The Role of the Social Worker
in the 21st Century –
A Literature Review

Education

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THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A LITERATURE REVIEW

'Indeed we have only the most general ideas of what we are trying to produce, what constitutes the essential skill of the social worker, and consequently still more varied ideas as to how to set about it' (Younghusband, 1959, p.28).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. A literature review on the role of the social worker was carried out during November 2004-January 2005 by consultants based at the University of Edinburgh. The review was commissioned by the Scottish Executive to support the work of the independent review group *21ˢᵗ Century Social Work* set up by the Education Minister, Mr Peter Peacock, under the chairmanship of Mr William Roe. The review surveyed a large volume of literature covering social work across much of the developed world. A list of references is appended.

2. There is a widespread perception of a current 'crisis' in British social work but there is little agreement about the nature of this crisis or its remedies. It is argued in this review that the 'crisis' in social work has to be understood in a broad context of professional, organisational, social and political changes since the 1960s.

3. There is a variety of views expressed in the literature on the nature of social work and the role of the social worker. Social work is a contested concept and subject to competing definitions. Its language is confusing and contributes to the lack of clarity about what it is that social workers do. This means that there is no universally accepted idea of valid knowledge, skills or expertise for social workers. However, there is fairly wide agreement that social work is committed to rights and justice; and that it exists to assist, support and enable those who suffer from the negative effects of social inequalities. Social work has a function of social integration; it is also widely seen as having the function of dealing with failures in other policy areas such as crime, health or education.

4. There is wide agreement about the basic values of social work. Based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, social work should promote the rights to individual self-determination and participation in society. Social workers should challenge discrimination, recognise diversity, and work to overcome social exclusion. These values are substantially constant across different societies and throughout the history of social work. What is distinctive about social work is the approach that locates the person in the context of his or her life as a whole. The 'crisis' in social work is seen by many as rooted in the difficulty, under current conditions, of upholding and pursuing the values of social work.

5. A number of key conceptions of the role of the social worker can be identified in the literature. Social workers may play all of these roles in different contexts and at different times in their career; and there may well be conflict between them. The roles are as follows:

    a. Counsellor (or caseworker) who works with individuals to help them address personal issues.

    b. Advocate on behalf of the poor and socially excluded.

    c. Partner working together with disadvantaged or disempowered individuals and groups.

d. **Assessor of risk or need** for a number of client groups; also associated with surveillance. This role may conflict with counselling.

e. **Care manager** who arranges services for users in a mixed economy of care, but may have little direct client contact.

f. **Agent of social control** who helps to maintain the social system against the demands of individuals whose behaviour is problematic.

6. A variant approach to social work is found in the continental tradition of social pedagogy. This stresses the educational role of the professional and the potential of individuals to address their family and social situation through the acquisition of appropriate skills and knowledge. It shares with the main tradition of social work the emphasis on human relationships and a holistic approach to social problems. The Kilbrandon report's proposed creation of a social education department is reminiscent of the principles of social pedagogy.

7. The role of social workers is affected by changes in social context. Amongst the important changes noted in the literature are the following:

   - **Demographic changes,** especially the ageing population and falling family size, that will affect the ability of families to provide care for dependants.

   - **Poverty and social exclusion** are seen by some commentators to make the continued provision of social work especially important.

   - **Internationalisation of social problems** with increased migration and the tendency of social problems to cross national borders.

   - **Modern communications technologies** radically affect record keeping in the social services. They may also offer increasing opportunities for new forms of information provision, remote services and self help.

8. Social work has been affected by changes in welfare policy and ideology since the postwar years. Service provision has been dominated by the following models, in approximate succession:

   - **Welfarism** – social democratic paternalism

   - **Professionalism** - the ideology stressing the expertise and authority of the professional

   - **Consumerism,** focusing on the power of the service user as a consumer

   - **Managerialism,** privileging managerialist and economic concerns

   - **Participationism,** stressing a more equal partnership between service provider and service user.

9. Policy and organisational changes have also considerably affected the role of the social worker. Significant developments include local government reorganisation, the increasingly mixed economy of welfare; increasing expectations of interprofessional collaboration with other social services. The need to provide effective leadership and management for social work services in the context of inter-service and inter-professional collaboration has exercised professional leaders and policy makers.

10. The notion of 'constructive social work' recently promoted by Jordan (2004) is an attempt to address what is taken to be the crisis in social work. This emphasises the importance of assisting the service user in change; working with the service user in his/her community context; promoting preventive work; and allowing the service user to be a partner with the worker in addressing the situation they find themselves in. It begins with how the service user him or herself perceives the situation and a 'narrative for change' is then negotiated through dialogue. This demands that social workers are trained in the skills associated with counselling and therapeutic work. It also requires an organisational structure which allows the worker the freedom to work creatively in partnership. It seeks to address the stigma associated with notions of 'welfare'.

11. The review concludes that

- The 'crisis' in social work is mainly a matter of professional identity that impacts on recruitment, retention and the understanding of the profession's basic aims.

- Social workers are very much needed to support those affected by poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion.

- There is an urgent need for social work to clarify its professional identity and its distinctiveness compared with other professions. This needs to be viewed with reference to the changing nature of the relationship between worker and client.

- The professional identity of social work need not be inextricably linked to specific organisational structures. Rather, its identity should be based on its core values and principles.

- The evidence suggests there is no logical need for a single structure social work department. The limited research evidence available suggests that social workers can and do work well and effectively in a variety of multi-disciplinary contexts and organisational settings. Core professional values and commitments are more important than organisational structures.

- Social work has increasingly moved away from its commitments to direct work with individuals, families and communities and away from a preventive role. Social workers may thus be required to fulfil an organisational function that conflicts with professional values and principles and with the reasons that provided their motivation to enter social work in the first place.

- Models from other countries may be suggestive, but change should recognise the achievements since Kilbrandon.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.   This report presents an analysis of and conclusions drawn from a review of literature relating to the role of the social worker in the 21st century. Our main objective was to identify key themes and issues concerning the role of the social worker and to appraise the relevance of these for the development of social work, and in particular for the role of the social worker, in Scotland in the 21st century. As such, it contributes to the Review of Social Work currently being undertaken.

Methods and approach

1.2.   To fulfil our objective we have carried out three main exercises.

Survey of the literature

1.3.   There is a considerable body of literature in this area - reflecting the contested issue of the nature of social work and the role to be played by social workers in society - and a policy of selective reading was adopted. However, a number of meta-analyses or general overviews of literature particularly related to our primary concerns were available and we have exploited these where appropriate. Given our wish to have as extensive an overview of the issues we also ensured the inclusion of literature not simply relating to the UK context but also as far as possible from Australia, Canada, Japan[1], Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe. Our review included professional materials, government publications and academic literature. To assist in our understanding of the impact of developments in other professional arenas on the role of the social worker, a limited reading was made of literature from other domains such as health and education.

1.4.   While reference has been made to significant policy documents, our prime focus is on the common elements of the role of the social worker across different service systems and national contexts, rather than on the particular manifestations of social work to be found in different administrative and legislative systems.

Consultation

1.5.   To assist with our aim of having as comprehensive a review as possible a small consultation exercise was carried out. In this, a short list of questions about the role of the social worker and the function of social work was distributed to a number of colleagues in Canada, Australia, Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe. The comments and response received informed our understanding of the issues and the analysis in general.[2]

Bibliography

1.6.   A selective bibliography has also been provided with this report to indicate the range and of materials and related writing available.

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[1] We are grateful to Mary Marshall for discussing with us aspects of social work in Japan.

[2] Annex A contains the covering email and list of questions sent to colleagues. This was not a rigorous exercise and responses were limited. But it was a useful exercise.

It is important for us to emphasise that the approach taken, both in our reading of the literature and subsequent discussions, was based on a critical but objective and fair consideration of the issues. We also on occasion adopted what we have referred to as the 'what if' device. That is, subjecting statements about or current arrangements for the provision of social work to questions such as - what if there were no local authority social work departments? What if there were no professionally qualified social workers?

Language and social work

1.7.   One thing it would be remiss of us to not comment on is the fact that the language of social work is very confusing and often misleading. It is confusing in the way in which various terms are used often interchangeably. Munday (Munday, 2003) points to the way in which across Europe, the term social services is difficult to define because it is used differently to refer to different services and activities within different countries. However, even within the UK, the terms social work, social care, social services, social work activity and so on are also used interchangeably and it is difficult to be certain of just what is being described.

1.8.   Many government reports (see for example Scottish Executive, 2004) can be seen to be guilty of this and it clearly illustrates the fact that the language used to refer to social work, reflects the lack of clarity in the professional identity of social work.

2. SOCIAL WORK- A PROFESSION IN CRISIS?

A 'Crisis'?

2.1.   For a number of social work commentators, there is no doubt that social work is a profession in crisis (see for example Unison, 2004). Whether there is indeed a crisis in social work or not is debateable. But for those who consider that there is, just what is the precise nature of the crisis depends greatly on the orientation of the particular commentator.

> Social work in Britain today has lost direction. This is not new. Many have talked about social work being in crisis for over thirty years now. The starting point for this manifesto, however, is that the 'crisis in social work' can no longer be tolerated. We need to find more effective ways of resisting the dominant trends within social work and map ways forward for a new engaged practice (Jones et al., 2004).

> Government proposals to push social work closer to health and education have resulted in increasing anxiety over the profession's role and identity. Despite protection of the title legislation, it is feared that the ingredients that make social work unique could be lost amid the blurring of professional boundaries (*Community Care,* 17 June 2004).

2.2.   Where there is seen to be a 'crisis' in social work, this takes a number of forms and includes:

- A crisis in professional identity;

- The erosion of professional boundaries;

- The lack of professional recognition;

- A shortage of qualified social workers;

- The growth of para-professionals;

- The failure to recruit;

- High turnover rates and concern at the numbers leaving professional social work in local authority settings;

- Working conditions;

- Much 'social work' is being carried out by non qualified workers/carers;

- The lack of resources necessary to allow social work to be effectively practised;

2.3.   But even if there seen to be no 'crisis' as such, for others it is clearly the case that social work has reached a critical stage in its development - professionally, structurally and organisationally (Jordan and Jordan, 2000; van Zwanenberg, 2003; Skinner, 2003). Less a 'crisis' and more a recognition that social work has reached a point where change may be required.

The Importance of Context

2.4.   Social Work in Scotland has its roots in the philosophy of the Kilbrandon Report and given legislative expression, through the White Paper *Social Work and*

the Community, in the 1968 Social Work Scotland Act. The Act legislated for a comprehensive social work department bringing together all associated social work services.

2.5.   It is in the context of such arrangements that any discussion about the role of the social worker in the 21st century has to be located and it is for that reason that this report later considers the role of the social worker in reference to the wider professional, organisational, social and political changes which have occurred since the 1960s.

2.6.   Our argument is that it is impossible to understand the crisis social work finds itself in at present and impossible to contribute to debates about the future role of social work without taking cognisance of these wider considerations. The role we expect of our social workers must inevitably be associated with the professional identity of social work, the function of social work, the structures within which social work services are provided, major social and economic changes, and broader social and economic ideologies. Social work is also necessarily defined in relation to other professional groups and their respective aspirations.

2.7.   What also has to be made clear is that whatever 'crisis' in social work is identified by some commentators, this is not an exclusively UK phenomenon. In many other countries, the nature of social work and the role of the social worker are also under review and this report benefits from arguments and commentaries on social work in the international arena (Rondeau, 2000; Munday, 2003; IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers), 2004). Loan forgiveness programmes in the United States have a similar objective to what have been termed golden handshakes in the UK (NASW (National Association of Social Workers), 2004).

3. SOCIAL WORK- ITS NATURE AND FUNCTION

In this section, we consider the nature and function of social work in anticipation of the discussion on the role of the social worker.

Defining Social Work

3.1.   Any attempt to explore the role and function of the social worker must of necessity seek to answer or at the very least address one basic question - what is social work? Our concern here is not to indulge in semantics though there is a serious issue about the language within which social work is framed and to which we will return later. Rather, our purpose is to identify the main definitions of social work as a social movement.

3.2.   The logic for this is very simple. Without some agreed notion of what it is that constitutes social work, it is well nigh impossible to determine what the role of the social worker might be; what skills and expertise social workers should have; what training and education is appropriate for social workers; and what it is that distinguishes social work from other professions.

3.3.   Differences in what is taken to be social work can also account in part for the gap between what social workers say they want to achieve and accomplish and what they are able to achieve within the constraints of the institutional settings within which they operate. It may also partly account for the gap in expectations of those who seek to enter the profession of social work and what they experience when they are in a work situations. It may also account for the fact that materials and documentation relating to the training courses offered by training institutions rarely (though with some exceptions) offer intending students any definition of what social work is.

3.4.   Cree (Cree, 2003, p.3) states that 'It is almost impossible to find a simple definition of social work with which everyone is likely to agree'. Thompson (Thompson, 2000, p.13) suggests 'Social work is what social workers do'. For Cree (Cree, 2003, p.4), though the Thomson position is not seen by her to be very helpful, goes on to state that:

> We should not expect to find unanimity in books about social work, or even in accounts of social workers. Social work is always subject to competing claims of definition and practice, and cannot be separated from the society in which it is located. Rather social work has to be seen as a collection of competing and contradictory discourses that come together at a particular moment in time to frame the task of social work.

Social Work as a Contested Concept

3.5.   From this perspective, social work is what social work is seen to legitimately be. This of course presents no statement as to the actual nature and function of social work. It does though emphasise the importance that what social work is, is subject to a process of what Askeland and Payne (Askeland and Payne, 2001) call 'validation'. That is, a process of legitimation validates what is seen to be the nature of social work from a variety of conflicting definitions and assumptions. Social work is a truly contested concept and at any point in time there are competing definitions.

What is clear is that what social work is taken to be has as much been about *whose* definition is seen as legitimate rather than *which* definition.

> Social work has always been subject to competing claims of definition and practice, as social workers, politicians, service users and policy makers have struggled to lay claims on what social work is, and what it might be.

And

> To understand social work, therefore, we must understand how knowledge is validated within the profession (Askeland and Payne, 2001, p.14).

3.6.   What this inevitably implies is that there is no universal body of knowledge for social workers. What is seen to be valid knowledge or indeed the function of social work is defined by many others outwith the profession including academics, educators, professionals, administrators, politicians, users, carers and the media. There can be no doubt that within these different constituencies, there are very different views and assumptions about social work and its function, fuelled by vested interests and media representation, especially of problematic cases and scenarios.

3.7.   This of course makes it very difficult to identify what are the appropriate skills and expertise needed for social work. It also accounts for the fact that social work as a movement has since its earliest days been associated with continual change and critical reflection on what it is; how best and where best it can be exercised. It also makes it very difficult to establish a clear professional identity for social work when the concept itself is subject to the views and assumptions of competing constituencies. Similarly, accepted or validated notions of social work which are embedded in the organisational structures of public social services may be entirely unacceptable to those with a more radical bent (Searing, 2004). For some, the resolution of this near chaos in competing statements about the nature and function of social work resides in the importance of social workers themselves determining what their specific professional identity is in order to ward off conflicting, indeed detrimental, notions about social work and its role.

Defining Social Work: The International Federation of Social Work

3.8.   However, one particular statement of the nature of social work has been agreed in the international community and has been accepted by the many constituencies within the UK and the international community (though Cree and others do not see it as in itself an acceptable statement). In 2001, the International Association of Schools of Social Work and the International Federation of Social Work agreed the following definition:

> The social work profession promotes social change, problem-solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work (IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work), 2001).

3.9.   Though of a very general nature, what the IFSW statement does at least present is a set of agreed commitments for social work. In particular, it promotes change, and also locates the social work task at the interface between the individual and the social; the individual and his/her environment. Similarly, it also identifies

the importance of social justice and rights and working with disempowered members of our communities. It underlines the affinity between social work, the human rights conventions and the more recent legislation that strengthens the enforcement of human rights.

3.10.   And again, though of a general nature it does accord with statements made by others as to what constitutes the primary function of social work:

- Social work is committed to rights and justice (Clark, 2002).

- [social workers'] concern is for the individual and helping them achieve change, a certain quality of life and/or protection from harm or harming others (ADSW (Association of Directors of Social Work), 2004).

3.11.   Davies put the notion of helping the vulnerable more forcibly when he asserted that:

> the essence of social work is maintenance: maintaining a stable, though not a static society, and maintaining the rights of and opportunities for those who in an unplanned uncontrolled community would go to the wall (Davies, 1981, p.209 cited in; Bamford, 1990 p.33).

3.12.   Social work from this perspective then is about assisting, supporting and enabling certain sections of the community. For that reason, one constancy in the history of social work has been its concern with those who suffer from the negative effects of social inequalities. For many this concern with inequality and poverty has become increasingly important because of what is seen to be the growing gap in modern societies between the rich and the poor or disadvantaged. For many (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001; Jones et al., 2004) (*Community Care,* 17 June 2004) there has never been a more important time for social work to establish itself as a credible profession working to ensure that the interests of less advantaged sections of the community are promoted and protected.

> In a society where the gaps between the haves and have nots have widened and continue to widen, the social policy role of social work is going to be of major significance (Bamford, 1990, p.168).

and social work might be

> ... really concerned with freeing the poor and the marginal underclass from subordination and exclusion (Ferraro, 2003).

Social Work and Social Control

3.13.   What is also clear is that whatever the legitimate or validated notion of social work is seen to be, from other perspectives, social work can be seen to be an agent of social control. Far from addressing the inequalities with which we live, it may well play an important role in sustaining or perpetuating the very social and economic system which promotes such inequalities. Rather than liberating, it can be viewed as oppressive and for that reason not true to the core values on which it claims to be based (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001; Jordan, 2004).

Social Work as an Integrating Force

3.14.   Munday (2003) and others also suggest European systems of social work also have a social integration function. On this view social work has as a key

function the integration or reintegration of sections of the community with mainstream society. What would be lost from this perspective if social work did not exist would be the necessary support and assistance offered to the most vulnerable sections of society and the abdication of any responsibility to ensure their social inclusion. If social work did not fulfil that task it is difficult to envisage what agency or body would. In the connection it may be added that other agencies are only likely ever to take on parts of the role of social work in a piecemeal and selective way; the integrated view that characterises social work would be lost.

A Radical Social Work?

3.15.   The demand for a radical social work which truly addresses the situation of those in need has been another constancy in the development of social work since the 1960s (Jones et al., 2004). Many of the current critiques of social work as a profession have embedded within them comments which do echo the concerns of those more inclined to a radical perspective on the role of social work. The argument has been made that the current structures through which social work is realised may not best serve those who are in need, and social work may do little more than perpetuate the very system which creates their vulnerability. A number of commentators (for example Bailey and Brake, 1975; Jordan and Jordan, 2000) have expressed their concern that by working with those who are most disadvantaged by the inequalities imposed by the economic system, social work may well contribute to the perpetuation of that very system. It is such a situation that Jordan (Jordan and Jordan, 2000) and others seek to address by proposing 'constructive social work'.

Social Work and Policy Failure

3.16.   A related position is that the function of social work may well be to deal with the failure of other policy areas such as crime, health or education. Social work is then seen to be charged with not simply dealing with those in need but rather with addressing the shortcomings of key policy areas in the public services.

3.17.   From these kinds of arguments then, whatever it is that social workers are expected to do or want to do at a face to face or micro level, at the macro level, social work may well have other functions. What the literature then suggests is that

- There are competing definitions of social work

- Social work has a number of wider social functions

- The function of social work is highly contested

- Social work plays an important function in social integration

- Social work may fulfil a social control function

- Social work is expected to address the failure of social policies

3.18.   The tension for social work has of course always been bridging the tension between the personal and the political (Halmos, 1965); between supporting clients and controlling them or subjecting them to forms of surveillance; between meeting the needs of clients or addressing the social and political situation in which they find themselves.

3.19.   Though the IFSW statement on the nature of social work does note the importance of social justice, it could be criticised for saying little about the

importance of seeing the service user/client/citizen in the context of his/her local community. In fact, it may well understate the value of community social work. One of the threads that has been woven through the history of social work and the organisational structures through which social work is to be realised, is the importance of seeing the client/service user as a member of a local community.

3.20. The Kilbrandon report (Kilbrandon, 1964), the Seebohm report (Seebohm, 1968), the Barclay report (Barclay, 1982) and the Griffiths report (Griffiths, 1988) all evidence this. They all reflect the recurring emphasis on the importance of working not just with individuals but with individuals as members of communities. These reports highlight that community social work could play a significant role in supporting community members to address the circumstances in which they find themselves (see also Ferraro, 2003). The paradox is that although this is seen to be the clear value of a community social work approach, organisational and structural changes in the way social work services are provided are seen to have inhibited its growth and development.

3.21. The argument made against the value of community social work, especially from the radical perspective is of course also that such an approach does not address the causal factors which propel many social work clients/service users into disadvantage and poverty. The model for a future social work offered by Jordan, drawing on the Australasian experience in offering what he calls a 'constructive social work', provides solutions to this dilemma and emphasises the importance of the local and the community. As we discuss later the 'constructive' approach takes a user centred approach to social work and recognises the importance of addressing family, local and national issues.

The Nature and Function of Social Work: Summary

3.22. In summary, several implications can be drawn from the contested nature of social work and the fact that it is seen to have a number of wider functions. In particular, the absence of a clear definition of social work - or at least a definition agreed by all - means that it will continue to be difficult to identify just what the skills, knowledge and expertise are required by social workers.

3.23. Establishing just what legitimate role social workers can play will also be somewhat problematic in the absence of an agreed basis for the development of the 'profession' of social work. The fact that there are competing notions of social work maintained by different constituencies, including practitioners, users, politicians, policy makers, and the public does suggest that there is a need to establish clearly an agreed and accepted statement on the nature and function of social work. Central to this is of course a statement of core values and principles - discussed in the following section.

4. SOCIAL WORK- PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND ETHICS.

4.1.   In this section, we consider the value base of social work and the implications it has for practice and the professional status of social work.

Values, Ethics and Regulation

4.2.   In discussions about the value or ethical base of social work, a distinction has to be drawn between two competing notions. One is of 'ethics' as relating to the value base of social work and in providing a set of principles or values on which those involved in social work base their actions - a kind of moral code (see Bisman, 2004). In this sense ethics and values can be treated synonymously. However, 'ethics' will also often refer to certain rules and regulations which govern the behaviours of professionals such as social workers. As such, they are more to do with the regulation and monitoring of professional activity. Banks (Banks, 2003) cautions:

> Don't take codes of ethics too seriously - they are as much rhetorical, educational and regulatory devices as they are grounds to practice for professionals facing ethical dilemmas.

4.3.   Our concern is more with the value basis of social work. The concern of some social work commentators is that there has been increasing emphasis on the notion of ethics or ethical codes in terms of the regulation of behaviours and less emphasis on the core values or principles on which social work as an activity should be based. Regulation has become more important than promotion of core values. Though the establishment of the Scottish Social Services Council for example may be seen to be a good thing, it may do more in terms of regulation than in the protection of professional identity (*Community Care,* 17 June 2004).

4.4.   Social work has undergone many changes in the second half of the 20th century in terms of organisational context and the nature of the social and political environment in which it operates. What is remarkable is how constant have been the key principles on which social work is seen to be based. Though the key principles have remained constant, they have of course been read and re read in different ways at particular points in time.

Code of Ethics: International Federation of Social Work

4.5.   In the recent new shortened ethical document proposed by the International Federation of Social Work, key values are presented which would have been accepted by social workers from much earlier periods in the history of social work. Few social workers would disagree with them because of their rather general nature. As seen above, the definition of social work proposed by the IFSW contains reference to human rights and social justice and it is not surprising that the Code of Ethics privileges such notions. In the IFSW Code (IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers), 2004):

> Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and the rights that follow from this. Social workers should uphold and defend each person's physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual integrity and well-being. This means:

1. Respecting the right to self-determination - Social workers should respect and promote people's rights to make their own choices and decisions, irrespective of their values and life choices, provided this does not threaten the rights and legitimate interests of others.

2. Promoting the right to participation - Social workers should promote the full involvement and participation of people using their services in ways that enable them to be empowered in all aspects of decisions and actions affecting their lives.

3. Treating each person as a whole - Social workers should be concerned with the whole person, within the family, community and societal and natural environments, and should seek to recognise all aspects of a person's life.

4. Identifying and developing strengths – Social workers should focus on the strengths of all individuals, groups and communities and thus promote their empowerment.

4.6.   Further, through their commitment to the promotion of social justice, social workers should challenge negative discrimination on whatever grounds; recognise diversity whether it be individual, family or community based; challenge unjust policies; and work in solidarity by challenging the conditions that contribute to social exclusion, stigmatisation or subjugation and work towards an inclusive society (IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers), 2004).

4.7.   The inability to operate according to such core principles may also in part account for the fact that many social workers leave the profession. For that reason what have been referred to as 'golden hellos' (Unison, 2004) - payments to encourage social workers to work in areas short of social workers; or 'golden handcuffs' (Unison, 2004) - payments to entice social workers not to leave, will not in themselves address the crisis facing social work. The issue is not one of logistics and redistribution of resources but rather about the very basis and key principles on which contemporary social work operates. What the literature does reveal is that for those who leave the profession, or indeed many who remain within it, the situation in which they practice does not allow them to fulfil their commitment to key principles.

4.8.   'Social work' is also a concept that is not readily understood by the public whose views on social work are equally influenced by its association with scandals, especially those involving children (Scottish Executive, 2005). Research using general public survey methods suggests that social work has a negative public image and is poorly understood, although there are some signs that this image is beginning to be less held (ibid.). The impact on public understanding and acceptance of social work has clearly been influenced by cases involving children. In any review of the future of social work it will be important to gauge public opinion as one element of the social context in which social work operates.

4.9.   What is also particularly interesting is that, though there are key differences in what the definition of social work may be, such values as contained in the IFSW statement are also embodied in the national association code of ethics for countries

such as France, Germany and the Russian Federation (IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers), 2004). There is a universality of such key values over time and place whether it be for the 'social worker', *'educateur'* or 'social pedagogue' (Kornbeck, 2002). Though there may be disagreement about the most appropriate structural or organisational context there is little disagreement about the core values of social work.

4.10.   The importance of maintaining a set of core values for social work also contributes to the notion of the professionalisation of social work - that it has its own distinctive values which demarcate it from other professions. The concern of some is that it is precisely because social work may have lost contact with these values that it has also lost its professional identity. Similarly, by not promoting these core values, the boundary between what social workers and other professionals do may be somewhat eroded.

Professional Values and Ethics: Summary

4.11.   What this discussion of professional values and ethics serves to highlight is that despite the many organisational and structural changes which have impacted on social work, the core values have remained relatively constant. This is significant for any review of social work because-

> The maintenance of core values and principles is central to professional identity
>
> The difficulty of implementing core values and principles in the context of current organisational and structural arrangements is problematic for social workers
>
> Future developments in the profession of social work should be based on a commitment in practice to key values and principles.

5. THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER

5.1.   What role the social worker should fulfil in the future will benefit from a consideration of the variety of roles identified in the literature and which forms the focus of this section of the review.

5.2.   Just as 'social work' is a contested concept with competing and often conflicting elements so too are there very different notions of what the actual role of the social worker is or should be. In many respects, part of the current crisis in social work can be attributed to the fact that there is a gap between what social workers think their role should be and the role they are expected to fulfil.

Crisis in the Social Worker Role?

5.3.   Disillusionment with the social work task (Françozo and Cassorla, 2004); providing a first aid service in the face of organisational demands (Georgoussi, 2003); limited face to face work with clients (Rogers, 2001) have all been attributed to the gap between what might be called the rhetoric and reality of the social work role. Because of this, what have been referred to as 'technical fixes' which ignore the deep rooted problems facing social work will perpetuate rather than alleviate the crisis in social work (Jones et al., 2004). Being a social worker in itself is not necessarily a bad thing. But being a social worker in a context where 'social work' cannot be meaningfully practised has made for high turnover and poor retention rates.

Social Work: Ideal Types

5.4.   There are many notions of what the role of the social worker should be and below we identify the more prevalent of them. These are not presented in terms of any historical or chronological continuity but - to assist this brief analysis - almost as ideal types. They are readily identified in the literature about the profession of social work and also about the organisational structure of social work. They are also inextricably associated with the values and principles seen to underpin social work in general. The main ideal types can be identified as follows.

The social worker as counsellor or caseworker

5.5.   The idea of the social worker as someone who works with or counsels individuals has been a recurrent and powerful notion in social work throughout its history (Younghusband, 1959). It has also been closely associated with some of the key values of social work and in particular recognising the inherent worth of the individual and respecting the person. Counselling and casework of course also appeals to those whose view of social work as a whole is one in which helping or supporting individuals is a key component. There is also implicit in the role of the social worker as counsellor or caseworker the idea that change will be involved in the behaviour or outlook of the client or service user. It is the loss of the casework or counselling role which has been seen to be a major issue for social work as provided through public services.

The social worker as advocate

5.6.   The social worker can also be viewed as an advocate on behalf of the poor or socially excluded. The advocacy role can also be played for individuals or groups such as families or communities and in some respects the advocacy role can also be associated with community work. The social worker in this role can give assist or support individuals or groups by giving voice or assisting them to give their own voice to their wishes, needs and aspirations. The advocacy role still privileges the notion of a close relationship between client/service user and social worker.

The social worker as partner

5.7.   The social worker can also be viewed as a partner of and working for disadvantaged or disempowered individuals or groups. Again, there is a close relationship between the social worker and those s/he is supporting. In reference to both the social worker as advocate and social worker as supporter, the empowerment of the client or group is an important and major objective.

The social work as assessor of risk and of need

5.8.   Increasingly, social workers have been given a major role in the assessment of need and risk over a number of client groups. The concern has been that whereas assessment is an important task for social workers it may well be at the cost of other activities important for social workers such as fulfilling the casework role and working with individuals, families and groups. Similarly, the assessment role may also be seen to be associated with a policing or surveillance role (Garrett, 2004). A fracture in the relationship between the client/service user and the social worker may well appear. The possible confusion and ambiguity in role has also been explored in reference to the mental health role carried out by social workers (Myers, 1999).

The social worker as care manager

5.9.   Social workers may also have a role as care manager. They may be involved in arranging care for clients/service users but be involved in very little direct contact with the clients whose care they are organising. In the mixed economy of care, social workers may arrange care for individuals which is carried out by non qualified social workers or those working within the voluntary or private sectors.

The social worker as agent of social control

5.10.   The function of social work, particularly from a radical perspective, can be seen to be a conservative force in perpetuating a social and economic system which accounts for the inequalities and disadvantage experienced by many. So too can the social worker be viewed as an agent of social control. In the broad sense this can be taken to refer to the role the social worker may play in maintaining the social system in general. One of the responses to our small consultation suggested that if social work did not exist then there would be a breakdown in the social system. In the narrower sense, the social worker can be considered as playing a control role in the responsibilities s/he is required to fulfil in relation to social work with offenders, or with those whose behaviour is problematic.

5.11.   There is no suggestion in this report that social workers at any one time fulfil only one of these roles. Social workers may play all of these different roles in

varying degrees of mix at any time in their career. The difficulty for many social workers and social work commentators is that the mix may have swung more away from the casework or counselling role involving direct work with clients to one in which there is less and less such direct involvement. Social workers may have become more social care managers, risk assessors and controlling or surveillance agents (Jordan and Jordan, 2000; Jones et al., 2004).

5.12.   One of the difficulties for social workers is that there may well be conflict between these different ideal types because they make very different assumptions about the function of social work; what should be expected of social workers and because social workers may well be asked to fulfil conflicting roles at any one time.

5.13.   Much of the comment on the disillusionment expressed by social workers is because of this shift away from direct work with clients - a feature of the expected social work which may have underpinned motivation to become a social worker in the first place.

> Too often today social workers are often doing little more than supervising the deterioration of people's lives (Jones et al., 2004).

5.14.   Whether such a stark statement can be generally acceptable as a prevalent view on social work it is certainly one which informs many critiques of the role played by social workers (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001). It also crystallises the question as to just what form of social work is relevant or adequate to meet the experiences and needs of large sections of the population in the 21st century.

5.15.   We have already noted that community development or community social work was also seen to be an important aspect in working with clients (Barclay, 1982). However, for many social workers there is little opportunity to carry out such work, particularly in local authority social work departments.

Social Work Practice: Core Values

5.16.   Though there may be disagreement over the primary role of the social worker there is nevertheless as noted above little disagreement about the core value of respecting persons and seeing the person as a whole person. This is also reflected in the commitment in practice that what is or should be distinctive about the social work role is the capacity to adopt a person centred approach locating the person in the context of his/her life situation as a whole. Whereas other professions may be concerned more with elements of a person's life, such as health, education, housing or income, social work is committed to working with the whole person and addressing the interrelatedness of different issues.

5.17.   It is on the basis of these key value and practice principles that social work lays its claim to being a distinctive profession. The Seebohm Report argued for change in the provision of social services through the medium of a large scale department which would improve service provision for clients but which would also contribute to the professional identity of social workers. The position adopted now is that the professional identity of social work does not depend on institutional or organisational context but is rather more to do with the value and practice distinctiveness of the social work role (*Community Care,* 17 June 2004). This will become particularly important when we consider the relationship between social work and other professions.

5.18. Note should also be taken of a strand in the literature which addresses not simply why some people choose to become social workers but also who chooses to do so. In particular, the point is made by a number of commentators (Cree and Cavanagh, 1995; Froschi, 2002; Bruckner, 2002; Harlow, 2004) that there may be a gender bias influencing both motivation and retention in social work as the role of the social worker, if conceived of as involving close and direct working with individuals. The argument has been made that if social work continues to lose the key element of working with people, it may be that women in particular will find social work as a profession less appealing. Conversely, if there continues to be a managerial and monitoring role associated with social work, it may be that men are to better accommodate or tolerate this role in the absence of direct work with individuals (Cree and Cavanagh, 1995; Froschi, 2002).

Social Work: Rural Contexts

5.19. The fact that much of the academic and professional literature relates to social work in an urban setting has also been the focus of discussion by those who argue for a form of social work which acknowledges that much social work is practised in rural settings, and that rural social work may have to take a very different form from the primarily urban (Turbett, 2004). A specific feature of the writing on rural social work is that it identifies the importance of what could be said to be lacking in much urban social work - the direct working with people in their communities and the notion of not just working in but also with communities. We would argue that there is much to be learnt from a further exploration of the value of and specific nature of rural social work - especially for future developments in Scotland. Turbett (Turbett, 2004) points to distinctive features of rural social work and in particular emphasises the community role and face to face involvement with service users as significant. The allocation of scarce resources, both human and financial, with in a rural context might also merit further consideration.

5.20. The geographical position of rural communities; the isolation of the social workers; the distribution of resources; accessibility to social work assistance; and the potential for the deployment of modern information and communications technologies allowing access to direct social work help all merit greater exploration for their relevance to the Scottish context. Rural social work is relevant not just for Scotland but also for most countries in Europe where large sections of the population live in rural communities that present the common issues of poverty, exclusion, ill health and limited labour market opportunities

Alternative Perspectives

5.21. The ideal types of the role of the social worker have largely been based on a reading of UK and associated literature. It is important however to bear in mind that the specific form of social work provision is culture and country located. This is best summed up by the statement from the IASSW (IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work), 2001) which also gives a comprehensive profile of what role social workers might play:

> Social work utilises a variety of skills, techniques, and activities consistent with its holistic focus on persons and their environments. Social work interventions range from primarily person-focused psychosocial processes to involvement in social policy, planning and development. These include counselling, clinical social work, group work, social pedagogical work, and

family treatment and therapy as well as efforts to help people obtain services and resources in the community. Interventions also include agency administration, community organisation and engaging in social and political action to impact social policy and economic development. The holistic focus of social work is universal, but the priorities of social work practice will vary from country to country and from time to time depending on cultural, historical, and socio-economic conditions.

5.22.   There are other models of 'social work' in other countries and contexts which merit consideration and in particular social pedagogy (Lorenz, 2000), which is a distinctive form of social work offered in a number of countries in central and eastern Europe though mainly Germanic in origin. The significance of examining the distinctive contribution of 'social pedagogy' or *education specialisée* is that it has also been considered on occasion for its potential as a model for future developments in the UK (Kornbeck, 2002).

5.23.   Social pedagogy is perhaps best described as being 'education' based and is clearly derived from pedagogics in general. The significance of the 'education' element of social pedagogy is that it emphases the potential of individuals to address their family and social situation through the acquisition of appropriate skills and knowledge. The role of the social pedagogue is to assist the individual realise his/her potential through a process of 'education' and 'instruction'. Put perhaps rather too simply, social pedagogy involves-

- working with individuals on a relationship basis

- assisting individuals in acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to be a member of appropriate social groups - the family, community and society (http://p.l3xicon.com/pedagogy.html)

- often sharing the life space of the individuals involved

5.24.   One way of clearly illustrating the education based approach of the social pedagogue is by outlining the tasks that the pedagogue should be equipped to undertake and also profile the type of trainings/he may undergo:

On obtaining the BA Degree the social pedagogue should be able to: function as a self aware professional, with a sound understanding of the psychodynamics of his/her own behaviour and its likely effect on others, understand and hypothesise about the behaviours and motivations of others, cope with complex and unpredictable life situations, take responsibility for assessing and intervening creatively in situations, work one to one or with groups of children and young people and their families, liaise and work collaboratively with other professionals, offer a variety of strategies for preventive and compensatory work with individuals and groups (University of Ljubljana: http://www.pef.uni-lj.si/straniep_sope.html).

And in terms of the kinds of courses the social pedagogue will take they include

- Theory of education

- Sport activities

- Developmental psychology

- Selected issues of educational psychology

- Sociology of education

- Selected chapters from philosophy

- Pedagogy of children with special needs

- Specific developmental troubles

- Personality theory and psychodynamics

- Social psychology and group dynamics

- Basic issues of criminology and penology

5.25.   There is no guarantee that every training programme will offer this mix of courses as at the University of Ljubljana but what it does clearly illustrate is the heavy emphasis on 'education' as an approach to allowing individuals to realise their potential as members of groups. But the self knowledge required of the social pedagogue certainly fits well with the idea that social workers' own experiences may be important and useful elements for becoming a social worker (Ruch, 2000). Similarly, the emphasis on human relationships and a holistic approach certainly fits with what many would take to be core elements of social work practice. What also differentiates social work as understood in the UK and social pedagogy is the way in which the client is viewed - a concern in the UK that the client or service user is made to fit within a bureaucratic system. In social pedagogy, there is an educational relationship less trammelled by specific bureaucratic structure.

5.26.   Two comments can be made here. One is that far from being a distinctive model of 'social work', social pedagogy greatly influenced the growth of casework in America with the migration of many Europeans in the inter- and postwar years (Ruch, 2000). The notion of social pedagogy cannot however be taken as the equivalent of 'social work' and there is no guarantee that it would readily translate into a UK context (Kornbeck, 2002) for all the reasons given above about the importance of cultural and historical differences. But it does privilege working directly with people much as promised by the core values of social work.

5.27.   The second is that it should not be forgotten that the Kilbrandon report (Kilbrandon, 1964) recommended that a separate service be established to support the new integrated arrangements for dealing with children in need and those who committed offences. This was not however to be a social work department (that was only suggested in the 1968 White Paper) but was to be a social education department. Though Kilbrandon did not fully elaborate on this there are grounds to believe that what was intended was not an 'education' department in the traditional sense but rather a department based on principles much akin to those of social pedagogy. The social education department proposed by Kilbrandon may well have had its roots more in the notion of allowing an individual to realise his/her potential in society, much as with the role of the *educateur* in France.

5.28.   Lyons (Lyons, 2002) also notes, in reference to the possible importing of social pedagogy into the UK, that

> '… current efforts ... Tend to focus on employment of social workers from Australia or South Africa while experienced social pedagogues have had difficulty gaining employment as social workers in the London area.'

5.29. Acknowledging the difficulties of importing social pedagogy, Kornbeck (Kornbeck, 2002) suggests that it could be transformed into a UK context with some modification to the benefit of British social work. Whether this might be possible at a time when social work in the UK is seeking to establish its own distinct professional identity is of course another issue.

5.30. As we have suggested elsewhere in this review, there is also no guarantee that what works in one country will work in another because of the very different social, political and cultural contexts involved. Nor do we suggest that social pedagogy should be considered as an infallible model operating well in other countries. For example, social pedagogy could be criticised for the way in which it lends itself to social engineering. That is, it could be used to ensure that individuals maintained appropriate political beliefs - a concern for those documenting the history of social pedagogy in its relationship to Nazism.

5.31. Rather, our purpose is to identify social pedagogy as an example of an approach to social work which privileges many aspects of working with individuals which current critics suggest are lacking from current social work in the UK: working face to face with individuals; emphasising the family, community and social context.

5.32. What has also been made clear to us is that in terms of alternative perspectives, countries such as Japan are placing more emphasis on working with individuals as members of families and communities.

The Role of the Social Worker: Summary

5.33. The literature indicates that there are a number of roles which social workers play and include the social worker as advocate, counsellor, caseworker, partner, risk assessor, care manager and agent of social control. This may of course not be an exhaustive list but it does indicate the range of potentially conflicting roles which social workers are seen to fulfil.

5.34. Though the roles attributed to social workers have changed and continue to be subject to review, the values and principles on which social work is based have remained relatively constant.

5.35. The extent to which social workers align themselves with any particular role may also indicate the extent to which they consider they are practising social work in terms of the key values and principles on which social work is based. For example, the key principle of working with individuals on a relationship basis may be compromised by the necessity to adopt the care manager role.

5.36. Alternative models of social work such as social pedagogy may well emphasise working with individuals in terms of key social work principles but may not be readily adaptable to a UK or indeed Scottish context. Other models of social work likewise emphasise the importance of locating the service user at the centre of social work and acknowledging the significance of the family, community and society.

6. THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN CONTEXT

6.1.   Though there are constancies in terms of the assumed function of social work and the role of the social worker, it is nevertheless important to understand the social and political context in which they are situated.

6.2.   As Evers (Evers, 2003) and Munday (Munday, 2003) both assert, understanding the social and political factors which have influenced the development of social work or social services across Europe is necessary to appreciate the very different forms they take and the directions they may take in the future. Social work does not operate in a vacuum. There are a number of contextual factors to be acknowledged in our understanding of the role to be played by social work and social workers, including the following.

Social change

6.3.   The function of social work and the role played by the social worker in contemporary society has of course been influenced by major social changes which have occurred over the past two or three decades.

Demographic Change

6.4.   In particular these include **major demographic change** such as the increasingly low birth rate in most European countries and a move to a much older age structure. As Munday (2003) points out the significance of the low birth rate means that in the future there will be a shortage of adult children to look after elderly relatives. This will have an obvious impact on the provision of social services more generally other than just social work and may well contribute to the further erosion of professional boundaries as new mechanisms and initiatives for providing affordable care for the elderly have to be found.

6.5.   Munday (2003) and others also point to the continuing change in the nature of the family and the move away from the 'traditional' family model with its implication for the growth of one parent families and 'multi parent' families. The fact also that more women are entering the labour market will also have an increasing knock on effect on the provision of care and others have pointed to the fact that women may be less inclined than previously to view social work as an attractive career proposition.

6.6.   Social work also now operates in a very different world from that in which Kilbrandon reported in terms of the priority areas to be addressed. In particular, in addition to the specific situation of the elderly and ageing population, social work is now practised in a context in which there have been a large number of scandals or problematic cases involving children and which have had an impact on the social work role. The rise in drug related problems has also contributed to the work of social work both in terms of work with drug users and also in terms of the implications for increasing drug use on children and families.

Poverty, Disadvantage and Social Exclusion

6.7.   The inequalities between different sections of the population in most countries across Europe, and the UK, forms the basis of argument from a number of

commentators (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001; Munday, 2003; Unison, 2004; Jones et al., 2004) that the distinctive role to be played by social work should not be lost. Without social work and the role that could be played by social workers, many members of our communities would continue to suffer the negative consequences of exclusion - poverty, ill health, poor housing, low educational attainment and so on.

Internationalisation of Social Problems

6.8.   The **growing internationalisation of social problems** - especially as a result of the movements of people within Europe - has also added a new dimension to the role to be played by social work. In particular, migration has meant that social work must now have a more international outlook than before in seeking to address the needs and experiences of individuals from different ethnic, cultural and political backgrounds. EU enlargement may result in this becoming a greater rather than smaller issue. Interestingly, the removal of many international borders will itself have implications for the development of social work as there is a need to develop common qualifications and training programmes.

6.9.   It can be no coincidence that there is considerable activity in international professional arena to foster cooperation, collaboration and harmonisation of activities in the social work field.[3] Where those concerned are asylum seekers, the fear is that social work will once more be drawn into a monitoring or surveillance rather than supportive and caring role (Ruch, 2000). But the general theme to be drawn from this section of the analysis is the need for a greater international perspective in social work, which is voiced in a number of the protocols of influential social work bodies[4] and finds expression in the number of social work training courses which include fieldwork placements overseas.

Modern Communications Technologies

6.10.   The discussion above on the rural nature of some social work also points to another area of growing significance for a review of social work in the 21st century - the importance of information technology. Developments in information technology have already significantly influenced the nature of record keeping and data collection in social work departments. However, there is also an increasing commitment to the use of information and modern communications technologies in other aspects of social work, some influenced in particular by the fact that some service users live in and some workers practise in rural contexts.

6.11.   Telemedicine technologies have for some time now (http://www.teis.nhs.uk/; http://www.gla.ac.uk/Project/Telemedicine/) been developed to provide remote training for health workers and indeed remote diagnosis of ailments. In reference to social work, developments which may well alter the nature of social work practice in the near future include:

- The provision of online knowledge and information (http://www.pantucek.com/swlinks_gb.html)

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[3] See discussions re collaboration and need for harmonisation of approach in the international arena at www.ifsw.org, www.eassw.org and www.iassw.org

[4] See www.casw.org; www.ifsw.org.

- The provision of training, teaching and degree opportunities on line (http://www.sosig.ac.uk/social_welfare/social_work/)

- The provision of library and bibliographic databases[5]

- The availability of video based conferencing facilities

- The recognition of transported related social exclusion (Kenyon, 2002) (http://www.chst.soton.ac.uk/nths/abv14342.htm)

- Online counselling for young people[6]

- Online self help, counselling and therapy[7]

- Regional knowledge and expertise exchange[8]

6.12. There can be no doubt that the nature of social work practice will increasingly be influenced by the deployment of modern communications and information technologies. In some respects, some technologies, such as videoconferencing in rural contexts, could actually allow more face to face social work to be carried out. It may also be the case that further use of online methods of working with clients might benefit those authorities - especially in a rural setting - where human and financial resources are scarce.

6.13. The increasing use of such technologies in learning; the making available of bodies of knowledge, information, skill and expertise to wider constituencies[9]; and the facility to hold large databases and information on clients and client groups will all impact on the future nature of social work. In reference to the latter, the fact that social workers may be responsible for databases relating to named children and families means that for some this may entail a greater monitoring or surveillance role than is seen to be compatible with the nature of the work with children and families (Garrett, 2004). Recent Data Protection legislation also presents specific problems for any agency which keeps records on individuals and families. This of course is not an issue specific to social work.

Social Change: Summary

6.14. In summary, the nature of social work and the role to be played by social workers is increasingly influenced by the many social changes which impact on the context within which it operates. Developments in social work have already had to take cognisance of such changes as outlined above and there is every reason to

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[5] See for example the Social Care Institute for Excellence library at http://www.elsc.org.uk/

[6] See Chui (2002)- http://www.chst.soton.ac.uk/nths/abv14344.htm and for more general counselling see http://www.onlinecounsellors.co.uk/ and http://www.theexpertpatient.co.uk/

[7] See http://www.onlinecounsellors.co.uk/ and http://www.theexpertpatient.co.uk/

[8] See for example the Children at Risk in the Baltic Sea States website which offers a good example of knowledge and expertise exchange. This centre provides a good example of how practitioners themselves can upload and download required information; enter into themed fora discussions and engage in dialogue about specific cases. See https://www.cbss.st/childcentre_secure/ Prof. Asquith was Advisor to the CBSS in developing this site and can speak to it if necessary.

[9] The CBSS provides a good example of this.

believe that in the future such trends will continue to determine the nature of the role to be played by social workers.

6.15. The authors of this report emphasise their belief that if social work is a service for the poor, socially excluded and disadvantaged, then there will be a greater need for effective social work in the future rather than less.

Welfare Philosophy and Policy - Changing Ideologies

6.16. As we stated at the beginning of this report, it is also important to assess the function of social work and the role of the social worker in the context of much broader movements and philosophies. The welfare philosophy or political ideology at any particular point in time is an important determinant of what, to borrow from Payne (Payne, 1999), we described as valid knowledge. Validity for social work knowledge, skill and practice has to be seen in reference to the prevailing ideology of the time.

6.17. In Table 1, Evers (Evers, 2003) presents a description of the main ideologies that have suffused social and political life over the past few decades. This a very useful representation of the main ideologies for a number of reasons:

- It provides an effective and economical backcloth to understand the chronological development of social work

- It provides a useful means to understand better some of the organisational and institutional changes to be discussed later and which have impacted on social work in the past few decades

- It also directly confronts the nature of the relationship between social work and clients or the social worker and the individual client. This is particularly relevant for our later discussion.

What this brief consideration of the positions presented in the Evers table will allow us to do is consider the current nature of the position of social work within existing ideologies and explore what implications this has for the future.

A Welfarist Ideology

6.18. Within a **welfarist** philosophy which prevailed in the social democratic post war years of the fifties and sixties, social work had not yet organised from disparate forms of service provision into large scale departments but operated with what some described as a paternalist approach - summed up best, and somewhat negatively, by Barbara Wootton's (Wootton, 1959) famous dictum of 'daddy knows best'. The welfare state accepted its responsibility for all on the basis of universal provision and where need was expressed it was to be met by the key welfare mechanisms of the welfare state. This is of course a simplistic conception of welfare provision but it does serve to highlight a number of assumptions which permeated the welfare services including social work:

- The idea that the state could identify and meet need.

- The notion that trained welfare workers could determine need and how best to address it

- A relationship between social worker and 'client' which reflected the hierarchical nature of the organisational arrangements - that there was a power imbalance with social worker equipped to know better than the client what needs were and how to meet them.

Professional Ideology

6.19. With the **professional** perspective, not too divorced historically or conceptually from welfarism, there is an increasing commitment to professionalism in service provision by qualified professionals whose main focus is case management with regulation of practice. The relationship with the client is still one within which the power balance rests with the professional whose training has equipped him to assess and meet the client's need. The notion of a professional identity for social work

Consumerism

6.20. With the **consumerist** position there is something of a paradigm shift with the client becoming a consumer able to choose services or have services determined more through choice than at the discretion or judgement of the social worker. The market becomes an important and powerful force in the availability of services to meet needs and the balance of the relationship between social worker and 'consumer' begins to look less hierarchical though, as commented on by a number of commentators, the relationship is still biased in favour of the social worker by virtue of his authority to assess and also his/her knowledge of what the market can or has to offer. What is not introduced is the notion that protection can be afforded to the consumer and that indeed the consumer can complain at the level or quality of service provision.

Table 1.

WELFARISM	PROFESSIONALISM	CONSUMERISM	MANAGERIALISM	PARTICIPATIONISM
• hierarchical governance of service systems	• case management	• competition	• managed care	• collective self help
• full coverage/ uniform services	• upgrading of educational levels	• individual choice	• target setting	• volunteering
• equal standards	• upgrading professional advice and consultancy	• market research	•upgrading managerial and economic concerns	• strengthening user and community based service providers
• boards and commissions for corporate governance	• quality control through professional self control	• vouchers	• external quality management	• strengthening local embeddedness
• quality control by state inspect	• public service ethos	• customer orientation	• complaint management	• orientation towards empowering users
• social rights and patients' chart		• consumer lobbying		• more service dialogues
		• consumer protection		• more user control in designing and running services

(Source: Evers, 2003)

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Managerialism

6.21.   The move to a more **managerialist** position which privileges managerialist and economic concerns has been seen to do so at the cost of direct work with clients. With the consumerist position, it also further introduces service provision by external non state agency and the role of the social worker from this perspective becomes more one of assessment and regulation. Though the service user is seen less as being a 'client', there is nevertheless concern that managerialism as it applies to social work attaches more importance to budgets and targets than to work with individuals; removes much front line social work from professionally qualified social workers and allows service provision to be determined by the market. The management of cases is emphasised at the cost of case management (Jones et al., 2004). For the critics of managerialism, social work is devalued (Leadbetter, 2004) and the individual is somewhat lost.

Participationism

6.22.   From the perspectives offered by these positions the individual 'client', 'consumer', or 'service user' has little say in the nature of the service afforded or in the planning and design of policies and practices designed to improve his situation. There is still a power imbalance in the relationship with social workers or carers. It is this that the **participationist** position seeks to address and which is seen (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001) to afford a closer working relationship between service provider and service user.

6.23.   For the participationist, the key objective is to strengthen the position of the user, to have more user input into discussions about the nature of service provision and to locate such discussions in local and community contexts. The emphasis is on community based services in which user and social worker are partners in seeking to address and ameliorate the life situation of the user. The power imbalance is reduced, the user is actively involved in his/her own future and has an active role to play as a citizen not excluded by virtue of poverty or disadvantage.

6.24.   Future social work would involve itself actively and directly in the lives of those it seeks to support. The benefits would be to both users and also to social workers for whom the shift would be back to a form of social work which remained true to the value and practice commitments which have formed a tread through the history of the development of social work irrespective of the organisational and institutional changes which have impacted on it. We will discuss the possibilities of such an inclusive approach to social work later when we address 'constructive social work' as promoted by Jordan (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001) and others (Parton and O'Byrne, 2000) on the basis of the experience and programmes developed in other countries.

Ideological Change - Summary

6.25.   This has of course been a rather simplistic review of the key ideologies impacting on social work over the years but the move from post war welfarism through to consumerism and managerialism will be familiar to many social workers and social work commentators. It will be particularly familiar to those who have

charted what they see to be the demise of social work and its loss of direction. It is the rolling out of such philosophies which allowed Statham (Statham, 2001, p.30) to agree with the statement that until recently:

> These were hard times for many of us. By the late 1990s the Chief Inspector in the Social Services Inspectorate was reporting that core social work skills had to be 'smuggled in'.

6.26.   The provision of social work in no country is based on any one ideology but is rather a particular blend of the different positions available as discussed above. It is again for that reason that we counsel against the possibility of cross country transplants of thinking about the future of social work based on what happens in different countries.

6.27.   But what a consideration of such ideologies does highlight is that the role of the social worker, and the ways in which how that role can be fulfilled, has had to be accommodated within ideological positions which may well have conflicted with the key values and principles underpinning social work.

6.28.   The move from welfarism, professionalism, consumerism, managerialism, to participationism has continually presented social work with the need to re evaluate its nature and function.

Organisational Change

6.29.   Just as there have been clearly chartable ideological shifts impacting on the role of the social worker so too have organisational changes impacted on what social workers do and what they cannot do. We identify these again briefly in order to explore just what has contributed to the crisis in the identity of social work.

6.30.   Post war services were provided through rather disparate entities and it was only with Kilbrandon and Seebohm that the move to large integrated structures occurred. Most social work provision was made through the large social work or social service departments with a relatively small role played by non public agencies. Subsequent attempts to allow social work and social workers to have a closer relationship with the groups and communities they served can be seen in the proposals for 'patch' working and of course the advocacy of community social work made in the Barclay report. A number of developments has significantly influenced the nature of social work provision since then and will continue to do so in the future .

Local Government Reorganisation

6.31.   The first is the changes in local government in Scotland which reintroduced a larger number of smaller social work departments.

Mixed Economy of Welfare

6.32.   The second is the fact that there is now a greater mixed economy of welfare with welfare provision not only through public or state agencies but increasingly through voluntary non profit organisations, private commercial enterprises and of course the informal care sector in which Munday (Munday, 2003) includes family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues . But the main point to be made is that much social work provision is now no longer through state agencies but through other

social sectors. Again, the nature of the mix will vary from country to country but there can be no doubt that there is universally a greater involvement of non state sectors in social work and welfare provision more generally. The fact that social workers may leave not the profession, but local authority departments, to work in other sectors of the welfare economy has been noted (*Community Care,* 17 June 2004).

6.33.   Similarly, there has been much comment (Healy and Meagher, 2004) on the growth of what has been referred to as the 'para-professional' sector by which is meant that body of workers who undertake caring roles and work in social care generally but who are not classified or qualified as 'social workers'. In most countries there has been an expansion of the para-professional sector with the concern expressed that much of what is seen to be the core task of social work may in fact increasingly be carried out by para-professionals[10]. The consequence of this is that those qualified social workers may be left to fulfil responsibilities, such as care management and risk assessment, which are one step removed from what they take to be the true role of the social worker. The further danger is also of course that the goals set for the social work task are externally defined (the management of care, assessment of risk, fulfilling the management role) rather than being set within the terms of professional judgement and decision making. This changing role for social workers in which they are seen to lose elements of their core tasks may well account for the disillusionment expressed by social workers and why there is a high degree of turnover which, as discussed earlier, cannot be resolved by golden handshakes or golden handcuffs.

Professional Collaboration

6.34.   The third aspect of organisational change is of course the fact that the social work role is increasingly carried out in close cooperation with other professionals such as teachers, doctors (van Zwanenberg, 2003) and nurses and indeed that there is an ever stronger move towards the integration of social work organisationally with other structures such as education, health and housing. The integration of social work with other bodies has been to be particularly successful as joint working has been valued as effective and beneficial to clients or users of services[11]. There is also evidence that social workers within non local authority social work departments such as those who work in GP practices (Firth et al., 2004) and in a variety of healthcare settings can and do play a significant role as members of multidisciplinary teams. It is particularly interesting that similar discussions about working in multidisciplinary teams, the growth of para-professionals and the search for professional boundaries have been held in the context of the role of the nurse in the modernising NHS (Melia, 2004).

6.35.   The implications of a wider health and education agenda for the future role to be played by social work/services is clearly one which fosters the argument that the need for social work to be carried out within local authority departments no longer

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[10] In Scotland, there were in 2003 just over 4500 social workers in a total social care workforce (covering all sectors- private, voluntary and public) of 118,000. See Scotland's Social Care Labour Market, Scottish Executive (2004)

[11] Observation by Director of Social Work in discussion

necessarily holds. This clearly has important implications for both what social workers do and where they do it.

> Social Service Departments may acquire a stronger strategic role in supporting the local authority's responsibility for promoting the economic, social and environmental well being of communities including through the Director's responsibility for the quality of provision and practice (Quality Strategy 2000). The end result is that social work will follow social care work in becoming increasingly separated from its close identification with local authority Social Services Departments. This is not a disaster, but offers new and more diverse opportunities. Like education and health, social work and social care are greater than the institutions in which they operate at a particular time and place. What is constructed, can also be reconstructed….(Statham, 2001, p.24).

6.36.   However what we also know is that effective working together can be inhibited by the lack of knowledge of or assumptions made about the responsibilities of one profession by members of another (see O'Brien et al., 2003).

6.37.   The fact that services for children may increasingly be accommodated within Education or that social work with offenders may be carried out within a separate criminal justice service, perhaps involving the prison service, does suggest that in the next stage of its development in Scotland social work may be undertaken within different organisational structures where the distinctive role of social work has to be based on professional considerations and not organisational location. Similarly, changes in other professions such as nursing, which has increasingly developed a broader care role with the nursing remit, will further erode professional boundaries.[12] In reference to the broader nature of the work undertaken by nursing, Melia (Melia, 2004, p.11) also points to the fact that:

> We can also add to this shaping of nursing's agenda the political goals of social inclusion….

6.38.   What the debate about professional roles also reintroduces is the discussion about whether social workers should be trained as generic workers to be able to work with all client groups including the elderly, children offenders, and so on or be specialists. The consensus does appear to be that social workers require some base or general training foundation but that specialisms may be required for working with specific groups.[13]

Leadership and Management Issues

6.39.   There is no doubt that joint working and cooperation between social work and other professions has had many positive outcomes. Nevertheless, it would be remiss to ignore those comments which counsel about the dangers associated with joint working and which might threaten the identity of social work and further contribute to the 'crisis' it faces. For example, in seeking the views of senior managers in social work in Scotland, van Zwanenberg (van Zwanenberg, 2003) is

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[12] For example, it is now possible to undertake a joint degree in nursing and social work at the University of Hertfordshire. See
http://www.herts.ac.uk/extrel/UGP2003/faculties/health/bsc_nurse_sw.html

[13] The position adopted by most of those who replied to our mini consultation.

able to identify what for them are the main leadership and management issues associated with joint, partnership and multidisciplinary working where social workers may operate in teams with other professionals. These include the difficulties of:

- providing leadership for social work within mixed teams and across 'separate governance arrangements'

- maintaining a high profile for social work within a multidisciplinary team setting

- retaining social work values

- ensuring quality of professional service provision

- ensuring a focus on the social work agenda so it is not a subset of either health or education and resisting professional boundary erosion

- managing resources within the competing demands of differential team requirements

- building and developing a care management culture that reflects the core values of social work and centres on the needs of the users and carers.

What van Zwanenberg (van Zwanenberg, 2003, p.8) was also able to identify was that the main challenges to future social work management focussed around concern at the further development and move towards single structures for social work and health and also

> fears about the impact on the structure of social work services and the future of the profession, particularly if the current social work structures within local authorities, were to disappear as a result of the pressures to integrate with other services, for example, health and education.

6.40. From the leadership perspective there are clearly threats to the future of a distinct role for the social worker. The role of the social worker and indeed the distinct identity for the work undertaken social workers may well be threatened by increasing integration with other services (van Zwanenberg, 2003) (*Community Care,* 17 June 2004). However, this need not necessarily lead to the position that professional social work will cease to exist. Rather, conversely, it could be argued that the need for social work to clarify and consolidate its professional identity is all the greater given the need to work more closely with other agencies and professions. The importance of the professional identity of social work is also seen by senior managers in van Zwanenberg's report to touch on the very importance aspects of recruitment and retention.

Social work has clearly been greatly influenced by the organisational changes of the last four decades including the move to smaller departments, the growth of a mixed economy of welfare provision, and increased collaboration and joint working. No suggestion is being made that such changes have been negative but they have meant that social work has continually had to change and adapt to new working conditions and arrangements.

Organisational Change-Summary

6.41. The impact on social work and the role of the social worker of the organisational changes discussed above is well illustrated by Zwanenberg and

Jordan. Van Zwanenberg (van Zwanenberg, 2003 5.6, p.9) argues that the constraints on social work at present and the difficulty in identifying just what role social workers should play in the future is best exemplified in the recognition that

> Recurrent themes in this area were the role of the professionally qualified social workers and social work service managers in an integrated service delivery world characterised by a range of cross professional and cross organisational partnerships and the continuing and continuous change agenda and the impact of current and emergent policy on service design and service management.

6.42.   Jordan (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001, p.37), in addressing similar issues, focuses on the question of whether

> …professional social work any longer seeks to be credible at street level, with service users and carers, or whether it is developing into an arm's length, office bound, report writing, official kind of practice which leaves face to face work to others.

6.43.   The paradox is for Jordan that with the expanding role of the voluntary and private sector in the provision of street level services, much of what would be called 'social work' is now carried out by non qualified, non trained workers. He also argues however that social work and social workers do still have a valuable role to play but that it cannot be undertaken within present arrangements which tend to remove social workers from face to face contact. So again, the concern is not with the relevance of professional social work as such but with the arrangements within which it is being practised.

The Role of the Social Worker in Context: Summary

6.44.   There is no doubt that the social changes which social work has had to accommodate - changing demographic structures; increased poverty, exclusion and disadvantage and the internationalisation of social problems - will continue in the future to impact on social work. Similarly, social work reflects a number of competing and potentially conflicting ideologies. Future developments will have to address the nature of the relationship between the service user and worker ensure the true participation of users.

6.45.   Given the nature of current organisational and structural arrangements and the way in which they are seen by some commentators to inhibit the practice of truly effective social work, developments in the provision of social work will have to be based on a reconsideration of the structures through which social work is practised. Despite the concerns about the leadership and management issues presented, social work can also be and is successfully practiced in a variety of contexts outwith single local authority structures.

7. PREVENTION

Kilbrandon

7.1. A central principle in the Kilbrandon report was the importance of prevention and in particular preventive work to address those factors which put children and families at risk. Kilbrandon argued that there should be

> …the formation in each area of a locally-based treatment authority, recognised as having specific responsibility for the prevention and reduction of juvenile delinquency (Kilbrandon, 1964 Part 1, 252.6).

7.2. The focus on prevention has always been seen to be an important principle underpinning developments in social work in Scotland deriving from the Kilbrandon Report. Similarly, with its emphasis on community social work, the Barclay report had also argued for a preventive approach to address those factors which were putting individuals, families and communities at risk.

7.3. However, and despite regular expression of concern about the failure to support and develop preventive work, the identity crisis of social work is also seen to be inextricably linked to the fact that social workers in a local authority setting are no longer able to effectively carry out preventive work (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001; Jones et al., 2004).

Constructive social work

7.4. Recurrent themes in the history of social work and consequently in this review have been the value base of social work; working with individuals, face to face work; working with communities and community work; prevention; and the relationship between service users and workers. As the ideologies and philosophies within which such issues have changed so too has the role for social work and that of the social worker more specifically had to be readdressed.

7.5. In drawing on developments in social work in Australia, New Zealand and USA, Jordan (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001) outlines the notion of *constructive social work* first developed by Parton and O'Byrne (Parton and O'Byrne, 2000). Within the notion of constructive social work an attempt is made to bring together the various concerns, many of them addressed within this review, underpinning what is taken to be the crisis in social work. In particular, constructive social work emphasises the importance of assisting the service user in change, working with the service user in his/her community context, promoting preventive work and allowing service users to be a partner with the worker in addressing the situation they find themselves in. Constructive solutions to deal with narratives or account for problem situations are found through dialogue with the worker and joint efforts are made to negotiate the resources, financial and human. needed to effect meaningful life changes.

7.6. What Jordan and others are arguing for in this way is a conception of social work which privileges talking and dialogue with service users and which emphasises the importance of addressing individual, family and community issues from the perspective of the service user. The approach is not so much 'person centred' in the sense of the worker making decisions which puts the service user at the centre of his/her professional judgment. Rather, it begins with how the service user him or herself perceives the situation and a solution or 'narrative for change', as Jordan

calls it, is negotiated through dialogue. This of courses demands a body of social workers who are trained in skills associated with counselling and therapeutic work and an organisational structure which allows the worker the freedom to work creatively to work in partnership to find solutions for change. It also builds on notions of social inclusion and citizenship and seeks to address the stigma associated with notions of 'welfare'. In the place of stigma are put '…equal worth, opportunity, empowerment and choice' (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001, p.217).

7.7.   What is particularly interesting about such a conception of social work and the role to be played by the social worker is that there can be found in it echoes both of social pedagogy and at the same time of 'participationism' as espoused by Leadbetter (Leadbetter, 2004).

8. GENERAL CONCLUSIONSCRISIS

8.1.   We conclude this report by drawing together some of the key issues identified by the material we have considered.

Crisis

8.2.   Whether in crisis or not, there are clearly a number of serious issues confronting the profession of social work which are not simply to do with shortage of numbers and resource distribution. Rather, the 'crisis' has more to do with loss of professional identity which impacts on recruitment, retention, and service profession.

Social work

8.3.   There can be little doubt that social work and social workers are very much needed in order to fulfil the function and role of supporting those who are in need, largely because of poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion. Without the role played by social work, large sections of the population would have little protection from the negative impact of the growing social and economic inequalities which will continue to characterise life for many individuals, families and communities in the 21st century.

Social Work Identity

8.4.   There is an urgent need for social work to clarify its professional identity in order to establish clear roles for individual social workers. What is distinctive about social work as compared with other professions, at least as based on its core principles and values, is that social work is more concerned with a person centred approach and locating the person in the context of his/her life experiences generally. As we have seen from the discussion earlier, what a person centred approach means has changed over time to the point where it is no longer sufficient to consider the person in his life situation generally but that the client or service user becomes an active participant in the process. The identity of social work and the role to be played by the social worker has to be viewed in reference to the changing nature of the relationship between worker and user/client.

Professional Identity of Social Work

8.5.   The professional identity of social work need not be inextricably linked to specific organisational structures. Rather, professional identity should be based more on core values and principles in order to distinguish the nature of the social worker's contribution from that of individuals working within other agencies and to protect against the threat of boundary erosion as the result of development in other professions. Issues of recruitment and retention to social work are inextricably linked to the issue of professional identity.

Organisational Context

8.6.   The evidence suggests that there is no logical need for a single structure social work department. What limited research evidence is available does suggest that social workers can and do work well and effectively in a variety of multi-disciplinary contexts and organisational settings. To repeat the point made above,

the identity of professional social work and the role to be played by social workers may be determined more by core professional values and commitments than organisational place. It may be less important then that social work is carried out in alternative structures and new arrangements - for example, with education, health or criminal justice settings - than that social work clarifies and consolidates an agreed view on just what its role is to be in meeting the demands of the 21st century.

Back to the Future

8.7.   Social work will continue to experience crisis and identity issues unless social workers can fulfil a role which is based on the values and principles which have continuously underpinned social work but which may have to be re-read in the light of contemporary contexts. Social work has increasingly moved away from its commitments to direct work with individuals, families and communities and from a preventive role. For that reason, social workers, especially in local authority social work departments, may be put in a position of 'professional bad faith'. That is, they may required to fulfil a role that conflicts with professional values and principles and indeed with those reasons which provided them with the motivation to enter social work in the first place. Direct work and preventive work have been less a feature of social work in recent years and there may be a need to revisit first principles in relation to preventive work and the Kilbrandon philosophy. It does appear that social workers may be less disillusioned about social work as a profession than with social work in local authority settings.

Baby and the bath water

8.8.   In this brief review, we considered alternative views of social work from other countries and also an alternative view of social work for the UK based on experience in other countries. Though there does appear to be a crisis in social work, we would argue that care does need to be taken in the degree of change that is necessary to resolve the issues faced by social work. In particular, models of social work espoused in other countries may well not readily migrate easily into a UK context. We have argued against the dangers of what might be called 'legal or social transplants' (Asquith, 2003) and social work is no exception. It may well be that what occurs in other countries can inform future developments in Scotland but care has to be taken not to throw out the baby with the bath water. To do so, irrespective of whether social work is in crisis or not, would be to ignore the positive aspects of social work since Kilbrandon and the White Paper. There is clearly a need for change but that change has to be tempered by a recognition of achievements to date.

Social Work and Language

8.9.   The language of social work is confusing and contributes to the lack of clarity about just what it is that social workers do. The lack of clarity between social work, social care, social services, social work activity both reflects and perpetuates the critical situation in which social work finds itself.

Still relevant?

8.10.   We take no particular line on the future of social work and have merely presented material for consideration. Nevertheless, there is clearly considerable concern that social work may in its present state not be suited to addressing the needs of the community in the 21st century. The further danger is that not only may

social work not be relevant to the needs of the 21st century but may fail those who most need its support because it lacks clear statements of its role. Though one may take issue with the Jordan's (Jordan and Parkinson, 2001, p.220) actual words, we share his sentiment that:

> Social work must remain a human activity and creative activity, that uses imagination, empathy and commitment as well as reason and evidence and engages with people's emotions and vulnerabilities as well as their rights and obligations. In a culture of rapid change and uncertainty, what social work would have to be ashamed of is if it came to represent rigidity, resistance and stagnation, or stigma, blame and exclusion.

9. ANNEX A

Dear All

Some time ago I contacted you to ask for your assistance in some work I was
doing on a Review of 21st Century Social Work for the Scottish Executive. I
said then I would come back to you with a few questions and hoped you might be able to
answer these as best as you can. This is a very small informal
' consultation' based on your experience and considered views. No need for
long replies and we'd be happy with short concise statements on the
strategic direction social work is or should be taking.

Also if there are what you believe to be any important publications-
reports/books articles/ etc in English or French relating to the topic
which you think might be useful for me I'd be grateful if you could bring
these to my attention.

The questions are in the attachment to this email. Feel free to pass on to
others you think may be interested in the topic.

EMAIL ATTACHMENT

21st Century Social Work
Mini Consultation

Q1 What values is social work based on?

Q1a Are these values the same across what in the UK are the seven main need/user groups?(
Children and families; addictions; criminal justice; learning disability; older people; physical
and sensory disability; mental health)

Q1b Is the expertise required the same across all seven need/user groups?

Q1c Should social workers be able to work generically covering all need/client groups or
should they specialise?

Q2 Do/should social workers work in an integrated service setting (eg working with health, education etc)? Or should they work in an independent external agency?

Q3 Can social workers in modern conditions carry out both direct (clinical) practice and case management? Should these be separated?

Q4 Do all those offering ' social work' require the same degree of training?

Q5 Could/Should   much of what we call social work be carried out by other groups/individuals?

Q5a Are there changes taking place in other professions which impact on the role of social workers? (e.g. changes in nursing, health care, education etc?)

Q6 Is there a role for community social work?

Q7 What changes are happening in the role of the social worker in your country? What roles/expertise are required by 'social workers' in the 21st Century?

Q8 Is the definition of social work changing? If so, in what way? Should it change- if so in what respects?

Q8a What would we lose if social work did not exist? Anything?

Please add any other comments you may wish to make about the skills expertise and training required of 'social workers' in the 21st Century.

Also please direct us to any relevant literature you feel would be useful.

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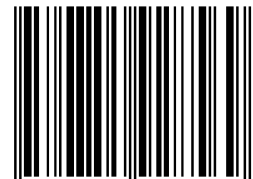Younghusband, E. (chair) (1959) *Report of the Working Party on Social Workers in the Local Authority Health and Welfare Services,* London, HMSO.