



The South African Association for  
Social Workers in Private Practice

## WHAT "SOCIAL WORK IN HEALTH CARE" ENTAILS

Social work in health care is a field of speciality that provides social work services within the national health system, including, but not limited to, health establishments, rehabilitation programmes, community-based programmes and private practice.

### **Activities undertaken by the specialist social worker include:**

- The bio-psycho-social assessment of the client to identify and address the biological, psychological and social health challenges within a multi-cultural context;
- Health promotion, education and prevention concerning health challenges to empower clients (individuals, families, groups and communities) to improve health outcomes in relation to psychosocial health inequalities and to make informed decisions;
- To implement appropriate models of intervention with clients in line with applicable legislation, policies and procedures;
- To discharge planning focussing on bio-psycho-social adjustment and to ensure optimal functioning within a continuum of care (community-based education, rehabilitation and after care);
- To liaise and network with relevant stakeholders, facilitate the development of sustainable resources and refer inter-sectorial where appropriate;
- To influence the development of policies, procedures and legislation;
- Functioning in collaboration with health service providers and significant others to ensure optimal bio-psycho-social functioning of the client regarding health challenges; and
- To advocate, facilitate, liaise, coordinate and be a catalyst between health service providers and users regarding health service provision.

### **Social workers that specialise in health care can assist anyone including:**

- Individuals
- Groups
- Communities
- Hospitals