

SOCIAL SERVICES

While the clinical staff in a senior living community focus on the physical and mental well being of residents, it is the role of the social services professional to enable each resident to function at the highest possible level of social and emotional wellness.

Social Services Coordinator

The social services coordinator is responsible for overseeing the nursing facility's comprehensive social services program to meet the psychosocial and medically related needs of each resident. Included in their responsibilities, they assess each resident and participate in the development and implementation of residents' plan of care.

A social services coordinator needs a bachelor's degree in social work or human services appropriate to resident needs; or one year, within the last five years, supervised direct social work experience.

Additionally, the social services coordinator has to be trained in recognizing and assessing the emotional and social needs of residents; and be knowledgeable of community agencies and resources available to meet those needs.

Next Steps

Social Worker

Social Worker

Social workers who are employed in geriatric care communities perform a number of functions, including helping new residents adjust to life in their new environment, advocating for the residents' needs and rights, providing supportive counseling and making psychosocial assessments. Social workers collaborate with other health care professionals, such as physicians and nurses, to develop an individualized plan of care. When discharge is an option, the social worker will make referrals for mental health services and coordinate discharge planning. If an older adult is not expected to go home, the social worker can help him or her deal with feelings of loss or depression. The social worker's duties may be related to end of life planning. Any facility with more than 120 beds must employ a qualified social worker on a full-time basis.

Education and Experience

A social worker must possess a bachelor's degree in Social Work (BSW) or in a human services field including but not limited to sociology, special education, rehabilitation, counseling, and psychology. This typically takes four years to complete.

Next Steps

Social Services Director



Social Services Director

The social services director is responsible for ensuring that the social, psychological and physical needs of all residents in the senior living community are being met. They provide counseling and social services to residents and their families. The social services director reports directly to the administrator and participates in interdisciplinary team meetings, providing information on an individual resident's psychosocial condition.

Education and Experience

A social services director must have a bachelor's degree in Social Work (BSW) or in a human services field including but not limited to sociology, special education, rehabilitation, counseling, and psychology and needs one year of supervised social work experience in a healthcare setting working directly with individuals.

Next Steps

Social Services Consultant

