

**FinalDRAFT**  
Revised 4/19/ 2004

**DRAFT**

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #1**

*Public Health Social Work uses social epidemiology principles to assess and monitor social problems affecting the health status and social functioning of at-risk populations within the context of family, community, and culture.*

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 1.1 PHSW assesses and monitors social problems affecting the health status and social functioning of at-risk populations within family, community, and culture contexts.
- 1.2 PHSW tracks health status and social functioning of the general population to monitor the progress of the at-risk population over time for:
  - \* Individuals and families at the direct-practice level
  - \* Community programs and policy development.
- 1.3 PHSW assures that assessment and monitoring tools are based on social epidemiology principles.
- 1.4 PHSW assures that assessment and monitoring tools are developed through an interdisciplinary collaborative process with input from intra/interagency, community partners/consumers, and diverse populations.
- 1.5 PHSW assures that assessment and monitoring tools are relevant to the full continuum of physical and social well-being through all stages of the life cycle.
- 1.6 PHSW develops guidelines for sharing health status and social functioning data with community partners to facilitate optimal individual and societal well-being.

**DRAFT**

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #2

*Public Health Social Work uses social epidemiology principles to identify and assess the factors associated with resiliency, strengths, and assets that promote optimal health.*

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 2.1 PHSW promotes an assets-based model for assessing physical and emotional health at the individual, family, and community levels.
- 2.2 PHSW seeks to identify factors which promote individual, family and community resiliency. These factors are culturally based and supported by a broad range of community partners.
- 2.3 PHSW identifies protective factors for individuals, families, and communities.
- 2.4 PHSW develops creative tools to measure strengths and/or assets that promote and protect the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities.
- 2.5 PHSW identifies and assesses factors that help individuals, families, and communities to change behaviors and environmental risk factors that trigger disease.
- 2.6 PHSW identifies factors that reduce the intensity of crises and enhance adaptation.

**DRAFT**

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #3**

*Public Health Social Work uses social epidemiology principles to identify and assess the social factors contributing to health problems, health hazards, and stress associated with ill health.*

**IPHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 3.1 PHSW develops measures to identify and assess the social factors contributing to health problems, health hazards, and stress.
- 3.2 PHSW identifies and assesses risk factors related to social conditions.
- 3.3 PHSW develops interventions that address the social factors related to mental and physical health, illness, and disability.
- 3.4 PHSW applies explanatory models to assist in identifying social factors which contribute to disease and emotional and social dysfunction.
- 3.5 PHSW identifies the relationships between poor housing, poor working conditions, and poverty, and high rates of infant mortality, tuberculosis and, behavioral and other health problems.
- 3.6 PHSW identifies and measures risk behaviors and lifestyle choices which contribute to poor social functioning and ill health.

**DRAFT**

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #4**

*Public Health Social Work uses social epidemiology principles to evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of individual, family, and population-based health interventions.*

PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 4.1 PHSW develops criteria for measuring program interventions and determining their effectiveness.
- 4.2 PHSW establishes outcome measures that analyze the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of individual and population-based interventions.
- 4.3. PHSW develops tools that measure disruptive changes in physical and coping capacity, environmental resources, and health.
- 4.4 PHSW assures that qualitative and quantitative evaluation tools are developed to determine accessibility, quality, effectiveness, and cultural competency of individual, family, and population-based health interventions. These instruments will be developed with input from individuals, communities, intra/interagency providers, and funders representing diverse cultures.
- 4.5 PHSW develops mechanisms to utilize evaluation results to enhance individual, family, and population-based health interventions, delivery and quality.
- 4.6 PHSW develops tools which measure emotional and societal morbidity affecting access to and utilization of the public health system of care.

**DRAFT**

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #5

*Public Health Social Work uses social planning, community organization and development, and social marketing principles to inform and educate individuals, families, and communities about public health issues.*

### IPHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 5.1 PHSW identifies public health issues relevant to individuals, families and communities by:
1. Surveying individuals, families, and communities to determine baseline knowledge of public health issues;
  2. Combining data and research with community priorities.
- 5.2 PHSW develops a range of community-based and creative strategies to deliver healthy lifestyle messages:
1. Culturally relevant forums on public health;
  2. Media opportunities for community dialogue;
  3. Printed materials for distribution in grocery, drug stores and video stores, restaurants, etc.;
  4. Community meetings;
  5. Youth speak-outs;
  6. Health fairs;
  7. Internet and computer-based technology.
- 5.3 PHSW utilizes the resources of faith communities, and social, and cultural groups to disseminate materials and speak on the value of public health by focusing on a public health problem facing that community.
- 5.4 PHSW develops public education messages that promote strategies of protection and resilience to enhance emotional, social and physical well-being.
- 5.5 PHSW develops communication methods for individuals, families and communities that make the information relevant and clear to all ages, cultural groups, educational levels, and abilities.
- 5.6 PHSW educates social service organizations about the relationships between health and social functioning from a public health perspective.

\*. **Formatted:** Bullets and Numbering

**DRAFT**

- 5.7 PHSW collaborates with a range of health and social service professionals and organizations to develop consistent health messages to inform and educate the public, families, and communities.
- 5.8 PHSW educates individuals, families, and communities about the relationship of social welfare, risk-taking behaviors, and poor health outcomes.
- 5.9 PHSW utilizes developmentally appropriate learning principles when developing public health messages.
- 5.10.1 PHSW develops strategies for promoting public health messages to specific populations such as those in prison, youth correctional or nursing facilities, homebound, or homeless.

**DRAFT**

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #6

*Public Health Social Work uses social planning, community organization and development, and social marketing principles to empower and mobilize individuals, families and communities through capacity building activities to become active participants in the identifying of public health concerns, the creative resolving of these issues, and the advancing individual, family, and societal well being.*

PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 6.1 PHSW develops a collaborative network of diverse stakeholders including traditional and non-traditional partners to identify, prioritize, and develop solutions for health and social problems. The network could include, for example: corporations, religious, and spiritual groups, youth-oriented groups, and funders (i.e., foundations, United Way, Chamber of Commerce, drug companies). Disenfranchised and vulnerable populations must be active members and leaders of the effort.
- 6.2 PHSW mobilizes community collaboratives to identify, prioritize, and solve health and related social problems.
- 6.3 PHSW develops and validates methodologies for presenting options to diverse groups to assure that proposed strategies respect their values and priorities.
- 6.4 PHSW develops resources (financial and infrastructure) that support activities surrounding community collaborations.
- 6.5 PHSW conducts capacity building activities that provide individuals, families, and communities with the tools to creatively resolve public health issues.
- 6.6 PHSW develops group work and other methodologies that promote the acceptance of culturally relevant and respectful communication techniques to engage communities .
- 6.7 PHSW mentors the leadership ability of individuals, families and communities to creatively resolve public health concerns
- 6.8 PHSW helps individuals, families and communities to identify their assets and liabilities and to develop solutions for their problems that preserve their cultural and family roots.

**DRAFT**

- 6.9 PHSW establishes communication strategies within the public health system that are responsive to community issues, priorities, and solutions. These strategies identify and remedy barriers which limit active participation of diverse consumers.
  
- 6.10 PHSW promotes an interdisciplinary planning model which integrates and enhances the medical model and traditional public health planning process to address the needs of vulnerable and diverse populations.



PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #7

*Public Health Social Work uses social planning, community organization and development, and social marketing to promote and enforce legal requirements that protect the health and safety of individuals, families, and communities.*

**DRAFT**

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 7.1 PHSW develops and promotes regulations that assures the health and safety of all, especially for vulnerable populations.
- 7.2 PHSW educates communities about legal rights and requirements, and how they impact their health and well-being.
- 7.3 PHSW promotes regulations that assures -vulnerable and underserved populations have access to needed health and social services.
- 7.4 PHSW advocates for communities in identifying and abating environmental concerns affecting health.
- 7.5 PHSW provides leadership in enforcing and simplifying rules related to entitlements and services.
- 7.6 PHSW provides pertinent data to stakeholders to impact environmental regulations

**DRAFT**

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #8

*Public Health Social Work uses social planning, community organization and development, and social marketing to assure public accountability for the well being of all, with emphasis on vulnerable populations.*

PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 8.1 PHSW creates culturally diverse partnerships that delineate clear and responsible roles in assuring the well-being for all with the emphasis on vulnerable and underserved populations.
- 8.2 PHSW documents and responds to individual, family and community complaints and concerns about the delivery and practice of health and related social services.
- 8.3 PHSW provides leadership in the dissemination of information about the effectiveness of public health and social interventions to policy makers, funders, and community groups.
- 8.4 PHSW assists communities in the development of a public health agenda that assures accountability for the well being of all..
- 8.5 PHSW uses the media and other mass communication methods to inform stakeholders of public health's role and responsibility to provide for the well being of all, and especially, vulnerable populations

**DRAFT**

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #9

*Public Health Social Work uses social planning, community organization and development and social marketing to develop primary prevention strategies that promote the health and well being of individuals, families, and communities.*

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 9.1 PHSW promotes a wide range of primary prevention strategies, both traditional and non-traditional, which are relevant across the life cycle and to diverse populations.
- 9.2 PHSW includes a broad range of stakeholders in developing primary prevention interventions to promote optimal health (eg. spiritual, emotional, psychological, bio-physical, and social).
- 9.3 PHSW develops common and consistent messages utilizing interdisciplinary teams and collaborative groups to promote healthy and culturally relevant lifestyles.
- 9.4 PHSW assures that primary prevention strategies address root causes of the essential elements of health and well-being from a cultural perspective.

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #10

*Public Health Social Work uses social planning, community organization and development, and social marketing to develop secondary and tertiary prevention strategies to alleviate health and related social and economic concerns.*

### PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 10.1 PHSW utilizes traditional, non-traditional, and culturally relevant methods to develop secondary and tertiary prevention intervention techniques.
- 10.2 PHSW engages a broad range of stakeholders, including family members, in developing secondary and tertiary prevention interventions to promote optimal health and the remediation of poor health outcomes (eg. spiritual, emotional, psychological bio-physical, and social).
- 10.3 PHSW develops common, consistent, and culturally competent screening and assessment methods for early identification of behaviors and risk factors which contribute to poor health outcomes.
- 10.4 PHSW assures that secondary prevention strategies address root causes of poor health outcomes beyond the presenting signs and symptoms.
- 10.5 PHSW promotes a range of secondary and tertiary prevention strategies which are relevant to diverse populations throughout the life cycle.
- 10.6 PHSW develops culturally relevant strategies to enhance quality of life of individuals and families living with a chronic or terminal disease.
- 10.7 PHSW assures that tertiary preventions are individualized through the use of family-centered, community based, integrated and coordinated care.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #11

*Public Health Social Work provides leadership and advocacy to assure the elimination of health and social disparities wherever they exist, such as, but not limited to those based on community, race, age, gender, ethnicity, culture, or disability.*

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 11.1 PHSW provides leadership in presenting research and data in a manner which documents health and social disparities clearly and understandably.
- 11.2 PHSW advocates for a broad range of strategies with diverse stakeholders to eliminate health and social disparity at the local, state, and national levels.
- 11.3 PHSW works with vulnerable communities to promote coordinated and integrated interventions for the reduction and elimination of health and social disparities.
- 11.4 PHSW provides leadership to inform policymakers of the economic, environmental and social factors impacting health and social disparities.
- 11.5 PHSW develops, in conjunction with other social and public health disciplines, methods to document health and social disparities
- 11.6 PHSW advocates for legislation and policies that promote eliminating health and social disparities.
- 11.7 PHSW advocates for eliminating categorical funding streams in order to reduce barriers to service provision, and to better address the magnitude of health and social disparities wherever they exist.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #12

*Public Health Social Work provides leadership and advocacy to assure and promote policy development for providing quality and comprehensive public health services within a cultural, community and family context.*

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 12.1 PHSW develops and promotes public health and social policy that assures the health and safety of all, especially for vulnerable populations.
- 12.2 PHSW develops public health and social policy which assures that vulnerable and underserved populations have access to needed health and social services.
- 12.3 PHSW provides leadership in developing and simplifying rules related to entitlements and services.
- 12.4 PHSW collaborates with social service organizations, educational institutions, and related health professional organizations to support policy development and legislative action that promotes the optimal health of a community.
- 12.5 PHSW develops and maintains mechanisms that promote open dialogue between policymakers and the community.
- 12.6 PHSW develops public health and social policy to assure provision of quality services which are responsive to individual, family, community, and cultural needs.
- 12.7 PHSW develops public health and social policies which promote integrating and coordinating services across health and social service programs.

**DRAFT**

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #13**

*Public Health Social Work supports and conducts data collection, research, and evaluation.*

**PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 13.1 PHSW develops and utilizes culturally appropriate data collection systems to identify social and behavioral determinants of health status for individuals and populations.
- 13.2 PHSW contributes to the development and utilization of culturally appropriate qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods to assess the effectiveness of specific programs and interventions with emphasis on the needs of vulnerable populations.
- 13.3 PHSW contributes to the development and utilization of methodologies to document system barriers which affect the quality and comprehensiveness of services.
- 13.4 PHSW conducts or participates in interdisciplinary public health research which promotes the replication and institutionalization of best practice models.
- 13.5 PHSW conducts surveys that measure client satisfaction for on-going quality improvement.
- 13.6 PHSW develops measures of emotional and societal factors which affect health status and access to public health.
- 13.7 PHSW develops results-oriented methodologies for the continuous improvement of the public health service system.

**DRAFT**

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD #14

*Public Health Social Work assures the competency of its practice to address the issues of public health effectively through a core body of social work knowledge, philosophy, code of ethics, and standards.*

PHSW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 14.1 PHSW incorporates standards of care from a range of social work and health organizations.
- 14.2 PHSW adheres to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the American Public Health Association Creed.
- 14.3 PHSW practices its profession in accordance with state licensure and/or regulations.
- 14.4 PHSW collaborates with schools of social work and public health to incorporate the core body of knowledge and principles of public health social work.
- 14.5 PHSW advocates for including public health social work in publicly and privately funded training programs, such as those through Health Resource Services Administration, Centers for Disease Control, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- 14.6 PHSW develops professional competencies that enhance the skill base of public health social work.
- 14.7 PHSW conducts periodic work force analyses and studies about public health social work changing roles.
- 14.8 PHSW conducts periodic surveys to identify ongoing continuing education needs.
- 14.9 PHSW advocate for the hiring of appropriate personnel with the expertise to address the economic, environmental and social factors which impact health status.
- 14.10 PHSW develops guidelines and protocols, and provides consultation for training in public health social work methodologies in public health agencies.



14.11 PHSW interprets the roles and concepts of public health social work practice to other health and social service disciplines.

154.152 PHSW promotes the social work philosophy of public health being broad-based which encompasses but not limited to the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being of individuals, families, and communities throughout the continuum of the life cycle.

## **Public Health Social Workers Core Competencies**

**DRAFT**

### **A. THEORETICAL BASE:**

**Public Health Social Workers will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**

1. The principles of social epidemiology.
2. The principles and theories of population-based health promotion and empowerment.
3. The normal patterns of individual and family growth and development from an intergenerational and lifespan perspective.
4. The impact of economic, environmental and social issues for at-risk populations.
5. The impact of protective or risk factors, e.g. gender, racism, ageism, classism, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, or religious basis on the health and well being of individuals, families, and communities.
6. The theories and principles of community organization, planned change, and development.
7. The characteristics of health systems, including the dimensions of, use of and access to health care.
8. Knowledge of macro level methods on the promotion and enforcement of regulations (policies and legislation) formulated to protect the health and safety of at-risk populations in social work practice.

**Public Health Social Workers should demonstrate the following skills:**

9. Apply macro level methods, e.g. social planning, community organization/development, and social marketing, employed in public health social work practice.
10. Apply knowledge of demographic, health, familial, socio-cultural, and environmental and community factors to design public health programs and services.
11. Critically analyze inequities in health status based on race/ethnicity, socioeconomic position and gender.
12. Recognize different strengths, needs, values, and practices of diverse cultural, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups and determine how these factors affect health status, health behaviors, and program design.
13. Apply primary and secondary strategies to address the health, social and economic issues of individuals, families and communities.
14. Apply development, practice, epidemiologic theories to substantiate interventions and program development designed to promote health behavioral change.

**B. METHODOLOGICAL AND ANALYTICAL SKILLS:**

**Public Health Social Workers will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**

1. Research design, sampling, basic descriptive and inferential statistics, and validity/reliability assessment of measures.
2. Epidemiological/socio- epidemiological concepts and descriptive epidemiology/ socio-epidemiological.
3. The use of data to illuminate ethical, political, scientific, economic, social and overall public health issues.
4. Principles and key features of community needs assessment, program design, implementation and evaluations.

**Public Health Social Workers should demonstrate the following skills:**

5. Prepare and interpret data from vital statistics, censuses, surveys, service utilization, and other relevant reports on social and health status, especially vulnerable populations.
6. The ability to detect meaningful inferences from data and to translate data into information for community assessment (gaps, barriers, and strengths analysis), program planning, implementation, and evaluation.
7. Formulate hypotheses or research questions and in collaboration with internal or external resources develop and implement an analytical strategy to influence health and social planned change.

**C. LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

**Public Health Social Workers will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**

1. Theories and practices of organizational culture and change.
2. Theories of leadership and communication practices for diverse internal and external groups.
3. The application of inter-organizational theories including grantsmanship, contractual agreements and linkages and the use of principles of systems development, management, and analysis.
4. Appropriate use of networking, inter/multidisciplinary team building, and group work processes.
5. The theories of social change, advocacy, negotiation, and conflict resolution.
6. The techniques of social work community organization and collation building to address the issues of social and health disparities.
7. Techniques for soliciting and maintain consumer and other constituency involvement at all levels of an organization.
8. Strategic planning, organizational development, performance and outcome measures,

**DRAFT**

program evaluation activities.

**Public Health Social Workers should demonstrate the following skills:**

9. The ability to vision and motivate staff to actualize the mission, goals and objectives of their organization. ( public health)
10. The ability to commit to individuals, families and communities and the diverse cultural values they hold.
11. The ability to operationalize best practice prevention and intervention strategies to eliminate social inequity and health disparities.
12. The capacity to build on the strengths and assets of individuals, families and communities to develop innovative and creative solutions to social and health issues.
13. Apply knowledge of management and organizational theories and practices to the development, planning, budgeting, staffing, administration, and evaluation of public health programs, including the implementation of strategies promoting integrated service systems, especially for vulnerable populations.
14. Develop mechanism to monitor and evaluate programs and service networks for their effectiveness and quality, including the use of performance and outcome measures.
15. Develop, implement, monitor and evaluate grant funded programs.
16. Effective written and oral communication skills, including accurate and effective preparation and presentation of reports to stakeholders e.g. agency boards, administrative organization, policy makers, consumers, and/or the media using demographic, statistical, programmatic and scientific information.
17. The ability to communicate effectively with diverse and multi-cultural organizations community/consumer boards and coalitions.
18. Develop strategies to assure integrated service systems for populations at risk for health and social issues.

**D. POLICY AND ADVOCACY SKILLS**

**Public Health Social Workers will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**

1. Federal and state mandates which guide the funding and implementation of health and social services programs.
2. Knowledge and synthesis of contemporary and alternative health and social policies.
3. Knowledge of the legislative, administrative and judicial processes at the national and local levels.
4. The historical development and scientific basis of public health and social policies and practices for federal, state and local agencies.

**DRAFT**

**Public Health Social Workers should demonstrate the following skills:**

5. Apply critical thinking to every stage of policy development and practice.
6. Identify essential gaps in the delivery system of health and social services.
7. Identify public health laws, regulations, and policies related to specific programs.
8. Collect and summarize data relevant to a particular policy/problem; articulate the health, fiscal, administrative, legal, social and political implications of each social policy option.
9. Coalition building and agenda settings to address the gaps in the system of social and health care.
10. State the feasibility and expected outcomes of and barriers to achieving each policy option and decide on the appropriate course of action.
11. Write a clear and concise policy statement, position paper, and/or testimony appropriate for a specific audience.
12. Develop a plan to implement a policy, including goals, outcomes and process objectives, implementation steps and evaluation plan.
13. Translate policy into organizational plans, structure, and programs.

**E. VALUES AND ETHICS**

**Public Health Social Workers will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**

1. The philosophy, values and social justice concepts associated with public health and social work practices.
2. Knowledge of the National Association of Social Work's Code of Ethics and the American Public Health Association Creed.
3. The philosophical concepts and rationale underlying the delivery of family-centered, comprehensive, integrated, community-based, and culturally competent public health and social services and programs, including the recognition of family and community assets.
4. The principles and issues involved in the ethical and sensitive conduct of practice and research especially with vulnerable populations, and in the organization and delivery of public health services within communities and governmental agencies; including the ethical and confidential collection of data and its management, analysis and dissemination.
5. Knowledge of state licensure and/or regulations.

**Public Health Social Workers should demonstrate the following skills:**

6. Application and integration of professional values and principles of ethics within community and organizational practice settings.
7. Ethical conduct in program management, research and data collection and storage.

**DRAFT**

8. Promotion of cultural competence concepts within public health settings.
9. Build partnerships with public health and social services communities and constituencies to foster community empowerment, reciprocal learning and involvement in design, implementation, and research aspects of public health and social systems.
10. Identify and apply social work standards and principles in the resolution of ethical dilemmas.

Acknowledge contribution of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work, Beyond 2010 Public Health Social Work Initiative, Association of State and Territorial Public Health Social Workers, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Public Health Association Social Work Section, National Association of Social Work, Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health, and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Special Acknowledgement to the Standards Development Committee:

(Joseph Telfair, Lann Thompson, Judith LeConte, Elizabeth Watkins, Ruth Knee, Deborah Wilkenson, Rita Webb, Marvin Reg Hurtchinson, Theora Evans, Loretta Fuddy, Delois Dilworth-Berry, Deborah Stokes, Kathleen Rounds, Paul Halverson, Dot Bon (Amy Smith, Barbara Thomas, Janice Houchins. social work students interns)