



AASW

.....
**Australian Association
of Social Workers**

***Scope of Social Work Practice
National Strategy***

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Introduction

The Australian Association of Social Workers' (AASW) has developed a series of documents called **Scope of Social Work Practice**. Each document in the series focuses on a particular field of practice or practice skill. The series aims to highlight and promote the significant role and contribution of the social work profession. This document provides an overview of the National Strategy that promotes this series.

The Australian Association of Social Workers

The AASW is the professional body representing more than 8,500 social workers throughout Australia. We set the benchmark for professional education and practice in social work and have a strong voice on matters of social inclusion, social justice, human rights and issues that impact upon the quality of life of all Australians.

We seek a close and collaborative relationship with educational institutions, industry, government, client associations, and the community. The AASW acknowledges the critical importance of the contribution made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members.

The social work profession

The social work profession is committed to maximising the wellbeing of individuals and society. We consider that individual and societal wellbeing is underpinned by socially inclusive communities that emphasise principles of social justice and respect for human dignity and human rights, including the right to freedom from intimidation and exclusion.

Drawing on theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and Indigenous knowledge, social workers focus on the interface between the individual and the environment and recognise the impact of social,

economic and cultural factors on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. Accordingly, social workers maintain a dual focus in both assisting with and improving human wellbeing; and addressing any external issues (known as systemic or structural issues) that may impact on wellbeing, such as inequality, injustice and discrimination.

Social work is a tertiary-qualified profession recognised nationally and internationally. The academic qualifications that are accredited by the AASW include: a Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Social Work with Honours, or a Social Work Qualifying Master's degree.

The curriculum provides entry-level professional social work education addressing knowledge, skills and values that can be applied across the diverse range of practice settings, fields of practice and methods of social work practice, and includes an extensive period of field education.

Graduates of AASW-accredited social work courses are eligible for membership of the AASW.

Click [here](#) for a full list of AASW accredited courses.



The Scope of Social Work Practice Series

Focusing on a particular field of practice, each document provides an overview of the role, contribution and evidence informing social work practice in each relevant area. The aim of the series is to highlight in a concise, accessible and informative manner the crucial function and services that social workers provide and that employers and clients can expect.

The list of documents currently includes:

- Health
- Mental Health
- School Social Work
- Aged Care
- Child Protection
- Case Management
- Psychosocial Assessments
- Hospital (Forthcoming)

The Scope of Social Work Practice Series: National Strategy

As the representative body for professional social workers in Australia, the AASW is responsible for advocating for the profession, and the profession's clients, at many levels including government, private and in the not-for-profit sector. It is in this capacity that the association will use the Scope of Practice series. The intent of the National Strategy is to develop a clear approach for utilising the series in advocating for the profession to key stakeholders.

The strategy has two main stages:

Stage 1: Ongoing consultation with members

Each publication in the series is seen as a dynamic document and therefore the AASW will engage in continued consultation with its members in order to ensure that it reflects the complexities of social work practice. This will

focus on the continual engagement with social workers who have significant knowledge, experience and expertise in each field in order to review the existing series and develop new titles.

Stage 2: Promotion of social work

Once the documents have been determined to be of the necessary quality and standard, they will be used as a platform for a national campaign to raise the profile of the profession. This campaign is understood as a collective effort and will rely on the initiative and involvement of the AASW's members, groups, branches and importantly the professional leaders.

The overall strategy is to use these documents to promote the value and significant contribution of the social work profession to the relevant stakeholders at two main levels:

Organisational

- Government departments
- Welfare and related service agencies
- Hospitals & health services
- Media organisations

Political

- Federal, state and territory
- Key government ministers
- Members of parliament

The specific methods for promotion, whether it is meetings, presentations or correspondence etc., will be determined contextually as deemed necessary, and in line with the profession's *Code of Ethics*.

Conclusion

The series and strategy provide a valuable opportunity to highlight to the broader community the important role that social workers have in working with communities and individuals to promote wellbeing, human rights and social justice



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