WHAT IS HUMAN SERVICES?

According to the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS):

The Human Services profession is one which promotes improved service delivery systems by addressing not only the quality of direct services, but by also seeking to improve accessibility, accountability, and coordination among professionals and agencies in service delivery.

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HUMAN SERVICES OR SOCIAL SERVICES?

- Social services and human services are often used interchangeably.
- Social service is sometimes used as the broader term that covers human services or vice versa (e.g. human services component).
- Human service is a new field that integrates many different fields of the social sciences. It’s distinct feature is the generic approach to helping people - learn about basic human needs and how unmet needs create social problems which require societal responses.
WHAT IS HUMAN SERVICES

- Human services is a broad term covering a number of careers:
  - Caseworker, Program Coordinator, Outreach Counselor, Crisis Counselor, Victim Advocate, Homeless Shelter Counselor, School Counselor/Social Worker.

- Common thread among all:
  - Helping people meet their basic physical and emotional needs that for whatever reason cannot be met without outside assistance.
  - Focus on Social Justice, Advocacy, Marginalized Populations, Social Issues.
WHO ARE HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONALS?

- Caring professionals.
- People who strive to make a differences by battering the human condition and promoting social justice.
- Professional ‘helpers’:
  - Help others to resolve problems, obtain resources.
  - Provide support during crises.
  - Facilitate social responses to needs.
  - Mastered the requisite knowledge base.
  - Developed competence in the required skills.
  - Adhere to values and ethnics of the social work profession.
WHO IS HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONAL?

According to the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) Web site a “human service professional” is:

A generic term for people who hold professional and paraprofessional jobs in such diverse settings as group homes and halfway houses; correctional, mental retardation, and community mental health centers; family, child, and youth service agencies, and programs concerned with alcoholism, drug abuse, family violence, and aging. Depending on the employment setting and the kinds of clients served there, job titles and duties vary a great deal (www.nationalhumanservices.org).

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PERSONAL QUALITIES?

- Determine the ability to work with others.
- For example:
  - Warmth, honesty, genuineness, openness.
  - Courage, hopefulness, humility/modesty.
  - Concern, sensitivity.
- Crucial to build rapport & relationships with colleagues and clients.
- Partnership with clients – facilitate change. By working with others, not doing something to them or for them.
WHY THE HUMAN SERVICES?

- Human service agencies come into the picture when people find themselves confronting barriers to getting their needs met and their own resources for assisting them in overcoming these obstacles are insufficient.

- Query: For what types of obstacles or barriers do people seek assistance from Human Service agencies?
SOME OF THESE BARRIERS INCLUDE:

- Lack of family (or supportive family)
- Lack of friends
- Mental illness
- Poverty
- Social Exclusion (due to racial discrimination for instance)
- Racism

- Oppression (e.g., racial, gender, age)
- Trauma
- Natural disasters
- Lack of education
- Lack of employment skills
- Unemployment
- Physical and/or intellectual disability
THE PURPOSES OF SOCIAL HUMAN SERVICES PRACTICE?

- To promote and restore a mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and society in order to improve the quality of life for everyone (National Association of Social Work, 1981, p.6).

- The dual focus of social and human services:
  - Human needs and social environments V. private troubles and public issues.
  - Intersections???
THE PURPOSES OF SOCIAL HUMAN SERVICES PRACTICE

- Enhance social functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Link client systems with needed resources.
- Improve the operation of the social service delivery network.
- Promote social justice through development of social policy.

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GOALS OF HUMAN SERVICES PRACTICE.

- **Improving social service delivery network.**
- Ensure the systems deliver services that are humane and adequate.
- **Client-centered planning, effective and efficient services.**
- **Development of social policy.**
- Examine social issues for policy implications.
- Make suggestions for new policies, recommendations for eliminating unproductive policies.
- **Translate general policies into programs and services.**
MAIN FUNCTIONS

1. Social care

- To help clients to meet their social needs, especially those who cannot care for themselves (temporarily or long term).
- Example of social care clients – the elderly, children, people with mental disabilities/illness, and survivors of crime, disasters, crises.
2. Social control

- Aims to control the recipients of services and the recipients circumstances when receiving social care (societal control).
- Example of clients – Children, youth and adults in the criminal justice system.
- These people either fail to care for themselves or lead a life that violates the norms/laws of the community.
3. Rehabilitation

- An independent person can lose the ability to function socially, physically or psychologically due to a crisis, an accident or other life circumstances.

- Aims to return the functioning of a person to its prior level of independence.

- Example – Veterans, People with physical disabilities, victims of psychological trauma.
IN SUMMARY, HUMAN SERVICES:

- **Support individuals and communities:**
  - Obtain necessary resources to get their basic needs met.
  - Develop the necessary skills to become self-sufficient and function at their optimal level within society.
  - Navigate barriers in society that affect:
    - Individuals, such as: mental illness, substance abuse disorders, a lack of education or vocational skills, health problems, poverty
    - Small and/or large groups of people dealing with prejudice, racism and discrimination, oppression, poverty and social exclusion.

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HOW TO ACHIEVE?

- Working on micro (individual), mezzo (small groups or families) and macro (community, organization, state or federal) levels.

- Working effectively with a broad range of populations (high-needs, marginalized and vulnerable populations due to one’s race, sexual orientation, socio-economic level (SES), etc.

- Advocating for change and social justice such as changes in laws and policies that harm certain populations.
# HOW TO BECOME HUMAN SERVICES PROFESSIONALS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Academic Area/Major</th>
<th>State License</th>
<th>Possible Careers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA/BS</td>
<td>Psychology, Sociology, Human Services</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Group home counselor, hospice bereavement counselor, residential counselor, job coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSW</td>
<td>Social Work (program accredited by CSWE)</td>
<td>Basic Licensing (LSW) depends on state requirements.</td>
<td>Same as above, depends on state requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSW 60 units</td>
<td>Social Work (Program accredited by CSWE)</td>
<td>LSW (on graduation) LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker —3200 post grad supervised hours)</td>
<td>Private practice, all governmental and social service agencies (some requiring licensure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PsyD 120 units</td>
<td>Doctor of Psychology</td>
<td>PSY# (Licensed Clinical Psychologist—3500 postgrad supervised hours)</td>
<td>Private practice, many governmental and social service agencies, teaching in some higher education institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD 120 units</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology</td>
<td>PSY# (Licensed Clinical Psychologist —3500 Postgraduate supervised hours)</td>
<td>Private practice, many governmental and social service agencies, teaching in higher education institutions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DUTIES & FUNCTIONS OF HUMAN SERVICES PROFESSIONALS.

The NOHS describes the general functions and competencies of the human service professional (see their website for a more detailed explanation):

- Understand the nature of human systems: individual, group, organization, community and society, and their major interactions.

- Understand the conditions which promote or limit optimal functioning and classes of deviations from desired functioning in the major human systems.

✓ This includes medically oriented, socially oriented, psychologically-behavioral oriented, and educationally oriented models.
CONTINUE

- Conduct a competent problem analysis and to select those strategies, services or interventions that are appropriate to helping clients attain a desired outcome. Interventions may include assistance, referral, advocacy, or direct counseling.

- Design a plan of action for an identified problem and implement the plan in a systematic way. This requires an understanding of problems analysis, decision-analysis, and design of work plans. Skill in evaluating the interventions is essential.
The National Association of Social Workers lists 6 common work activities (for more detailed explanations see NASW’s website):

- Determining people’s social, emotional, and economic problems and needs.
- Developing resources, programs and social policies to address unmet community needs.
- Assessing, diagnosing and/or treating mental health and emotional problems.
- Working to improve social programs and health services.
- Helping people improve personal and/or social functioning.
- Coordinating and working with governmental, private, civic, religious, business, and/or trade organizations to combat social problems.
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HUMAN SERVICES NETWORK

FIGURE 1.1  HUMAN SERVICE NETWORK

- Drug and Alcohol
- Education
- Aging Services
- Housing
- Community Services
- Child Care
- Health
- Legal Services
- Welfare
- Corrections
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Mental Health

Human Services