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ABSTRACT

This report provides information on demand for social workers in the field of aging, supply of persons to fill these jobs, adequacy of their training and skill levels, and barriers to effective use of social service staff. Part 1 identifies types of jobs that social workers hold in the field of aging and range of setting in which they perform these jobs. Part 2 identifies statistical information available for supply/demand analysis, describes the shortcomings of these data, and presents qualitative information on the job market for social workers in aging. Part 3 describes academic programs that train social workers to work with the elderly, including short-term and continuing education. It raises important issues in social work education, such as student financial aid, funding for long- and short-term training, minority participation, and alternatives to social work training. Part 3 concludes with a discussion of regulation and social work practice and implications for the field of aging. Part 4 relates to the future role of social work in this field. It presents two alternative models for future social service systems and examines effects of the implementation of each of these models on employment and training needs in the field of social work with the elderly. (YIB)

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# AoA Occasional Papers in Gerontology

No. 4

## Employment Issues in Social Work with the Elderly

DHEW Publication No. (OHDS) 79-20090

November 1979

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
EDUCATION, AND WELFARE**

Office of Human Development Services  
Administration of Aging  
National Clearinghouse on Aging

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
EDUCATION & WELFARE  
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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<b>Report Highlights</b> .....	iii
<b>Foreword</b> .....	v
<b>Introduction</b> .....	vii
<b>Part I: Social Work in the Field of Aging</b> ...	1
<b>Part II: Analysis of Supply and Demand</b> ....	5
<b>Part III: Key Issues Related to Supply and Demand</b> .....	9
Developments in Social Work College Education .....	9
Short-term Training and Continuing Education .....	15
Regulation of Social Work Practice ..	16
<b>Part IV: Supply and Demand Implications of Alternative Social Service Models</b> ..	19

of persons currently in the field can provide at least a qualitative assessment of the job market.

Job opportunities for social workers in general vary widely by geographic area. Job competition in some large urban areas is quite strong, but many rural areas are unable to attract qualified workers.

Reports indicate that compared to the overall situation for social workers, social work graduates with training in the field of aging have fared well in the job market. Many have taken jobs in aging-related settings. However, salaries are not always comparable to those in other social work positions. Also, often there are fewer career ladder opportunities than in other settings and often there is less job security because of uncertain funding. This has resulted in relatively high turnover of the better trained staff. At the same time, an overall competitive job market has caused low turnover among workers with less training, making it difficult for some employers to hire persons with strong qualifications.

The importance of specialized training in aging is a key employment issue. The availability of gerontological training for social workers has grown considerably in recent years. A number of colleges and universities now provide some aging content to their social work students, using a number of different methods. These range from infusing material on aging into existing courses to providing a sequence of courses that leads to a certificate or specialization in aging along with the social work degree.

Among the recommendations for Federal policy in the areas of social work education and training that were made by conference participants and others are:

- 1 Federal support of social work education should reflect the impact of the "core curriculum" project currently being undertaken by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) with the help of the Council on Social Work Education. The effect of this program may be that the Master of Social Work (MSW) programs would require entering students to have completed some course work in social work at the undergraduate level. Having already taken undergraduate courses in basic social work theory and practice, master's students would have more opportunity for specialization in the field of aging.
- 2 Some of the most important areas that the Administration on Aging (and other Federal agencies that

## HIGHLIGHTS

Social workers are employed in a wide range of jobs and in all types of agencies that serve the elderly. The availability of an adequate supply of trained social workers is important for the provision of quality services to the elderly.

Social workers serve the elderly in such functions as casework, groupwork, community organization, administration, social planning, teaching, research and consultation.

Currently available data are not adequate to estimate current employment of social workers in the field of aging or to project future employment. However, the data can provide an insight into the nature of the social work labor force in general, and the experience

support social work education) must evaluate in their funding decisions for social work education are: the organizational structure and objectives of the program, the curriculum model to be used, the use of funds for student support, the opportunities for minority and low-income students, and the alternatives to social work education.

- 3 While support of undergraduate institutions should be continued, first priority should be given to graduate education. Funding at the master's and doctoral levels has the greatest multiplier effects. Whether in a teaching or a supervisory position, these graduates will have the greatest influence on others. Careful consideration should be given to the curriculum models used in aging programs, and to how these models relate to the job roles of graduates at each level of education and in each geographic area.
- 4 In providing gerontological training for current practitioners, the single most critical problem is a lack of coordination among agencies on aging, service providers, and educators. Several persons recommended that AoA support a number of States in developing effective models for short-term training, and disseminating information on successful models.
- 5 Conference participants and others were quite strong in their belief that the social work professional associations—NASW, CSWE, and the minority associations—should be encouraged to take a much greater role in the field. These associations have the resources and influence to affect social work education and practice for the benefit of the elderly. The associations might, for example, participate in the formulating of AoA guidelines and funding decisions for social work programs; coor-

dinate the development of alternative models for providing social work education in aging; coordinate the training of social work educators in aging; disseminate information to academic institutions on alternative curriculum models; develop models for short-term training programs and coordinate these training activities with State and area agencies; and disseminate information to schools of social work about career opportunities in aging.

Another key employment issue is the regulation of social work practice and its effect on the quality of service. Many agencies that provide social services to the elderly operate under civil service regulations that neither recognize nor give preference to persons trained in social work or gerontology. These agencies often are unable to hire the best qualified workers. Agency administrators generally feel that civil service regulations need to be changed to bring job qualifications in line with the profession's own recommended standards, and that social work, like law and nursing, should be more self-regulated. It was suggested that AoA encourage State and area agencies on aging to support State NASW chapters as they work for social work licensure laws. Both educators and service providers feel that insuring quality service from well-trained personnel depends largely on the existence of strict licensing laws in all States.

Data are not available to project requirements for social workers in aging. The future demand for these workers is a function of the growth in social services for older persons. In addition to demand caused by new types of services, the expansion of funding for existing services, such as senior centers, mental health services, and protective services would create a need for additional trained workers.

## FOREWORD

The Comprehensive Older Americans Services Amendments of 1973 direct The Commissioner on Aging to develop information on current and future needs for workers in the field of aging, provide a broad range of quality training and retraining opportunities responsive to the changing needs of programs in the field, attract a greater number of qualified persons to the field, and help make training programs more responsive to the needs of workers. The Commissioner must also prepare an annual report appraising the adequacy of the Nation's current and future personnel needs in the field of aging.

The information currently available on manpower is limited, however, thereby weakening the ability of the Administration on Aging (AoA) to carry out these activities. Because of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' long experience in analyzing employment issues, the AoA asked the BLS to help develop the needed information. Among the products previously submitted to AoA by BLS are reports on employment issues in the nursing home industry and homemaker-home health aide services, a report summarizing the results of AoA hearings on social service employment issues, and career guidance materials on occupations and industries that serve the elderly.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AoA Occasional Papers in Gerontology, No. 1 Manpower Needs in the Field of Aging: The Nursing Home Industry, (Office of Human Development, Administration on Aging, 1975), DHEW Publication No. (OHD) 76-20082.

AoA Occasional Papers in Gerontology, No. 2 Human Resource Issues in the Field of Aging: Homemaker-Home Health Aide Services, (Office of Human Development, Administration on Aging, 1977), DHEW Publication No. (OHD) 77-20086.

Human Resource Issues in the Delivery of Social Services to the Elderly: A Report of Hearings Conducted by the Commissioner on Aging, (Office of Human Development, Administration on Aging, February 1977). (Available from AoA, Division of Manpower Resources)

"Working with Older People," *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Fall 1976). Entire issue.

"Working with Older People: Occupations in Therapy," *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Winter 1976, pp. 13-17). By Lois Plunkert Terlizzi.

Social workers perform a wider range of services in more types of agencies that serve the elderly than persons in any other profession. Because of this, AoA has devoted a substantial portion of its training funds to short- and long-term training for social workers. However, information necessary to evaluate this investment has not been available.

The Administration on Aging contracted with the BLS to assess the current supply and demand for social workers in the field of aging, and to suggest how the results of this analysis could be translated into policy at the Federal level. This report presents the results of the BLS study.

The BLS hopes this report will be useful not only to AoA but also to professional associations and other organizations concerned with employment and training issues in the field of social work with the aging.

The BLS would like to thank the people who contributed to this report. Persons who participated in a BLS-sponsored conference in Washington, D.C. were: Alan Beckman, Benjamin Rose Institute, Cleveland; Thomas Briggs, Syracuse University; Nancy Coleman, Council on Social Work Education (CSWE); Ira Ehrich, Southern Illinois University; Richard Greene, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Otome Nagano, California State Department of Aging; Barbara Newsome, University of the District of Columbia; Mary O'Day, University of California, Berkeley; Mary Seguin, University of Southern California; Sheldon Tobin, University of Chicago; and Linda Van Buskirk, Lockport Senior Citizens Center, Lockport, N.Y.

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This report was prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Employment Structure and Trends, Division of Occupational Outlook, with funds provided by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Administration on Aging. It was prepared by Philip L. Rones under the direction of Max Carey. A significant contribution was made by Patrick Wash.

## INTRODUCTION

The information in this report comes from a number of sources. Many service providers and educators were interviewed and asked to comment on the demand for social workers in the field of aging, the supply of persons to fill these jobs, the adequacy of their training and skill levels, and barriers to the effective use of social service staff.

In addition, a two day conference was held in Washington, D.C. on November 18th and 19th, 1976. Eleven persons from around the country were invited to share their expertise on a number of predetermined employment and training issues. Participating in this conference were social work educators, service providers, and representatives of the major social work professional associations. Each participant was asked to provide BLS with a post-conference report containing more detailed information and recommendations on areas that were not thoroughly covered at the conference. The conference participants were a major source of information and made many of the policy recommendations contained in this report.

The report covers four major areas. Part I, which identifies the role of social work in the field of aging, is included as background for readers who may not be familiar with the field.

**Part I** identifies the types of jobs that social workers hold in the field of aging and the range of settings in which they perform these jobs.

**Part II** identifies the statistical information available for supply/demand analysis, describes the shortcomings of these data, and presents qualitative information on the job market for social workers in aging.

**Part III** describes academic programs that train social workers to work with the elderly. Short-term and con-

tinuing education also are described. This section raises many of the important issues in social work education, including student financial aid, funding for long- and short-term training, minority participation, and alternatives to social work training. Part III concludes with a discussion of the regulation of social work practice and its implications for the field of aging.

**Part IV**, the last section, relates to the future role of social work in the field of aging. Employment projections and planning for this field must be made under specific assumptions as to the types of services that social workers will perform in the future. Part IV presents two alternative models for future social service systems and examines the effects of the implementation of each of these models on employment and training needs in the field of social work with the elderly.

Many subjects were researched in the course of preparing this report. Given the scope of the report, no single issue was dealt with in great detail. Also, although the conference participants represented a range of social work interests, they cannot be considered to represent the entire field of social work in aging.

The recommendations in this report come from experts in the field of social work in aging through personal interviews, conference participation, and written materials. The policy proposals do not necessarily represent a consensus of the experts since these persons represent a variety of interests in the field. The BLS has attempted to view these recommendations within the framework of its expertise in analyzing employment needs and to include a range of recommendations representing differing points of view.

# Part I

## SOCIAL WORK IN THE FIELD OF AGING

Decisions about training should be based on an understanding of job content. The following section seeks to provide a basic understanding of what social workers do in the field of aging. The discussion is not detailed, but it presents the full range of social work services to the aging.

The major areas of social work practice are casework and group work, supervision and administration, community organization, and social policy and planning. Social workers also teach, do research and serve as consultants. Most social workers are in jobs that require them to practice in several of these areas. A brief look at each of these functions as they relate to the field of aging follows.

In *casework*, social workers use interviews to identify the problems of individuals and families. Once facts and feelings emerge, the caseworker can help people understand and solve their problems and can secure additional services if required. Caseworkers are employed in nearly all of the agencies that provide social services to the elderly, including multipurpose senior centers, social service agencies, community mental health agencies, nursing homes, and family service agencies.

An older person's need for casework services may come to the attention of the social worker in a number of ways—a citizen calling the local public welfare department about an older neighbor who needs food or clothing; a doctor contacting the social worker in a hospital to help make living arrangements for an elderly patient; a nutrition program employee noting the absence of a regular client. In many cases, of course, elderly persons or their families request help themselves.

Many of the problems for which the aged seek outside assistance are common to adults of all ages: emotional and physical health, finances, housing marital and family relationships, and the use of time. In addition, the elderly face problems associated with aging. Old age generally is a time of real loss—loss of

spouse, relatives, friends, job, income, status, and health—and of increasing dependence and approaching death.

The caseworker helps clients use their own resources to find solutions to their problems. Clients also can be urged to seek outside help from health, social, and recreation services, for example. Encouraging clients to help themselves whenever possible is an important part of the caseworker's job.

Cases with different complexity require social workers with different levels of education and skills. On the one hand, an elderly client may only need transportation to the grocery store or clinic, or may have a question about food stamps, Medicaid, or Social Security. A social service aide (as used here, anyone with less training than a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree) should be able to perform these tasks routinely. However, even in an apparently simple case, the social worker should be able to identify problems that the client may not express. These problems could include the need for a part-time homemaker, additional medical treatment, nutrition services, and budget counseling.

Many problems are more complex. For instance, a family faced with a parent's need for nursing home care may have difficulties not only with finding the proper nursing home, but also in dealing with their parent's and their own emotions regarding the placement. The social worker assigned to this type of case should have a knowledge of community nursing home facilities and skills in counseling clients to deal with the emotional trauma that often accompanies a nursing home placement.

In some settings, such as a senior center or nursing home, the social worker deals primarily with problems of older people and their families. In other agencies, such as a family service agency or mental health clinic, older clients may be only a small part of the worker's caseload. Because so many workers whose primary interest is not aging have to provide services to aging

clients, aging content should be incorporated into general social work courses such as human development, the social service system, and casework methods.

**Group workers** are trained to help individuals use group experiences to meet their personal needs, to form relationships between people, and to effect needed changes in the community. Over a million elderly people live in nursing homes or other institutional settings. In addition, many older people use community services designed for the elderly, such as those available in senior centers. Social work services may be provided in these group settings where people have similar interests, needs, and problems. While working with groups requires some skills that are different from those used to work with individuals, group workers in most settings also need casework skills. In most master's level clinical social work programs, students learn to work with individuals, families, and groups.

The following illustrates the use of group work with the elderly in such institutions as nursing homes, homes for the aged, and hospitals for the mentally ill.

- All newcomers share anxieties about a new way of life. They may need help in making friends and in adjusting to living rules. A group of new residents would include people with common fears and needs for information. The newcomers, meeting under the leadership of a trained group worker, would share information and experiences and support each other.
- Lack of participation in decisions that affect their lives can be one of the most difficult adjustments for people in an institutional setting. One approach to help involve the resident in this process is the formation of resident councils that meet regularly with administrators. A group worker can help organize such activities and can act as a consultant to the resident group.
- Placement of an elderly person in a long-term care facility typically presents problems for the family as well as for the new resident. There may be misconceptions about the facility and its personnel; very often there is guilt over not keeping the older person at home. Social workers in long-term care facilities bring the families of new residents together to discuss these feelings so they can gain a more realistic understanding of the placement.

An increasing number of institutions and social service agencies are using the group work approach to bring social work services to the greatest number of people. However, in most instances, casework services are necessary too. In a setting such as a senior center, a group worker might also become involved in community organization tasks such as those described below.

The role of the **community organizer** (CO) in the field of social work is difficult to define. In general, community organization is a social work method that involves two kinds of skills. First, the community organizer works with citizen groups to help them influence the social service system. For example, the CO might help elderly public housing residents get more street lights around their housing complex. Second, the community organizer works as a social planner, assessing the impact and effectiveness of a proposed service and developing a plan of social action to implement it.

A community organizer may become involved in an issue in several ways. In some cases, a community group or organization requests the services of a CO to help it develop a plan to deal with a particular social issue. In other instances, organizers employed by an agency concerned with the elderly engage the support of community residents to help them effect needed changes.

The community organizer must be knowledgeable in many areas. Some of these include:

- Leadership development. The ability to make changes in a community depends on whether the community members are willing and able to take charge of the "fight".
- Group dynamics. The CO must be able to direct the energies of a group of residents toward a constructive approach to a problem.
- Problem-solving strategies. An organizer must know how to get things done. This requires a knowledge of the political structure and lines of influence and power in the community.
- Planning for social services. In trying to make changes in a community the people involved must be able to explain exactly what they want to accomplish. If the availability of a social service is involved, the CO must be able to offer the local officials a concrete proposal. This requires many of the planning skills described below.

BLS research on employment issues in agencies on aging identified a scarcity of trained **social planners** to work in these agencies. While schools of urban planning traditionally have produced the majority of planners, many agencies find that social work students who have taken a planning or social policy sequence are admirably suited for planning jobs in agencies on aging. Traditional planning agencies at the State and local level increasingly are being asked to respond to the needs of the elderly in areas such as housing, recreation, transportation, and mental health. Since all students of planning—whether in an urban planning or social work program—receive some instruction in the planning of social services, conference participants expressed hope that aging content can be incorporated into existing courses.

Planners need many types of skills on the job.

- They must be able to evaluate the needs of groups



within the population, such as the elderly, children, criminals, or the mentally ill, and be familiar with the services available to these groups. Depending on the employing agency, a planner may specialize in a particular service or in the needs of a specific group.

- They need to be able to use available statistical information or be able to collect new information to measure the potential impact of a proposed program in terms of both benefits and costs.
- They must be familiar with the political and legislative process that affects policy decisions and must be able to work with and influence those with decisionmaking power.
- They should be skilled in community organization and able to secure the active participation of citizens in the planning process.
- Finally, while using these skills to conduct a workable plan, planners must also be able to prepare a proposal that effectively expresses their arguments and conclusions to government officials and others.

Many planners who concentrate in the field of aging are employed by State or area agencies on aging. Others work directly on a contract basis, or for agencies concerned with transportation, housing, recreation, health, and other needs of the elderly. Quite a few planners work for private consulting firms.

Social workers often advance to *administrative* positions, even in agencies where social work services are not the primary function. Social workers may be top administrators in the following types of agencies that serve the elderly: senior centers, State and area agencies on aging, local and national associations of older persons, homes for the aging, information and referral services, homemaker-home health aide services, and volunteer services.

Some graduate schools of social work offer administration sequences. In 1975, over 4 percent of the second year graduate students had a primary area of concentration in administration,<sup>2</sup> while many students

<sup>2</sup> Joseph C. Sheehan, ed., *Statistics on Social Work Education-1975* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1976), p. 48.

in other sequences took some coursework in administration. There is no consensus as to what type of academic preparation is most appropriate for jobs in administration. However, most persons seem to agree that the primary elements for success are knowledge and skills in four areas: social services, management, politics and aging. Thus, schools of social work that train administrators to work in agencies that serve the elderly should include each of these subject areas.

Social workers involved in *teaching, research, and consultation* have had a significant impact on the field of social work with the aging, although the number of people employed in these areas is quite small.

At present, very few social work teachers at the college level have aging as their primary field of emphasis (unlike social work with children, adolescents, or families—all popular specialties). In fact, some persons who are called upon to teach aging have a very limited knowledge of the field. However, those teachers who have developed expertise in social work with the elderly have made contributions, particularly through their writings on curriculum development in aging.

The need for social work teachers with a knowledge of and interest in aging was mentioned frequently by educators and service providers. Some suggestions regarding this issue are discussed in Part III.

Most academic research in social work is done by professors and post-master's students. Areas of social work research include the development of models for working with certain groups of elderly persons, and for training social workers in the skills needed to work with the elderly.

Much of the consulting work that social workers do in the field of aging is in the area of nursing home services. Nursing homes are required by Federal and State laws to provide certain social services to patients and their families. The facility usually has the option of having a qualified social work consultant available, often someone with a bachelor's degree in social work (BSW), with an untrained person providing the day-to-day services. Many nursing homes choose this option rather than have a full-time paid social worker on staff.

## Part II

### ANALYSIS OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND

As mentioned in Part I, two major groups of social workers provide services for the aging. First is the group who have aging clients as part of their general caseload. These persons may be employed in such agencies as public departments of social services, family and children's services, and community mental health centers. Specific training in aging is generally not required for these positions. The second group consists of those social workers who work primarily with aging clients in settings such as nursing homes, senior centers, and agencies on aging. For these positions, some training and experience working with older persons is generally preferred.

The following analysis of demand and supply information is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the job market for social workers in aging. The second section assesses demand and supply information for the entire field of social work, focusing on the interrelationships between the general job market for social workers and for social workers in the field of aging.

#### The Job Market for Social Workers in Aging

##### *Quantitative Analysis*

While current and historical employment data are available for social workers as a whole, the data are not detailed enough to tell how many social workers are employed in aging settings. Without such data, quantitative projections of future requirements cannot be made.<sup>3</sup> On the supply side, it is impossible to es-

<sup>3</sup> In two previous manpower studies conducted by BLS for AoA, data sources existed from which manpower projections could be made. The nursing home industry makes up a very large portion of the "convalescent institution" industry, for which current and historical employment data are available from the decennial Population Census and the monthly Current Population Survey. Not only can growth in the industry be seen from these data, but also changes in the occupational makeup of the industry. The homemaker-home health aide occupational projections were based on survey data from the National Council for Homemaker-Home Health Aide Services. Persons working in both industries deal largely with older persons.

timate the number of social workers with education or experience in aging—the group that would comprise the supply of trained workers. While a quantitative supply/demand analysis cannot be made, much can be learned from educators and service providers about recruitment efforts, qualifications of current and potential employees, preferred training, and turnover.

##### *Qualitative Analysis*

**Recruitment.** Geographic area is an important determinant of an employer's ability to recruit well-qualified social workers. Some employers in urban areas report large numbers of applicants for job openings—in some cases over a hundred for a single position. However, in many rural areas, employers have a difficult time attracting qualified workers. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon. (1) The majority of colleges are in urban areas, where students may prefer to stay following graduation. (2) Professional people often prefer to live in areas with other professionals, i.e. urban and suburban areas. (3) Rural areas may offer little opportunity for professional advancement or continuing education. (4) Salaries are often less than those in urban areas.<sup>4</sup>

**Qualifications of Job Applicants.** Employers note that although one hundred or more social work graduates may apply for a single position, relatively few applicants possess training or experience in aging. In view of this, it is worth examining the type of field placements selected by social work students. Of all second year social work students in 1974-75, only 209, or 2 percent took their field placements in an aging-related setting. (Certainly, many others work in settings with a wide range of clients).<sup>5</sup>

Educators have indicated that graduates with aging concentrations have fared well in a generally competitive job market. A high percentage have found employment in aging-related settings. Some educators have reported receiving requests from around the country for graduates with a concentration in aging.

<sup>4</sup> These conclusions are based on information gathered in interviews with educators and service providers.

<sup>5</sup> Sheehan, *Statistics*, p. 42.

**Turnover.** Turnover rates in the field of social work in aging offer a study in contrasts: Rates are high for some workers and low for others. Many persons who do social work with the elderly have little formal training in the field. Some of them are long-time employees, hired in the days before aging "specialists" appeared on the scene. Turnover is low among these workers, for as the overall social work job market tightens, mobility diminishes. Employers must therefore make the best of their current employees—evaluating their effectiveness and determining areas that need to be strengthened. This involves the use of continuing education and in-service training to upgrade the skills of the social service staff.

The turnover situation for social workers who have training in aging contrasts with that of workers without such training. Some employers have noted that turnover among persons with training in aging often is high. Contributing to the high turnover rate are salaries in aging that often lag behind those in other settings and less favorable career ladder opportunities and job security. Moreover, a large proportion of social workers with this training are young, and young workers in general have higher turnover rates.

In many occupations, high turnover is seen as a problem. But while persons in aging agree that this field needs to reach parity with other social work fields in the benefits that it offers its employees, turnover may actually have its advantages. When persons whose major field of interest is aging move to more "stable" jobs in larger, more established agencies, they bring with them a concern for the elderly. This is particularly significant when social workers sensitized to the needs of the elderly move into planning and administrative positions. Aging services will not be adversely affected by this turnover phenomenon as long as the supply of new graduates with aging concentrations meets the demand.

**Hiring Policies.** Civil Service regulations impede the hiring of social workers with a knowledge of the aging process and the delivery of services to aging clients. For many jobs in public agencies, the applicant with gerontological training competes with all social workers at his or her degree level (and even below). In many cases, persons without any social work education may take the examination for a social work job. Moreover, the exam often has little or no relevance to the job (discussed further in Part III).

**Outlook.** Unfortunately, it is difficult to predict long-run job market conditions. Several factors must be taken into account. Social services for the aging have grown rapidly in recent years, reflecting both demographic realities and the increased visibility of the plight of many of the elderly. Yet compared to the services for other groups, aging services are largely in their infancy. Thus, the future demand for social workers in the field of aging is largely a function of

a continued healthy expansion of aging services at a time when other services are faced with small growth or are even being cut back.

On the supply side, programs that train workers specifically in the field of aging are, for the most part, fairly new. As more and more programs offer this concentration, an increasing number of graduates will be seeking jobs in aging. Future job market conditions for graduates educated in both social work and gerontology depend on the relationship between these demand and supply conditions.

The job market for aging specialists is quite closely related to the general social work job market. To a large extent, social workers with an aging background must compete with other workers for positions in aging. This is due to some extent to hiring practices that do not recognize specialized training. However, there are other reasons. An employer may get ten applicants for one job opening, with only one from a person with a strong background in aging. Employers have stressed the fact that their first priority is to get the best social worker, with the aging specialization being important when other qualifications are similar. Hence, because social workers with training in aging often compete with other social work graduates, the job market conditions for social workers in aging will be determined largely by the market conditions in the field as a whole. For this reason, some information on the demand and supply of social workers in general may add to the knowledge of the job market in aging.

Estimates of current social work employment come primarily from two sources:

- The decennial Population Census, which contains the following occupational classifications: social workers; welfare service aides; and clerical assistants, social welfare.
- The Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides monthly, quarterly, and annual employment figures, based on a 47,000 household survey. The CPS definition for social workers is comparable to the 1970 Census definition.

The CPS estimates that there were 320,000 social workers in 1976. A look at the educational characteristics of these persons gives a good insight into their backgrounds.

**Educational Characteristics.** The educational backgrounds of those who report themselves as social workers are quite varied. Certainly no more than one-half have had "professional" training in social work (a bachelor's degree or higher in social work). The NASW estimates that about 140-150,000 persons in the field have had professional training. This is less than half of the 320,000 social workers shown in the 1976 CPS averages. The 1970 Population Census, the most

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Myles Johnson, Staff Associate, NASW.

reliable source, gives the following data on occupation by education. Of the 222,000 persons who classified themselves as social workers in 1970, 32 percent had less than a 4 year college degree and only 30 percent had completed 5 or more years of college.<sup>7</sup> No information on major field of study is available from the census data. However, it can be assumed that most of the 38 percent who have only a 4 year degree received that degree in some field other than social work, since few bachelor's social work degree programs existed at that time.

In 1976, for the first time, the educational attainment of persons in certain selected occupations was compiled from CPS data. Although the sample size is too small for desired statistical accuracy, these data appear to support the 1970 Census data.

Data from an unpublished American Council on Education (ACE) survey give additional information on the education of social workers just a year after the 1970 Census. In 1971, ACE surveyed persons who had been college freshmen in the fall of 1961. Only 11.7 percent of those with no more than a bachelor's degree who named social work as their occupation had social work as their major field of study. Almost 50 percent were Sociology or Psychology majors, with English, History, Political Science, and Economics accounting for an additional 24 Percent. While more BSW students have entered the field in recent years, the majority of bachelor level social workers do not have degrees in social work.

The ACE data give a different picture for social workers with a master's degree. Of those persons with at least a master's degree who considered themselves social workers, 80 percent had a degree in social work, with education (11.7 percent) being the only other significant major field of study. Therefore, at the lower levels of social work practice many persons have degrees in areas other than social work while at the higher levels of practice, as one would expect, social work training is more common.

**Employment Projections.** BLS projects employment requirements for social workers through 1985. The basic sources of data for these projections are the Census, CPS, and the BLS Industry/Occupational Matrix. Based on a 1976 current employment figure of 330,000, the latest projection indicates that 440,000 social workers are expected to be required in 1985, about a 33 percent increase.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population: 1970, Subject Reports, Final Report PC (2)-7A, Occupational Characteristics* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), Table 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Occupational Projections and Training Data*. Bulletin 2020 (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Forthcoming). BLS projections are made using certain basic assumptions about economic and social conditions. Included in these assumptions are levels of population and labor force participation, unemployment and employment;

This average growth of 12,000 social workers per year through 1985 implies an annual growth of 3.5 percent. This is higher than the 2.0 percent average for all occupations.<sup>9</sup> Thus while the social work profession is expected to grow at a slower rate than the 8.3 percent annual rate<sup>10</sup> during the previous 13 year period (1963-76), a relatively high growth rate is still anticipated. Obviously, any significant changes in government policy towards the social services, in either direction, would have a corresponding effect on the demand for social workers.

**Openings.** An expected average of 12,000 jobs will be created each year through 1985 due to growth in the occupation. An even greater number of openings will occur because of the need to replace those who retire, die, or otherwise leave the occupation. BLS projections indicate that an average of 13,000 replacements will be needed each year through 1985. Adding this figure to the annual growth estimate, the average openings for social workers in all fields between 1976 and 1985 is projected to be about 25,000.<sup>11</sup>

**Supply.** Data on the number of persons graduating from programs each year are available from the Office of Education (OE), which compiles data on the number of graduates from BSW, MSW, and DSW (Ph.D.) programs.<sup>12</sup> The latest year for which OE figures are available is 1974-75. In that year, 10,351 bachelor's degrees (or certificates), 8,763 master's degrees, and 135 doctorates were awarded in social work.<sup>13</sup>

No data are available on the percentage of social work graduates at each academic level who seek jobs as social workers. Certainly, some BSW graduates go into MSW programs or find jobs in other fields. To examine relative changes in the job market for social workers over time, some assumptions must be made as to the proportion of graduates who enter the field—or try to. The figures following are not necessarily an accurate reflection of the actual annual supply of social workers, but they are useful in examining relative changes in the supply/demand ratio.

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growth in GNP and worker output; and assumptions regarding policy alternatives available to the Federal government.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Based on CPS annual averages: 1963 social worker employment was 116,000. This rate reflects the rapid expansion of social services in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

<sup>11</sup> *Occupational Projections and Training Data*, Forthcoming.

<sup>12</sup> *Earned Degrees Conferred* (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, published annually.) CSWE also publishes the number of graduates from accredited social work programs. These are generally consistent with OE projections.

<sup>13</sup> Based on unpublished projections of graduates by sub-field from U.S. Office of Education.

OE also projects the future number of social work graduates:

**Earned Social Work Degrees, by Level**  
(Projections)

	Bachelors	Masters	DSW, Ph.D.
1975-76	11,740	9,450	160
1976-77	13,240	10,030	170
1977-78	15,320	10,680	180
1978-79	16,890	11,100	190
1979-80	17,780	11,530	200
1980-81	18,580	11,920	220
1981-82	19,300	12,310	250
1982-83	19,420	12,580	270
1983-84	19,370	12,820	280
1984-85	19,170	12,870	300

If we assume that 50 percent of the BSW's, 90 percent of the MSW's, and 100 percent of the DSW's seek social work employment, the future supply of new graduates seeking jobs as social workers is as follows:<sup>14</sup>

**Social Work Graduates Entering Job Market**

1976—14,535	1981—20,238
1977—15,862	1982—20,979
1978—17,452	1983—21,302
1979—18,625	1984—21,503
1980—19,467	1985—21,468

**Summary**

Service providers and educators pointed to increasing competition for social work positions during the 1970's, as the hitherto-rapid growth in social services has slowed and the supply of trained social workers has grown. However, there are regional differences. The job market is reported to be tight in many urban areas, particularly in academically-oriented areas such as Boston, San Francisco, and New York. At the same time, many rural areas report difficulty in attracting qualified workers. Reports indicate that graduates from the limited number of social work programs with

<sup>14</sup> Assumed participation rates based on data from unpublished American Council on Education (ACE) survey.

**Outlook.** During the late 1960's many manpower experts could not foresee any time when the supply of social workers would meet the demand. At that time (1965-70) there were an average of 24,000 job openings per year, but an average of only 5,658 trained social workers entering the labor force (using the same procedures as those used above to calculate projected annual openings and new graduates entering the labor force). Thus the ratio of openings to new job seekers was about four to one. Using 1975-76 projected supply figures, about 14,500 trained social workers entered the job market in 1976. When this is compared to the estimate of annual job openings, the current ratio of openings to new social work graduates who are seeking employment is less than two to one.

This analysis might lead one to assume that, with over 10,000 more job openings each year than graduates entering the job market, the job market is still in an excess demand situation. This is not necessarily the case. The Census counts many persons as social workers who are in positions that do not really require either a four-year degree or training in social work, such as Collector-Salvation Army, Case Investigator, Home Visitor, and others. Thus, the large change in the job openings/new graduate ratio can be used to reflect only the relative tightening of the job market between the two periods.

The 1978-79 edition of the Occupational Outlook Handbook cites increasing competition for graduates with BSW's, and a continued good outlook for MSW's. It does, however, stress the fact that there are wide geographic differences in the job market for social workers.

aging concentrations have fared relatively well in the job market.

Employers in many areas report a shortage of persons who are well trained in the field of aging, and also stress the restrictions they face in hiring qualified applicants. These restrictions include hiring freezes, civil service regulations and low turnover among the less trained staff, as well as the general conditions of lower pay and poorer advancement opportunities in aging compared to the social work field in general. In addition, it is noted that even when social workers who are trained in aging take jobs in other settings, they bring to these settings a knowledge of, and concern for the needs of the elderly.

## Part III

### KEY ISSUES RELATED TO SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Education and training of social workers was repeatedly identified by experts in the field as a key employment issue. It is significant because of its impact on both the supply of social workers and the quality of social services. This section presents most of the important issues and policy recommendations related to the training of social workers for the field of aging.

Most social workers contacted during the research for this report felt that specific skills related to aging are secondary to the values and generic skills of social

work. For this reason, background information is included on developments in social work education in general, and aging-related education in particular. Following a discussion of the state of social work education at each academic level, information is presented on issues related to training social workers in the field of aging: financial aid, program objectives, minority participation, approaches to curriculum, structure of aging problems, priority funding areas, and alternatives to social work education.

#### Developments in Social Work College Education

**Master's Degree Programs.** The profession of social work has traditionally stressed graduate education as the only preparation for the practice of social work. It was not until the explosion of services in the mid and late 1960's that the profession acknowledged that manpower needs in the field could not be met by the limited supply of MSW's.<sup>15</sup> Thus, it is only within the last decade that workers without graduate training have become an accepted part of the service delivery system.

The role of the MSW has begun to change, as social workers at or below the bachelor's level have begun to perform many of the direct service duties formerly assumed by MSW's. Conference participants pointed out that after 2 years of working in the field, most graduate social workers were at least partially involved in supervision, and that the majority of social workers were in jobs that required more than one mode of practice, such as casework and supervision, supervision and administration, administration and planning, or community organization and casework. Some jobs, particularly in a small agency, might require almost all of these functions. Conference participants stressed the fact that graduate social work education must reflect this need for training in supervisory skills in addition to practice skills.

<sup>15</sup> Ruben Shindler, "The Community and Social Service Programs—A report of a National Survey", *Community and Social Service Education in the Community Colleges: Issues and Characteristics* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1972), p. 49.

In 1976, CSWE accredited 95 master's level social work programs; three additional programs were pending approval.<sup>16</sup> These schools graduated 8,824 students in 1974-75.<sup>17</sup> Of the 8,836 full-time, second year master's students in that year, only 209 were taking their field practicum specifically in the field of aging. (Many others were in settings where aging clients were part of their caseload—such as psychiatric, public health, and family services). According to the directory prepared by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE),<sup>18</sup> about 30 graduate schools of social work offer or are planning a concentration in aging. Many others offer at least one course that deals specifically with aging or courses with some aging content. The various schools provide different emphases in the areas of concentration of their aging program. These include direct services, community organization, policy and planning, and administration.

**Bachelor's Level Education.** Until quite recently persons with a bachelor's degree who provided social work services generally were not graduates of social work programs. The majority had majored in a related field such as sociology or psychology, but many others

<sup>16</sup> *Schools of Social Work with Accredited Master's Degrees Programs* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, July 1976).

<sup>17</sup> Sheehan, *Statistics*, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> Betsy M. Sprouse, ed. *National Directory of Educational Programs in Gerontology, First Edition, 1976* (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Administration on Aging, 1976), Publication No. 017-062-00105-7.

had majored in unrelated fields. As recently as 1966, only 1,900 persons graduated from BSW programs.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, in 1973-74 over 9,600 graduated from BSW programs.<sup>20</sup> The rapid rise in the number of bachelor's level social work programs has occurred largely as a reaction to the severe manpower shortages in social work in the late 1960's and early 1970's. In 1976, 173 BSW programs were accredited by the CSWE with another 13 in candidacy status.<sup>21</sup> Accreditation of BSW programs began in 1975 following recognition of the BSW as a "professional" degree.

The BSW program is seen by educators as preparing students for a wide range of direct service roles. The programs generally provide courses in social work practice skills and values, social welfare policy and service systems, human behavior and the social environment, research methods, and supervised field experience. Opportunities for BSW students to specialize in aging, however, are limited to elective courses and field placements.

A number of studies have shown that bachelor's level social workers can perform some direct service functions as well as MSW's.<sup>22</sup> In many areas, however, the BSW has not yet been incorporated into the service agencies. In some cases, this seems to be due to the lack of availability of BSW's. In others, however, social work administrators and supervisors who have been in the field for some time are not familiar with the skills that the BSW's possess. Conference participants felt that it was largely the responsibility of the educational institutions to educate employers about the skills and abilities of a BSW graduate. Employment of BSW's also is impeded by civil service regulations that often fail to recognize the merit of a BSW degree. This problem is discussed in the next section.

The AGHE directory lists 28 schools that offer or are planning a concentration in aging at the bachelor's level, usually consisting of an introductory course and a field placement in an aging setting. Other schools offer specific courses in aging or courses that incorporate aging content into existing courses.<sup>23</sup> A stu-

<sup>19</sup> *Earned Degrees Conferred, 1965-66* (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1968).

<sup>20</sup> *Earned Degrees Conferred, 1973-74* (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1976).

<sup>21</sup> *Colleges and Universities with Accredited Undergraduate and Graduate Social Work Programs* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, July 1976).

<sup>22</sup> Among these studies are the Midway Project, Catholic Social Services of Wayne County Study, and the U.S. Veterans Administration Study. These are described in the chapter entitled, "Manpower Research on the Utilization of Baccalaureate Social Workers: Implications for Education", in *Undergraduate Social Work Education for Practice: A Report on Curriculum Content and Issues*, Lester J. Glick, ed., (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972)

<sup>23</sup> Sprouse, *National Directory*, p. 1613.

dent may gain experience working with the aged through field experience in settings such as nursing homes and senior centers.

One of the most significant developments in social work education in some time is a project currently being undertaken by the National Institute of Mental Health with the help of CSWE. The goal of this project is to identify a "core curriculum" for social work programs at the bachelor's level.

If this core curriculum policy is enacted, a BSW program will have to provide a minimum number of prescribed courses to be accredited by CSWE. The prescribed courses will insure that all social work students receive a good general background in the areas of social work values, practice skills, the social service system, and human development. Graduate schools will then be able to require that entrants have taken this core curriculum. Traditionally, many graduate students have undergraduate majors in fields other than social work. These students need to take many of the same basic courses as social work students now take at the undergraduate level. The requirement that all MSW program entrants have already completed certain courses would allow much more time for students to specialize at the graduate level. (In some MSW programs, BSW graduates are either exempted from certain courses, thus enabling them to take more electives, or are given advanced standing and are able to complete the program in less than the usual 2 years).

This core curriculum development could have a great impact on the field of aging. One of the main arguments against many specialized courses has been that a large amount of generic information needs to be learned in the 2 years and that specialized study would take away from other courses. While all students have the opportunity to take some electives, courses on social work with the aging have rarely been offered. The core curriculum developments would help to change this situation by allowing more time for specialized study.

**Community and Junior College Programs.** The 2-year college programs in the field of social services for the elderly have received less attention than the bachelor's and master's programs. While CSWE does not accredit 2-year programs, they have supported some research in the field, and a few other individuals and organizations have provided further insight into these programs.

A description of a typical Associate of Arts (AA) program reads remarkably like that of a bachelor's program. Brawley,<sup>24</sup> in a report published by CSWE,

<sup>24</sup> Edward A. Brawley, "Themes, Issues, and Directions in Associate Degree Programs in the Community and Social Services", *Community and Social Service Education in the Community College: Issues and Characteristics* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1972) pp. 19-29.

describes the goal of the 2-year social service programs as training generalists, primarily for direct service positions. He also states that these schools have largely adopted a generic approach to education. Because services such as child care, social service, mental health, and recreation have many common elements, a curriculum can be developed that teaches "the most fundamental principles underlying practice in the helping services."

Brawley's description of the courses in AA programs is similar to that of BSW programs. Included are courses in human behavior, social welfare systems, values and attitudes, specific skills, and field experience. The similarities between the 2- and 4-year programs go beyond goals and course content. In practice, AA graduates perform many of the same job functions as BSW's, and more commonly, BA's. Their respective use is a function of local regulations, the availability of different levels of personnel, the financial condition of the agency, and the attitude of the hiring authority towards the skills of each level of worker. (In the same way, BSW's often are used in positions similar to those held by MSW's, particularly in direct service functions).

Some welfare agencies have viewed the AA worker as a technician, performing such tasks as intake interviews, case investigation, or application processing. In practice, a worker requires skills, knowledge, and particularly values that are not consistent with the concept of the technician as a "neutral" person—that is, providing a specific service without the need to make judgments based on value decisions. Even in performing a simple task, the successful worker must be an "advocate" for the client and not merely a processor of people.<sup>25</sup>

Proponents of the 2-year program stress that these programs are particularly important in the field of social services because they provide educational opportunities for so many people who otherwise would not have a chance to attend college. Most important is the role of the 2-year college in attracting first generation college students of working class families and ethnic minorities.

Shindler reports the results of a 1971 survey of these programs.<sup>26</sup> Of the students enrolled in 144 community and social service programs in October 1970, 65.8% were white, 29.3% black, 2.5% Chicano, 1% American Indian, and 1.5% other ethnic minorities. Training minority students is particularly significant to the fields of social work and aging, since minority groups tend to have higher incidences of illness, poverty, unemployment, and poor education than the population as a whole.

<sup>25</sup> Edward A. Brawley, *The New Human Service Worker—Community College Education and the Social Service* (New York: Praeger publishers, 1975) p. 59-61.

<sup>26</sup> Shindler, "The Community," p. 60

Two-year programs were developed for much the same reason that BSW programs were. Their graduates were, too, seen largely as a stop-gap measure during a supply shortage. Both types of programs have demonstrated that their graduates can help provide better and more cost effective services. However, some agencies faced with severe financial constraints have taken advantage of the supply of AA graduates in the human services to fill jobs that actually require more training. These workers often are paid less than professional social workers. This is particularly true of aging services since they often are among the most poorly financed. Most universal and strict State licensure laws could help eliminate some abuses in this area.

The CSWE has conducted research on social work with the aging.<sup>27</sup> A summary report completed in 1975 outlines the organizational structure of academic programs in social work and aging and discusses course content. The CSWE report was helpful in preparing several of the following sections. Any person or organization involved in planning for educational programs in social work with the aging should draw on CSWE resources.

**Organizational Structure and Objectives.** Different schools have approached social work and aging in quite different ways, and the results provide a number of training models. Among these are:

- (1) Aging specialization within a social work program. This model allows students to take their field placements in an aging-related setting, and to take a limited number of courses about social work with the aging. The aging specialization may be in a student's field of interest: planning, administration, or direct service. A certificate may be awarded to indicate that the student has fulfilled some minimum requirements in aging as well as the requirements for the social work degree.
- (2) Aging specialization at a gerontology center or institute coupled with a social work program. The university gerontology center allows students in social work and other disciplines to acquire specialized knowledge in aging. Coordination between the social work department and the gerontology center helps to insure that the course materials in aging are relevant to the goals of the social work program. This model allows for considerable interdisciplinary learning. Degrees are awarded by the student's major discipline rather than the gerontology center.
- (3) A school of gerontology within a university gerontology center. Students are awarded a degree

<sup>27</sup> Nancy Coleman, *Council on Social Work Education Project on Alternative Models for Social Work with the Aging: A Summary Report* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1975) unpublished.



in gerontology and may take courses in a number of disciplines. Courses may be taught by the faculty of the gerontology school or by other university faculty. This model offers the greatest opportunities for interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary education. It offers less course material on social services or social work than is available in a school of social work.

- (4) Incorporation of aging content. In this model, aging content is incorporated into social work courses such as practice methods, human behavior, and social service systems. No degree or certificate is awarded, although students are able to specialize in aging through field placements.
- (5) Integration of gerontology through non-course methods. Some social work programs rely on seminars and lectures on issues in aging to provide students with an opportunity to integrate gerontology into their social work training.

Conference participants expressed some preferences about training models. Since many participants are identified with specific programs in social work and gerontology, impartiality is not assumed. In general, participants favored social work degree programs that impart specific knowledge of gerontology. It was felt that academic programs should be flexible enough to permit social work students to take courses at a gerontology center or within another discipline. At the same time, participants noted that graduate programs often do not allow students much opportunity for this. There was some disagreement as to whether social work programs should be modified to allow students with an aging specialization to substitute a limited number of aging courses from other disciplines for social work courses. All of the participants considered it important to incorporate material on aging into the program as a whole, and to limit the number of specialized courses in aging.

While experiments with the degree programs in gerontology were not discouraged, both educators and a number of practitioners felt that the incorporation of gerontology content into a gerontology program was better for social work practice than the incorporation of social work content into a gerontology program. Of course, educators in gerontology degree programs do not claim to be training social workers.

**Curriculum Issues.** A great deal of information is available on the skills that social workers need to serve the aging and on educational models to teach these skills. While it is not possible to deal with curriculum issues in detail in this report, a few of the major issues are noted below.

Students' feelings about the aging process and about older people are more important than specific social work skills, according to conference participants. Both educators and service providers felt that students must be educated about the process of aging to help

break down common stereotypes. Participants suggested that AoA evaluate the programs it funds to ensure that the values related to work with the aging are given sufficient priority.

MSW graduates perform a critical role. Because most MSW graduates with a specialty in aging assume some supervisory responsibility within a few years of graduation, the MSW curriculum should cover supervision and training methods. Moreover, such courses should take into account the very limited knowledge, on the part of most practitioners, of social work methods in the field of aging. While social work students often are reluctant to take courses on supervision and administration, such training provides skills that MSW graduates especially are likely to need.

The amount of course material that students should have as preparation for work with the elderly is considerable. Much of the literature listing this content is many pages long.<sup>28</sup> The choice of what to include is important since all schools are limited in the amount of aging material they can provide their students. Conference participants felt that the teaching of very narrow job or task-specific skills should be avoided at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Most educators feel these skills are more effectively taught on the job, although they often are introduced through the students' field placements. A general knowledge about the needs of the elderly population will make the graduate more flexible in a job market that responds to rapidly changing services for the elderly.

Some conference participants suggested that since the goals of each educational program are somewhat different, the goals of the aging specialization program should be made explicit, and a composite of this information from all schools offering aging programs should be available to prospective students. CSWE could coordinate this activity. Programs should be evaluated by AoA based on their relevance to the needs of the elderly in the area to be serviced.

**Training models.** Experts in the field, particularly practitioners, feel that the perspective of the course material is quite important. For instance, a medically oriented approach may discount the psychological or social aspects of aging and may tend to ignore the needs of many of the well elderly for social relationships, group experiences, etc. On the other hand, medical information cannot be passed over when teaching about a population whose health problems are considerable. AoA should examine the perspectives of those who evaluate IV-A funding proposals to determine whether they represent a wide range of approaches to training.

Also, a knowledge of newly developed training

<sup>28</sup> Among the most complete listings is that found in the summary report of the CSWE project on Alternative Educational Models for Social Work with the Aging (unpublished).

models is lacking among many educators. NASW or CSWE may be helpful in compiling information on training models, or coordinating the funding of the development of new training models.

In summary, conference participants and others in the field generally felt that a program should have a reasonable mix of courses in social work with the aging and incorporation of aging content into the general social work curriculum. The training model used to present aging content must present a view of the aged as a very diverse group—containing many people who need little help from the social service system, and others, such as the impaired and low income elderly, who may need considerable support. The curriculum should also provide information on the special needs of the minority aged, a group facing special problems of poverty, poor housing, nutrition, and illness.

**Financial Aid.** It is important to train students from diverse backgrounds to work with those elderly persons who have the greatest need for services. Schools of social work have committed themselves to actively recruiting and supporting minority students. The statistics are impressive. In 1975, of the 16,676 full-time master's students, 6,784, or 41 percent, were receiving financial grants. The percentage of minority students receiving grants was much higher than average—Blacks, 75 percent; Chicanos, 78 percent; Puerto Ricans, 65 percent; Asian Americans, 54 percent; and American Indians, 82 percent. Of the 7,528 grants awarded,<sup>29</sup> 2,719 were from Federal agencies (excluding VA), 1,398 from State and local sources, 559 from veterans benefits, 695 from voluntary funds, and 2,133 from the school or university.<sup>30</sup>

Conference participants felt that student financial aid was critical to the success of any training program. Financial aid not only allows for the inclusion of students who otherwise might be unable to attend college, but it also has a multiplier effect. One conference participant noted that students on stipend, together with other interested students and faculty, exert pressure for greater incorporation of aging content in the curriculum. Students with aging-related field placements bring questions to their theory courses from which all students can benefit. Also noted were the impressive accomplishments of students who have received financial aid. Many have become committed to social work with the aging and are employed in responsible positions where they are helping to improve services.

Among suggestions regarding financial aid were these:

- If financial aid funding remains close to the present level, a plan might be instituted whereby students with career plans in aging would receive

<sup>29</sup> Some students received multiple grants.

<sup>30</sup> Sheehan, *Statistics*, p. 44-47.

loans to be paid back through work in the field or financial reimbursement. These students would make a commitment to take certain courses and aging-related field placements. This plan would require the coordination of the recruitment, admissions, education, employment, and continuing education functions.

- A grant must be supplemented by services that will help the student cope with the competitive academic environment. Unless the student is able to complete the program and receive a degree, not only has the grant money been a poor investment, but the student will have been subjected to a frustrating and expensive experience. Thus, the college and the social work department should have a program, outside of the purely academic, that helps the student succeed.
- Minority participation also should be encouraged at the graduate level because minority social workers are needed not only to staff service programs, but to plan and administer these services. Social work programs at the graduate level are competing for qualified minority students with other disciplines, such as business administration and law. The availability of financial aid is essential if schools of social work are to succeed in attracting minority students.
- Grants to social work doctoral students in the field of aging should be comparable to those available to doctoral students in other social work fields. This money should be available for students to study in a university with an established aging sequence, and to underwrite the cost of dissertations that focus on aging topics. Conference participants felt that the school rather than a Federal agency should award these funds to qualified students. Training doctoral students who are interested in aging is one of the ways to insure that aging content is incorporated into the curriculums of schools of social work. Funds could be made available for doctoral students or recent doctoral graduates to develop aging sequences in associate degree or bachelor's degree programs. This would require that the school make a commitment to absorb the costs of the program beyond the development period, including the cost of qualified faculty members.
- Information on career opportunities in the field of aging should be made available to social work students who are receiving financial support from agencies other than AoA, such as NIMH or VA.

**Alternatives to Social Work Education.** The Administration on Aging must weigh the benefit of funding a social work program rather than a program offered by another discipline. Schools of gerontology, urban (or regional) planning, and public administration are three alternatives to social work training, each training persons for vastly different roles. A brief dis-

cussion of gerontology programs was presented in the section on organizational structures of training programs.

**Planning.** The field of planning has changed significantly from its roots in physical planning for transportation, water management, and urban renewal. As the social service system has grown in size, a greater emphasis has been placed on the planning of these services. Many schools of planning have incorporated some social service content into their programs.

In contrast to a general planning curriculum, the program within a school of social work has social planning as its primary area of concern. Social work graduates are hired in an increasing number of social service planning agencies such as city, county, or State departments of human resources or social services. They also are hired by agencies where social planning may still be secondary to physical planning, such as a Council of Governments (COG) or a transportation department. The State and area agencies on aging have made considerable use of planners from both schools of social work and schools of planning.

Persons in the social work profession did not seem to feel that social work was the only type of training for the social planner. Rather, they felt that the common interests of the two planning disciplines were such that they could complement each other. In some schools, students from each discipline take courses from the other.

The social planning sequence must emphasize the impact of social policy at the most specific levels—the individual, family, and community—for the needs of the aged to be served. This is the typical perspective of the social work planning program. AoA should evaluate how this information will be presented before funding schools in the area of social planning for the aged.

**Administration.** Many people feel that a social work background is important for the administration of a program whose primary function is delivery of social services to the elderly. However, the relative merits of training in administration or in social work are less obvious in positions that do not involve direct service delivery. In agencies on aging, for example, some directors have formal training in social work; others are trained in administration. Directors seem to feel that each discipline offers distinct advantages.

If AoA views the training of administrators as a priority area, they should carefully evaluate how each program under consideration treats course material in administration and social services. The results of this evaluation then could be compared to AoA's more impartial concept of the skills and training needed to administer agencies that plan and provide social services, rather than to totally exclude either type of program from funding.

**The Federal Role in Social Work Education.** Some suggestions regarding AoA's role in social work education are presented below. Other sections of this report present recommendations in specific areas, namely, financial aid to students, curriculum issues, and regulation of social work practice. These suggestions focus on types of programs AoA might choose to fund. Like other recommendations in this report, these reflect the opinions of experts in the social service field; they do not constitute policy recommendations by BLS.

- No long-term policy decisions should be made until the impact of the "core curriculum" project now underway is evaluated. (See a discussion of this project earlier in this section). Adoption of new curriculum requirements at the undergraduate and graduate levels might affect the nature of the programs AoA may choose to fund. For instance, AoA may wish to place greater emphasis on certain specific issues—such as social work in nursing homes or in protective services for the aging—than they can under the present structure. Together, CSWE and AoA should be able to assess the impact and timing of any forthcoming changes, and how they might influence AoA funding.
- Priority areas of funding suggested by experts in the field centered around graduate education, particularly within the framework of the MSW as a supervisor and trainer of AA's, BA's, BSW's, and others. It was felt that the multiplier effects of an investment in graduate education were considerable. At the Ph.D. level, fellowships could be given to doctoral students to develop curriculums and to teach at the community college and undergraduate levels. Some commitment from the college would be needed to insure that the program is continued beyond the initial phase.
- AoA policy of making investments in selected undergraduate programs was supported by most educators. The graduates of these programs become both direct service providers and MSW students with a commitment to aging. Schools with joint undergraduate/graduate programs might provide a good opportunity to experiment with models on a continuum from the BSW to MSW levels.
- Another important reason for the support of undergraduate institutions is their greater accessibility to low income and minority students. Educators generally supported current AoA funding for a number of programs in minority colleges, but they felt that additional support is needed to encourage blacks and other minority students to continue on to MSW programs.
- It was recognized that gerontology degree programs have a legitimate place in the educational system because their graduates often fill positions that are not considered the domain of the "estab-

lished" professions. This training, however, should not be seen as a substitute for social work training. While the training of gerontologists should be continued, most people felt that training persons within an established social work program would be more appropriate for social service positions. Policies should be followed to allow for maximum interdisciplinary cooperation without infringing on a department's autonomy.

- Funding for colleges should be at least three years in duration. Important considerations in choosing among funding requests are the background and training of faculty members, faculty position and tenure, plans for continued funding beyond the grant period availability of relevant field place-

ments, goals of the program, and curriculum model.

- Several participants were disturbed at the lack of coordination between AoA and CSWE in developing an overall strategy for social work education in aging. They suggested that AoA provide funds to enable CSWE
  - (1) to participate in formulating guidelines for AoA funding policy;
  - (2) to provide funds to schools of social work to develop new programs along specific models and to improve existing programs;
  - (3) to hire consultants to assist schools of social work in incorporating aging content during curriculum review periods; and
  - (4) to disseminate information on program organization and curriculum models.

### Short-term Training and Continuing Education

The following suggestions by conference participants relate to the role of AoA in short-term training.

- One of the greatest concerns in this area has to do with poor coordination and planning. Because planning is so poor, much short-term training is provided by persons who are far removed from the actual field of practice. Cooperation is needed among agencies on aging, service providers, and educators to provide adequate training for the staff of the thousands of programs, many small, that plan, administer and provide social services to the elderly.

Most persons felt that coordinated planning must begin at the State level. A few States, including California and Florida, have made considerable progress toward a well-planned coordination of training programs. Information on successful training models should be disseminated by AoA on a nationwide basis.
- The shifts in service priority areas by AoA have been a barrier to effective training. This problem was cited at both conferences on human resource issues in aging conducted by BLS in 1976 and 1977; one on social work and the other on agencies on aging. Participants in the agencies on aging conference felt that at least 3 years are needed to plan and provide training for workers in a given priority area.
- Both educators and service providers indicated that, given the limited amount of training funds available, money spent on training supervisory level workers would have the greatest multiplier effect. In the work setting, skilled supervisors could impart knowledge of aging to their subordinates.

Where money is available to train direct service providers, training should be more concerned with social work skills and values than with spe-

cific aging-related material. Administrators and supervisors felt that they were better able to teach workers the special needs of the elderly in-service than to teach basic social work skills.

- Persons familiar with the NASW-coordinated training of nursing home social service staff felt that it was a successful program, and that similar programs might be developed. The professional associations, including NASW, CSWE, and minority associations such as the National Association of Black Social Workers and the Association of American Indian Social Workers, could be quite helpful in other short-term training functions. CSWE is currently in the final year of a 3-year project funded by The National Institute of Mental Health. The project, called Continuing Education Models in Community Mental Health, tests several training models for mental health workers in selected communities and States. Test sites were chosen to include areas with varied characteristics—rural, urban, ethnic, lower and middle class. It was suggested that a combined NASW/CSWE project could test training models for social workers in aging and disseminate information about alternative models of training.
- NSAW or CSWE could set up training programs around the country for faculty who are interested in the field of aging. The associations could coordinate the activities of this training. In this way, faculty members in schools that have not been involved in the field of aging might advocate that aging content be included in their curriculums. Also, in schools that do have some aging-related program, faculty not currently involved in the program may gain an interest in the field of aging.
- Many educators felt that the inclusion of contin-

uing education opportunities should be an integral part of AoA grants to college programs. Although schools have been able to include this element in

their grant proposals, these educators felt that continuing education should receive greater emphasis in the AoA guidelines.

### Regulation of Social Work Practice

Possibly the most important issue related to the job market for social workers is the regulation of practice—that is, the determination of who can practice social work. The majority of people who call themselves social workers do not have professional social work training. Yet in many States, these persons are allowed to perform any of the functions required of a social worker. While in some areas the qualifications for social work positions are being redefined to insure better-trained personnel, in other areas the qualifications are being broadened, making more people than ever eligible for social work positions. Of course, the degree of strictness of employment qualifications directly affects the pool of potential social workers and thus, the overall social work job market.

The regulation of social worker practice is examined in this section, especially civil service policy, licensure and regulation laws, and Federal government regulation. Regulation of the field of social work in general is applicable to the subfield of social work with the aging.

**Civil Service** NASW conducted a survey of all State merit system departments in 1975-76 to determine the minimum hiring requirements for social work and social service positions.<sup>31</sup> (State and local government agency hiring practices are guided by standards for Merit Systems of State Personnel Administration, established by the U.S. Civil Service Commission.) The NASW survey summarized information for three levels of practice: worker, supervisor, and administrator.

**The Worker Level.** All States had a general social work or social service position. Thirty-three of 51 States required graduation from college, 6 required the BSW, and 12 required the MSW. These data reveal that the BSW has not been recognized by State Merit Systems as being important for the delivery of social work services. In fact, many social work educators and practitioners complain that the civil service test for social work positions do not require social work knowledge. Thus, the BSW graduate has no real advantage over persons with any other BA degree.

While some States are raising their standards to recognize the BSW, still others are lowering them. This is largely due to the anticipated pressure from lawsuits brought under the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. This issue is discussed later in this section.

<sup>31</sup> Beth Gilbert, *An Analysis of Hiring Requirements for Social Service Classification in State Merit Systems* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers, 1975), mimeograph.

**The Supervisory Level.** All States had a general social work or social service supervisor position. Of the 51 jurisdictions, 20 required only a BA degree; 15 had some positions requiring a BA and some requiring an MSW; 14 had an MSW requirement; and 2 required any master's degree. Of the 15 States that listed psychiatric or clinical supervisor positions, all but two required the MSW, indicating that these positions are thought to require more training and skill. The majority of States allow persons with no formal social work training to supervise and train other social workers.

**The Administrative Levels.** Program manager, welfare administrator, and social service director are examples of job titles under the administration category. Of all the administrative titles reported by the 29 States represented, 113 required the BA degree, 17 required a master's degree in any field, and 56 required the MSW. Only four States recognized the BSW for administrative positions. In these cases, the BSW is usually treated as the equivalent of a BA with 1 year of experience, just as the MSW is often treated as the equivalent of a BA with 2 years' experience.

**Trends in State Revisions of Social Work Positions.** The NASW survey first was sent to the States in the Spring of 1975 and the results were updated with a second mailing in January, 1976. Any changes could be indicated at that time. Among the changes during that period was an increase in the number of States that recognize the BSW for some positions, from 16 States to 20 States. On the other hand, there seems to be a trend to change the requirement for a MSW degree to a master's in any social or behavioral science, and to broaden job qualifications at the bachelor's level.

Another trend is the increased substitution of experience for professional training. The manpower shortage of the 1960's was just cause for having more flexible requirements. This justification is no longer valid in most areas, as the supply of BSW's and MSW's has increased considerably and the demand for social workers has slowed. With the current manpower situation, job qualifications at each level of practice could more accurately reflect the training necessary to provide the best possible service.

Much of the rewriting of educational requirements is an attempt to comply with regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. These changes could have a detrimental effect on the field of social work. All accredited social work schools already have an affirmative action program. In 1975, ethnic minority

students made up about 20 percent of all graduate social work students and 28 percent of all undergraduate students.<sup>32</sup> In all disciplines, only 16 percent of the full-time undergraduate students and 10 percent of the graduate students are ethnic minorities.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, State Civil Service Systems should consider these unique factors in social work education before lowering training requirements. Administrators feel strongly that the rights of the client population for competent service by trained workers must be given a high priority.

**Licensing and Registration Laws.** Self-regulation is the most attractive policy for regulation of practice within the social work profession. Other professions are largely self-regulated. Lawyers and nurses, for example, generally are exempted from State or local civil service tests because their license to practice is thought to insure some minimum standards of training and knowledge. Social workers generally feel that their profession can be similarly self-regulated.

As of early 1977, 20 States had some type of licensing or registration laws for social workers.<sup>34</sup> Seventeen of these have been enacted since 1965. Half of the laws are registration laws. Briefly, these limit the use of certain titles to persons certified by a State agency as having met all the requirements for certification. These requirements are based on levels of education and experience.

Licensure laws forbid the practice of social work by anyone who is not licensed by the State. Thus, it would be illegal to perform certain specified functions without being certified by the State agency. Most registration and licensure laws require the applicant to pass a written or oral examination approved by the State agency. Some State registration laws have a wider range of coverage than others. The Michigan law, for example, excludes only the title "school social worker" from compliance. The qualifications of these persons are set by the State Department of Education. All other persons using the titles "social work technician", "social worker", or "certified social worker" must be certified by the State Department of Licensing and Regulation.

NASW, in its guidelines for the regulation of practice, recommends that legislation include the following items:<sup>35</sup>

1. Regulation shall be directed to the licensure of practice, rather than simple protection of certain titles.

<sup>32</sup> Sheehan, *Statistics*, pp. 18, 26-28.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Joan Brackett, Office for Civil Rights, DHEW.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Myles Johnson, Staff Associate, NASW.

<sup>35</sup> *Policy Statement on the Legal Regulations of Social Work Practice* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers, June 1964), mimeograph.

2. Regulation shall recognize all levels of practice in the provision of social work and social services that use or are based on the discipline and knowledge of the profession of social work.
3. Regulation shall establish criteria for practice of social work on an autonomous or independent basis and on private practice or fee for service basis.
4. Legislation for the licensure of social work shall require that each level of practice, including that of independent practice, have a valid means of objectively assessing the qualifications, knowledge, and competencies of applicants for licensure, in addition to requirements for specific educational attainment.
5. Regulatory legislation shall require periodic renewal of the license and a requirement for some form of continuing education for those licensed.
6. Legislation regulating social work shall provide that client-worker communication will be considered confidential, subject to the permission of the client.

Supporters of licensure laws have been faced with two major problems. First, the practice of social work, particularly by persons with a range of education and training, is not easy to define. Second, the initial reaction to proposed legislation is often that minorities will be excluded from practice due to the educational requirements.

NASW has attempted to separate categories of social workers by level of training and then define the appropriate function for each level.<sup>36</sup> The categories are: social service aide, social service technician, social worker, graduate social worker, certified social worker, and social work fellow. This policy has received considerable criticism for several reasons. First, it is argued that the wording does not really separate two levels of worker. For instance, a "certified social worker" is responsible for a "wide range of independent social work activities requiring individual accountability", while the "social work fellow" is capable of these same duties.<sup>37</sup>

Another criticism of these standards is that they assume increasing competencies with increasing education. This criticism does not discount the idea that people without certain training should not be performing more difficult tasks. Rather, it emphasizes that a strict hierarchical structure based on educational attainment is not the only way to deliver services.

The second argument against licensure is that these laws would exclude minority participation from the practice of social work. The counter to this charge has

<sup>36</sup> *Standards for Social Service Manpower* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers, 1973).

<sup>37</sup> Thomas L. Briggs, "A Critique of the NASW Manpower Statement," *Journal of Education for Social Work* (Winter, 1975) pp. 9-14.

been twofold. As recognition of the fact that many social workers do not have the required education, "grandfather clauses" have been included in most laws that allow the registration or licensure of current practitioners.<sup>38</sup> Also, as mentioned earlier in this section, schools of social work have instituted affirmative action programs; about 20 percent of all graduate social work students in 1975 were members of ethnic minority groups.<sup>39</sup>

Federal guidelines represent another option for the regulation of social work practice. Service providers generally felt that this action, although not an ideal solution, would be necessary to insure that clients receive quality service. Recommendations generally center around minimum qualifications for workers in Federally supported programs such as Title XX of the Social Security Act, services to SSI recipients, and Medicaid and Medicare (specifically related to nursing home services). The vast majority of conference participants and others contacted in research for this report, however, favored Federal intervention only as a last resort. Most prefer professional regulation of social workers at the State level.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Myles Johnson, Staff Associate, NASW.

<sup>39</sup> Sheehan, *Statistics*, pp. 26-28.

Although each State has had to deal with many problems in considering any regulatory legislation, licensure laws seem to many to be the best option available. The alternatives—Civil Service regulation, no regulation, and Federal regulation—are not popular. Licensure laws would help insure that workers hired by each agency meet some minimum education and knowledge requirements.

Persons involved in the research for this report generally felt that AoA should support individual State efforts to insure some standard of quality from social workers who serve the aging. AoA could urge State and area agencies to support local social work organizations in their attempts to have licensure laws enacted. NASW could cooperate with AoA in this endeavor by providing information on the status of legislation in each State, and the names of the social work organizations involved.

More restrictive qualifications for social work employment would greatly affect the supply and demand conditions for social workers. Obviously, the narrower the qualifications, the smaller the supply of persons who meet those qualifications. Thus, restrictions cannot be so tight that they create a supply shortage. On the other hand, the clients' need for quality social services requires that social workers demonstrate competency in their job.

## Part IV

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND IMPLICATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL SERVICE MODELS

In the previous two sections, factors that affect the job market for social workers in aging were discussed. Particular emphasis was placed on supply, centering on the issues of social work education and the regulation of social work practice. The most critical factor that would influence the demand side is future growth in services for the aging. Several models for future social services to the elderly have been developed. Two important ones are presented in this section, with an emphasis on how these models could affect the demand for social workers in aging.

**FCOA National Policy for the Frail Elderly**<sup>40</sup> The Federal Council on the Aging (FCOA) has prepared a model for providing services to the "frail" elderly. Briefly, the legislation on which this program is based would entitle all persons over age 75 to a package of services. Among these services would be an assessment of an individual's social and health needs. A "senior counselor" would perform the assessment and then work with the individual and his or her family or friends to implement a treatment plan on a continuing, long-term basis. This corps of counselors would be an integral part of the Social Security Administration. When no person is available in an individual's life to assist in simple, daily living, the program would provide the assurance of a "significant other" to help with day-to-day needs. Several factors help justify this type of program.

- (1) Demographic and health data identify the over 75 population as having the greatest need for long-term intervention.
- (2) A pre-determined eligibility age for services is not without precedent. The Social Security program uses a similar policy.
- (3) The Social Security (old age benefits), Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, and Food Stamp programs are all essentially *income* programs. For many of the frail elderly, these programs should be supplemented by a variety of

services and help in effectively using these services.

- (4) Long-term services for the elderly are, for the most part, limited to care in nursing homes. While this care is needed for some elderly persons, others could remain in their homes if sufficient home services were provided. Some Federal money has been used at the local level to establish alternatives to institutionalization. However, these services are usually insufficient in any one locality to provide a realistic long-term alternative. Also, services are quite inconsistent from one area to another.
- (5) Present programs are geared toward the low-income elderly although, in many cases, factors other than income are critical in dealing with the frail elderly's problems.

Future implementation of this type of program could have a tremendous impact on the field of social work. First, the demand for health, recreation, counseling, and other services provided by social workers would increase significantly. Of equal importance would be the opportunities established for people with social work training to be employed as senior counselors. The FCOA report cites social work training as being probably the most appropriate for this job. Given a proposed average caseload of 100 persons per worker, and a projected 75+ population in 1980 of 4.1 million, the impact on the demand for social workers in the field of aging is obviously great. Educational institutions would need to adapt their curriculums to prepare students for this role.

**Morris, Anderson: Model for Personal Care Services**<sup>41</sup> Robert Morris of Brandeis University and Delvin Anderson of the U.S. Veterans Administration present another interesting model for the delivery of social services to the elderly. The authors estimate

<sup>40</sup> FCOA Report on National Policy for the Frail Elderly (Federal Council on the Aging, 1976, Washington, D.C.) draft copy.

<sup>41</sup> The model presented here is based on an article by Morris and Anderson, "Personal Care Service: An Identity for Social Work," *Social Service Review*, June 1975.



that the number of persons in need of some type of regular, long-term caretaking service is as high as 10 percent of the population. At present, these caretaking services are provided by a wide range of professions, with all sharing both the responsibility for providing services and the accountability for their quality.

Persons with training from the high school level to the Ph.D. are identified as social workers and provide tremendous range of services. Yet only in the fields of child welfare, and to some extent, family services have social workers actually been responsible for managing and setting policy for a major social service system. The profession has had little real responsibility even in areas such as social security or public assistance, with which social work would seem to have a natural connection.

Thus, a group of services for which the social work profession could be responsible has never been clearly established. The authors of this model consider the social needs related to health issues (physical and mental) as an opportunity to give the profession an identity. Responsibilities would center around the need for long-term services for chronically ill patients, such as for homemaker services; home health services; day care for children and the mentally and physically ill; services for the elderly, physically handicapped, and the injured; services in mental hospitals and halfway houses; and protective services for children and the elderly.

Social work would have to modify its present focus to assume these responsibilities. While the profession now stresses the effect of psychological and social processes on the individual, it would have to include in its focus the need for simple day-to-day caretaking services.

The actual application of this model would involve the consolidation of a range of existing services—a procedure used by the British in the early 1970's. In the British model, social workers plan, manage, and staff these coordinating agencies. Persons from diverse backgrounds are employed to provide direct services. Each agency is responsible for a range of caretaking functions within a geographic area.

It should be kept in mind that the idea of consolidating service agencies is not unique to Great Britain. With the growing number of planning and service networks related to aging services, children's services, and health services, the need for a more simplified system has been cited in this country as well. In fact, the authors cite experiments in the U.S. with the con-

solidation of services in comprehensive geriatric centers and human resource multipurpose centers.

Implementation of comprehensive programs would increase the demand for social workers with skills in management, planning, and direct services, and for those with an orientation toward the caretaking functions. Social workers with an understanding of the needs of the elderly would be required because the aged make up such a large portion of those requiring day-to-day services.

The previous two examples presented models of different service systems that, if implemented, would have a significant impact on the field of social work with the aging. Expansion of existing programs also would have an impact on the field. Protective services for older adults is an example of a traditional social service field that could be greatly expanded. Protective services for children is an integral part of our social service system, dealing with child abuse and neglect, guardianship, foster care and adoption. Some elderly persons are unable to manage their daily lives, and have no one to turn to for help. They are often in need of intervention in such areas as nutrition, health, legal aid, foster care, counseling or institutionalization. Even with this tremendous need by such a helpless segment of society, few resources are available to provide protective casework for older persons. Some private agencies, such as the Benjamin Rose Institute in Cleveland, have provided protective service casework for some time.<sup>42</sup>

In the public sector, a 2-year program for protective casework was started in the District of Columbia in 1969, funded by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. It was continued with local funding beyond the project completion. The project used the team approach—including MSW supervisors, bachelor level caseworkers, case aides, and professional consultants. This project demonstrated the enormous demand for protective services, the success of the team approach, and the positive impact of this service on the lives of several hundred clients.

As more and more elderly persons need protective service intervention, their plight will become more visible. This is one of a number of services that are currently available only in scattered communities. Local or even Federal legislation may encourage the expansion of these services, which would require trained social workers to provide them.

<sup>42</sup> Edna Wasser, *Protective Casework with Older Persons* (Cleveland: Benjamin Rose Institute, 1974).