



Social Work Practice in Healthcare

Advanced Approaches and Emerging Trends

Karen M. Allen | William J. Spitzer



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Social Work Practice in Healthcare

Dedications

To Jim, for loving me enough to give me the time and support I needed to finish this part of the journey.

Karen M. Allen

To my father and mother (Dr. William C. and Violet Spitzer), who provided unfaltering support and serve as role models for me at every point of my life. At the same time, my son Colin has brought unbounded joy, love, and caring and in so doing has provided me with inspiration that has shaped and enriched my life. To these three, I will always be indebted. I would also happily say that being surrounded by a vast group of indulging friends who were always encouraging was a blessing.

William J. Spitzer



Social workers of Massachusetts General Hospital.

Source: Massachusetts General Hospital, Archives and Special Collections.



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Preface

This text offers a comprehensive examination of social work practice in healthcare. Because it utilizes the advanced, contemporary knowledge and expertise of skilled practitioners and academics specialized in healthcare delivery, it is designed not only for graduate and undergraduate students but also for practicing professionals. Every effort was made to present content in a straightforward manner revealing not just the characteristics and competencies of practice, but the historic, current, and anticipated factors contributing to the shape and direction of healthcare social work. As administrative and academic social workers with 60 years of combined practice experience, the editors carefully considered the concepts, principles, methodologies, and operational dynamics that influence competent practice in the continuously evolving healthcare environment. Particular attention is devoted throughout on the impacts of the landmark Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA). Emphasis is placed on the integration of physical and behavioral healthcare, evidence-based practice, transdisciplinary care, and the increasing focus on primary health services associated with prioritized prevention, wellness, and chronic illness intervention.

This text has a singular intent—to promote competent healthcare social work practice. Competency is prescribed in the Council on Social Work Education Standards as well as the National Association of Social Workers' Standards for Practice in Health Care Settings. Contributing authors were selected on the basis of both their extensive patient care knowledge and ability to translate that in readily understood terms. The emphasis of the text is on conveying meaningful technical information in a manner that is logical, easy to understand, pragmatic, and readily applicable to healthcare professionals, regardless of present skill level. The goal is to advance social work practice to meet the current and anticipated needs of patients, families, and provider institutions. It is written in a style to not just hold the readers' attention, but more importantly, energize them to those vigorous, challenging professional opportunities associated with the healthcare environment.

Today's healthcare environment demands excellence. It expects the practitioner to not only be competent in their profession, but to understand the technological, social, political, ethical, and financial factors impacting patient care delivery. The introduction of managed care, alternately referred to by Munson (2002) as "managed cost," in the mid-1980s and 1990s and, more recently, the passage of the PPACA, provide clear evidence of concern about escalating healthcare costs, rising consumer expectations, evolving population demographics, and the challenge of un- and underinsured patient care. These and related factors place mounting pressure on institutional providers and individual practitioners alike to continuously adapt their patient care methodologies and priorities. This text addresses these issues by alerting readers to their bearing on current and future healthcare

social work practice. It identifies the skills, ethical perspectives, techniques, and stresses associated with contemporary patient care. Using a systems approach to service delivery, significant emphasis throughout the text is placed on the importance of healthcare social workers being attentive to both individual patient and institutional provider needs.

This text has immediate applicability in the classroom, practicum, and by professionals in a wide range of patient care settings. With such use, the editors seek to enhance the integration of classroom and field by promoting a shared perspective on both pragmatic service delivery issues and professional orientation. It recognizes that learning accelerates and becomes more meaningful when students, academics, and practitioners share common ground. To facilitate this process, each chapter presents examples, exercises, and questions that challenge readers to translate theoretical concepts into competent practice.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXT

This text is organized in two parts. The first part consists of six chapters that provide a foundation in the knowledge, skills, and values associated with healthcare social work practice. Chapter 1 highlights the history of medical social work and the background for the development of healthcare delivery in the United States. Chapter 2 addresses the healthcare practice environment including organizational design, the continuum of patient care settings, and determining impacts on social work services. Chapter 3 introduces the knowledge and theoretical basis for contemporary healthcare social work practice. Chapter 4 delineates the requisite skills for competent practice, while Chapter 5 affords an overview of social work values and ethics in healthcare settings. Chapter 6 concludes the first part of the book by focusing on evidence-based practice and the considerations in evaluating such practice.

The second part of the book presents 10 chapters that describe advanced approaches and emerging trends in contemporary healthcare social work, including interventions with chronic illness, the characteristics of social work practice across the continuum of patient care settings, palliative and end-of-life care; community healthcare and health promotion, practice characteristics and issues associated with elderly patients, pediatric patient and family care, co-existing psychiatric and substance disorders, supervision and staff evaluation, and cultural competence in professional practice. Part 2 concludes with a final chapter on emerging trends in healthcare policy and delivery and projects the future of social work in healthcare. The statement given to students and practitioners alike is that the healthcare environment, while experiencing dramatic change, offers robust opportunities for social work practice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Development of this text involved considerable work on the part of many accomplished professionals. The editors are indebted to our 10 contributing authors for their commitment in the production of this text. Their expertise and perspectives reflect benchmark

contemporary social work practice and offer experienced insight into the myriad of factors determining such practice.

The editors additionally wish to express their gratitude to those who contributed their time, interest, support, and expertise in commenting on the text. The information and perspective gained in that process was invaluable given their extensive leadership experience throughout the spectrum of healthcare services. Our distinguished colleagues included: Dr. Carolyn Watts, Chair, School of Health Administration, Virginia Commonwealth University; Dr. Frank Baskind, Professor and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, Virginia Commonwealth University and Past President, Council on Social Work Education; Dr. Kay Davidson, Professor and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, University of Connecticut; Michael Jurgensen, Senior Vice President for Health Policy and Planning, Medical Society of Virginia; Edward Woomer, LCSW, Associate Administrator, DuPont Hospital for Children and Past President, National Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care; Barbara Farley, MSN, Senior Vice President for Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer (retired), Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia Hospitals and Clinics; and Jeff Ruskin, Vice-President of Operations, Select Medical Corporation and previous Chief Executive Officer of HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital, Richmond, Virginia.

In addition, we wish to express our appreciation to SAGE Publications and to acknowledge the support, encouragement, and tangible assistance we received from Kassie Graves, Libby Larson, Carrie Montoya, and Allan Harper in completing this project. In addition, Karen Allen would like to recognize and acknowledge Michael J. Neuman and express her gratitude for the help and support received during her doctoral studies and dissertation. Further, she would like to acknowledge the support and mentoring she received early in her academic career by Dr. Andrew Weissman, a tremendous advocate for social work in healthcare. Finally, she would like to express her appreciation for Dr. Gary and Lauren Shepherd, for their unwavering loyalty, support and friendship.

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About the Authors

Dr. Karen M. Allen, PhD, LCSW received her bachelor's degree in social psychology from Oakland University as well as an MSW in social work administration and a PhD in education from Wayne State University. She has nearly 20 years of experience in healthcare working as a medical social worker, department director, and administrator. Her clinical practice involved working with individuals and families affected with severe illnesses and traumas, including burns, spinal cord injuries, head injuries, cancer, and strokes. Most recently, her clinical work and research have been in trauma-infused cognitive behavioral therapy, especially as it relates to women who are recovering from interpersonal violence. She is a co-author with Danielle Wozniak of *Surviving Domestic Violence* and has written over 30 publications, including peer-reviewed papers, books, book chapters, and other publications.

Dr. Allen is currently Professor and Director of the Social Work Program at Indiana University Bloomington. She serves on the editorial review boards for *Social Work in Health Care*, *Social Work in Mental Health*, and *Advances in Social Work*; is a licensed clinical and macro-practice social worker; and teaches practice, policy, and research.

Dr. William J. Spitzer, PhD, DCSW earned his PhD in social work and business administration from the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign). His career extends over 30 years, with appointments as Department Director of Social Work Services for Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia Hospitals and Clinics, Oregon Health Sciences University Hospitals and Clinics, and the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System. He served as State Manager of Licensing Operations for the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services, was acting Department Director of Human Resources for Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System and senior development partner for a proposed assisted-living community, and directed a staff private practice consulting extended-care facilities. Dr. Spitzer serves as Publications Editor and Communications Committee Co-chair for the National Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care, was a National Board member, and served as President of the Virginia and Oregon Societies, Vice-President of the Central Illinois Society, and on the National Association of Social Workers Boards of Directors of Virginia, Oregon, and Michigan (Central).

Dr. Spitzer received the national Hy Weiner Social Work Health Care Leadership Award for administrative and academic achievement, the State Health Care Social Work Director of the Year Awards in Virginia and Oregon, two State Health Care Social Work Program of the Year Awards, and had his social work department honored as The Best Health System Patient Care Department by Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia

Hospitals administration. His academic appointments include Clinical Associate Professor of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University with prior appointments at Portland State University and the University of Illinois. Dr. Spitzer has served on numerous Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) university accreditation teams and journal editorial boards, presented at national and state conferences and has written 40 publications including articles in *Social Work in Health Care*, *Health and Social Work*, *Journal of Brief Therapy*, *the Social Work Desk Reference* (Oxford University), the *Journal of Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, invitational social work healthcare text chapters, and the American Hospital Association publication on case management. He created and continues to edit the expanding 12-volume *Exemplars in Health Care Social Work Practice* text series of the National Society.

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