



Welfare & Social Work

An overview from UK



English Welfare Context

- ◆ Liberal or residual welfare regime – focus on poor (Lorenz 1994)
- ◆ Strong social control function by state sector
- ◆ Caring, universal proactive work by third sector (NGOs)
- ◆ Activation of workforce, marketisation/commodification of welfare and cost cutting priorities since 1980s (Ginsburg & Lawrence, 2006)

Statement of Social Work Roles & Tasks for 21st Century (GSCC 2008 www.gsccl.org)

Social work is an established professional discipline with a distinctive part to play in promoting and securing the wellbeing of children, adults, families and communities. It operates within a framework of legislation and government policy, set out in Putting People First and the Children's Plan, and contributes to the development of social policy, practice and service provision. It collaborates with other social care, health, education and related services to ensure people receive integrated support. It is a profession regulated by law. (original emphasis)

Statement of Social Work Roles & Tasks for 21st Century (GSCC 2008)

Reference to:

- Adult social care separate from children's services
- Emphasis on integrated working
- Regulated profession

Reflects recent developments in Government Policy

Organisation of Services

- ❖ **Putting People First: a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care, 2007. Personalisation agenda for adults.**
- ❖ **The Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures, 2008 & Every Child Matters 2003**

Workforce Development

- Children's Workforce Development Council – Department for Children, Schools & Families
- Skills for Care (adult sector)-
Department of Health

Low Professional Status of Social Work in UK 1980 - 2000

- Failures in child protection services
- Cuts in welfare expenditure
- Growing managerialism
- Growing bureaucracy
- McDonaldisation of social work through care management (Dustin, 2007)

Regulation and Registration of Social Workers in UK

- ❖ General Social Care Council established in 2001
- ❖ Undergraduate degree as minimum qualification for social workers from 2003, with postgraduate route
- ❖ Code of Practice for social workers and employers
- ❖ Protected title – Social Work Registration compulsory from 2005 with re-registration every three years
- ❖ Post qualifying framework of training
- ❖ 91,530 social work professionals on GSCC register (including 15,000 students)
- ❖ Over 5,000 vacancies in June 2007

Social Work Education & Training in UK

- 68 accredited universities and 10 related HEIs offer 226 social work courses (GSCC 2007)
- 47 Universities approved to offer post qualifying courses
- 15,000 students registered with GSCC (2007)

Social Work Education

- 3 year degree from 2003 – (2 years postgraduate option for those with first degree)
- Involvement of service users and carers in all aspects of programmes in UK since 2003 a requirement by GSCC
- Annual quality return on each programme has to be submitted to GSCC

Social Work Education (2)

- Anti-oppressive practice embedded in training
- ‘Diversity’ agenda replaced ideas of anti-racism and multiculturalism
- Student profile varies in different regions and different universities – more BME students in inner cities and post 1992 universities
- Nature of diversity teaching varies according to student profile

Social Work Education 3

- 200 days of assessed practice placement
- Practice teachers must be qualified to supervise
- Highly regulated placements
- Many key skills identified by GSCC which each student must practice, evidence and pass

Doctoral Studies in Social Work

- PhD – Doctorate by research – part-time or full-time study
- Increasing number of Professional Doctorates in Social Work: mostly part-time
- London Metropolitan offers only Professional Doctorate in UK in International Social Work