

- The LCSW license has stature. It is the most nationally and historically recognized master's level license allowing someone to independently practice counseling/therapy with the benefit of 3rd party financial reimbursement (insurance.)
- Medicare recognizes only the MSW master's level licensure for reimbursement. The implications of this are enormous going forward as baby boomers shift to this form of insurance.
- The VA (federal) will only hire master's level people with the MSW degree. The VA (federal) is very advanced in the incorporation of best practices and state of the art models of psychotherapy. New employees come under LCSW licensing supervision immediately upon being hired.
- The changes brought about by the Affordable Health Care Act are driving the development of *integrated health care*. This will greatly influence service reimbursement and how other monies flow. The projection is that most mental health services will soon be based in primary health care settings, including your own doctor's office. New integrative roles will emerge. An example would be the merger of what we now think of as "medical social work" with behavioral health, or what we now think of as "mental health." There is no way to overestimate how much things will change during the course of your career, or predict exactly what the new roles will look like. The MSW degree is well positioned for these historic changes because of its contextual perspective and the wide range of skills which are taught.
- The LCSW licensing exam is a national exam which makes it easier to move from one state to another. Licensing reciprocity is not guaranteed with any move, but it is much easier when everyone is talking about the same degree and the same licensing exam.
- Social work is more than a degree – it is a profession. It has a membership organization that represents all people holding the degree, licensed or unlicensed, at the national level. The National Association of Social Workers protects the policy, funding and professional interests of the profession, as well as the policy interests of the many populations served by the social work profession.
- Social work is an internationally recognized profession. An accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education, holds all accredited schools of social work accountable to the same educational policies and standards. You can move to almost anywhere in the world and prospective employers recognize the degree and understand the educational background of the person holding the degree.
- The NASW Code of Ethics addresses a macro range of professional responsibilities - to the client/patient, the service agency/facility, colleagues, the profession & the greater society as a whole. We don't know of another professional code of ethics that addresses such a broad range of responsibilities & objectives. These professional objectives are mirrored in the broad signature perspective of the MSW educational curriculum. This perspective should easily fit with the growing consensus that health & mental health services must be brought together as a system of holistic health & wellness care in order to address the fragmentation and gaps which have existed.

- In this regard, social workers are known as being great employees. Social workers often work within multidisciplinary teams, and are often and quickly moved into supervisory and program management positions in their work systems. They are always working to improve the systems in which they work in order to improve the care and the environment provided to the client/patient system.
- There is no way to exaggerate the importance of holding a degree that allows for more, not less, employment flexibility. In a rapidly changing professional landscape new professional roles, even clinical roles, will emerge that we currently can't imagine. It is true that the generalist focus of the Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work does not allow for an intense concentration of clinical courses. Students do not emerge from the school destined to any health or human services professional niche. They graduate and become employed in a vast array of work settings, regardless of their final practice areas of concentration. Students who elect to become clinical social workers (therapists) begin licensing supervision immediately upon graduation and successful employment. Their educational foundation positions them very well to do this, and hopefully to launch a career lifetime of learning that includes perpetual independent study. In this regard, their professional careers will follow the same long roads of study and clinical trainings as clinical psychiatry, psychology, professional counselors, psychiatric nursing, etc.