addictions.

Clinical social workers, also called licensed clinical social workers, typically do the following:

- Diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional disorders, including anxiety and depression
- Provide individual, group, family, and couples therapy
- Assess clients' histories, backgrounds, and situations to understand their needs, as well as their strengths and weaknesses
- Develop a treatment plan with the client, doctors, and other healthcare professionals
- Encourage clients to discuss their emotions and experiences to develop a better understanding of themselves and their relationships
- Help clients adjust to changes in their life, such as a divorce or being laid-off
- Work with clients to develop strategies to change behavior or cope with difficult situations
- Refer clients to other resources or services, such as support groups or other mental health professionals
- Evaluate their clients' progress and, if necessary, adjust the treatment plan

Many clinical social workers work in private practice. Some work in a group practice with other social workers or mental health professionals. Others work alone in a solo practice. In private practice, clinical social workers often do administrative and recordkeeping tasks. Among these tasks is working with clients and insurance companies to receive payment for their services. In addition, social workers market their practice to bring in new clients and to network with other professionals who may recommend them.

Direct-service social workers and clinical social workers often focus on a particular population or work environment. The following are some types of workers in this occupation:

Child and family social workers protect vulnerable children and help families in need of assistance. They help parents find services, such as child care, 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 get families back together. Clinical social workers provide mental health care to help children and families cope with changes in their lives, such as divorce or other family problems.

School social workers work with teachers, parents, and school administrators to develop plans and strategies to improve students' academic performance and social development. Students and their families are often referred to social workers to deal with problems such as aggressive behavior, bullying, or frequent absences from school.

Healthcare social workers help patients understand their diagnosis and make the necessary adjustments to their lifestyle, housing, or healthcare. They provide information on services, such as home health care or support groups, to help patients manage their illness or disease. Social workers help doctors and other healthcare professionals understand the effects diseases and illnesses have on patients' mental and emotional health.

Some healthcare social workers specialize in gerontological social work or hospice and palliative care social work.

Gerontological social workers help senior citizens and their families. They help clients find services such as programs that provide older adults with meals or with home health care. In some cases, they provide information about assisted living facilities or nursing homes or work with older adults in those settings. They help clients and their families make plans for possible health complications or where clients will live if they can no longer care for themselves.

Hospice and palliative care social workers help patients adjust to serious, chronic, or terminal illnesses. Palliative care focuses on relieving or preventing pain and other symptoms associated with serious illness. Hospice is a type of palliative care for people who are dying. Social workers in this setting provide and find services, such as support groups or grief counselors, to help patients and their families cope with the illness or disease.

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

Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs (Degree Types and Colleges/Universities)

How to Become a Social Worker

Clients talk to social workers about challenges in their lives and social workers must listen to and understand their clients' needs.

A bachelor's degree is required for most direct-service social work positions, but some positions and settings require a master's degree. Clinical social workers must have a master's degree. Licensure varies by state. Clinical social workers must be licensed.

Education

A bachelor's degree in social work (BSW) is the most common requirement for entry-level positions. However, some employers may hire workers who have a bachelor's degree in a related field, such as psychology or sociology.

BSW programs prepare students for direct-service positions such as caseworker or mental health assistant. These programs teach students about diverse populations, human behavior, and social welfare policy. All programs require students to complete supervised fieldwork or an internship.

Some positions, including those in schools and in healthcare, frequently require a master's degree in social work (MSW). All clinical social workers must have an MSW.

MSWs generally take 2 years to complete. Some programs allow those with a BSW to earn their MSW in 1 year. MSW programs prepare students for work in their chosen specialty and develop the skills to do clinical assessments, manage a large number of clients, and take on supervisory duties. All programs require students to complete supervised fieldwork or an internship.

A BSW is not required to enter MSW programs. In fact, a degree in almost any major is acceptable. However, coursework in psychology, sociology, economics, and political science are recommended.

Licenses

Licensure varies by state. All states have some type of licensure or certification requirement. All states require clinical social workers to be licensed. However, some states provide exemptions for clinical social workers who work in government agencies.

Becoming a licensed clinical social worker usually requires a master's degree in social work and 2 years or 3,000 hours of supervised clinical experience after graduation. After completing their supervised experience, clinical social workers must pass an exam to be licensed.

Although most states also have licenses for nonclinical social workers, these licenses are often optional. For more information about licensure by state, contact the [Association of Social Work Boards](#).

Important Qualities

Compassion. Social workers often work with people who are in stressful and difficult situations. To develop strong relationships, they must have compassion and empathy for their clients.

Listening skills. Clients talk to social workers about challenges in their lives. To effectively help, social workers must listen to and understand their clients’ needs.

Organizational skills. Helping and managing multiple clients, often assisting with their paperwork or documenting their treatment, requires good organizational skills.

People skills. Being able to work with different groups of people is essential for social workers. They need strong people skills to foster healthy and productive relationships with their clients and colleagues.

Problem-solving skills. Social workers need to develop practical and innovative solutions to their clients’ problems.

Time-management skills. Social workers often have many clients. They must manage their time well to provide adequate service to all of their clients.

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American
Social Work (AA)	Social Work (AA)			Social Work (BS)

Local Employers

Employer	City	Employer	City
A Better Choice Home Health	Brownsville	A-Touch Home Health Care	Harlingen
A One Health Svc Agency	Brownsville	Bay Brook Home Health Svc	Harlingen
A Touch Home Health Care Inc	Brownsville	Bee First Primary Home Care	Harlingen
Abc Pediatrics	Brownsville	Behavior & Wellness Ctr	Harlingen
Abundant Life Home Health Inc	Brownsville	Boy Scouts of America	Harlingen

Career Options (Specific Job Types)

Sample of reported job titles:

- Social Worker
- Medical Social Worker
- Clinical Social Worker
- Director of Social Services
- Social Work Case Manager
- Nephrology Social Worker
- Oncology Social Worker
- Renal Social Worker
- Director of Social Work
- Psychiatric Social Worker

Salary Ranges

Wages for Healthcare Social Workers

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$14.98	\$18.56	\$23.37	\$28.98	\$35.11
	Yearly	\$31,200	\$38,600	\$48,600	\$60,300	\$73,000
Texas	Hourly	\$15.75	\$19.91	\$24.91	\$29.34	\$35.03
	Yearly	\$32,800	\$41,400	\$51,800	\$61,000	\$72,900
Brownsville-Harlingen, TX MSA	Hourly	\$9.19	\$13.36	\$21.62	\$27.65	\$34.65
	Yearly	\$19,100	\$27,800	\$45,000	\$57,500	\$72,100
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX MSA	Hourly	\$13.21	\$16.93	\$23.39	\$30.41	\$37.13
	Yearly	\$27,500	\$35,200	\$48,700	\$63,300	\$77,200

Professional Associations Linked to the Careers

For more information about social workers and clinical social workers, visit

[National Association of Social Workers](#)

[Center for Clinical Social Work](#)

For more information about licensure requirements, visit

[Association of Social Work Boards](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)