

Ref: 45/2001

16 May 2001

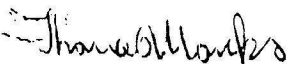
Each Chief Executive  
Health Boards/Voluntary Hospitals/Mental Handicap Agencies

A Chara

I refer to the agreement reached between the Health Service Employers Agency and IMPACT regarding Senior Social Work Practitioner Grade.

The sanction of the Minister for Health and Children can be assumed for the implementation of the arrangements set out in the attached circular.

Yours sincerely



Thomas Monks  
Personnel Management & Development Division



DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH AND  
CHILDREN  
AN ROINN  
SLÁINTE AGUS LEANA

Shaping a  
Healthier Future



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Employers Agency**

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**To: CEO's - All Health Boards, Voluntary Hospitals, Mental Handicap Agencies**

8<sup>th</sup> May 2001

**Re: Senior Social Work Practitioner Grade**

A Chara,

I wish to advise that arising from the work of the Social Workers Forum, agreement has been reached between IMPACT and HSEA regarding the introduction of the post of Senior Social Worker Practitioner. The agreement provides for the filling of 250 positions nationally and it is important to note the following criteria which will apply to the posts.

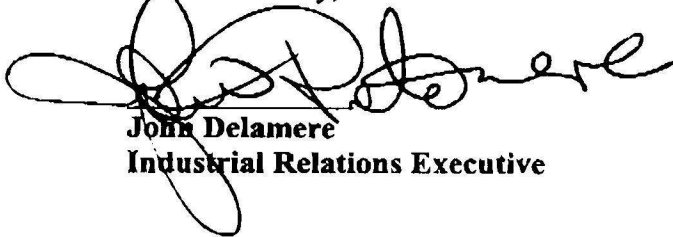
1. Posts will be filled on the basis of service requirements and not on seniority.
2. The posts are to be filled on a non-replacement basis and the introduction of the post must not have an adverse effect on clinical caseloads.
3. The allocation of posts within each agency will be a matter for discussion between management and the Social Work Manager.
4. In order to be eligible to apply for posts at Snr. Social Worker level, the social worker must have 3 years post qualification experience. This requirement is to be waived in the case of those social workers who have recently completed the NQSW Conversion course.
5. The initial filling of posts will be by way of confined competition within each agency.
6. The salary scale attaching to the post will be a differential of £3,060 (at April 2001 rates) on all points of the professionally qualified basic social worker salary scale.

- £28,875
- £29,881
- £30,713
- £31,554
- £32,411
- £33,272
- £34,145

LSI £34,767

7. The effectiveness of the posts will be reviewed after 18 months.
8. The role of the practitioner will vary from agency to agency depending on service requirements, however, it is envisaged that the post holder will specialise in particular areas e.g. Travellers, Refugees, Child Protection etc. The ultimate allocation of responsibility will be a matter for local decision.
9. A number of job profiles have been drawn up and these are attached. It should be noted that these are guidelines towards the drawing up of job descriptions and may be varied to suit individual agency requirements. Core attributes and competencies, entry-level requirements and duties and responsibilities are also included.
10. The allocation of posts to each agency is attached. Employers should immediately begin the process of filling these positions which will have an implementation date of June 1<sup>st</sup> 2001.

Yours sincerely,



**John Delamere**  
**Industrial Relations Executive**

### ALLOCATION OF SNR. PRACTITIONER SOCIAL WORKER POSTS

North Western Health Board	12
Western Health Board	15
Southern Health Board	24
Sth. Eastern Health Board	17
Midwestern Health Board	15
Midland Health Board	12
North East Health Board	12
NAHB/ECAHB/SWAHB (Division of posts between 3 Area Boards to be agreed by respective Directors of HR).	100

### VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

St. Michaels House	3
Bros. of Charity Galway	2
Bros of Charity Roscommon	1
Western Care	1
Brothers of Charity Lota	1
Brothers of Charity Waterford	1
Brothers of Charity Bawnmore	1
Daughters of Charity Lisnagry	1
Daughters of Charity Dublin	1
Sisters of Jesus & Mary	2
Central Remedial Clinic	1
Enable	1
St. John of God	2
Galway County Association	1

### DUBLIN HOSPITALS

Beaumont	2
Mater	1
Crumlin	2
Temple Street	2
Coombe	1
National Maternity Holles Street	1
Rotunda	1
Rehab Dun Laoire	1
Tallaght	3
St. Vincents	3
Our Ladys Hospice	1
St. James	4
St. Lukes	1

## **SNR SOCIAL WORKER PRACTITIONER**

### **Core Attributes and Competencies**

- Demonstrates advanced knowledge and skills within specified areas of practice.
- Demonstrates best practice through the process of reasoning and decision-making, allowing application of theoretical framework to be applied to complex and difficult areas.
- Demonstrates willingness to supervise students on professional practice placements.
- Demonstrates ability to participate in evidence-based research.
- Demonstrates self-motivation and initiative in the development of professional practice.
- Demonstrates a critical understanding of the context in which practice occurs within a wider social and political milieu.
- Demonstrates ability to act as mentor to existing staff in specialised areas of Social Work.
- Demonstrates ability to act as mentor to new entrants to profession.
- Demonstrates an ability to display autonomous work practice within the agency setting.
- Demonstrates ability to use evidence based research and advanced ethical awareness to be applied on an ongoing basis to best practice.
- Demonstrates ability to liaise effectively across professional and organisational boundaries.
- Ability to demonstrate additional skills in a specific field.
- Accountable to and reports to the Principal Social Worker and other designated officer.

### **Entry Level**

P.Q.S.W. or equivalent plus 3 years qualified Social Work experience (not a requirement in respect of those who recently undertook conversion course to gain Professional Qualification.)

**Duties/Areas of responsibility:**

***Responsibilities will vary across different social work settings but may include the following:***

Contributing actively to the development and maintenance of high standards of clinical practice in co-operation and collaboration with the Team Leader and Principle Social Worker.

Contributing to the development, provision and implementation of individualised training programmes for social work staff in meeting organisational goals and objectives in collaboration with the Team Leader and Principle Social Worker.

**Takes a lead role in the development and implementation of quality assurance for a service department.**

Responsibility for the planning and supervision of social work students on professional practice placements.

Responsibilities for induction of new staff to the agency, **as required.**

Role in the evaluation of the Service periodically e.g. this may involve looking at existing or future training needs in the agency in meeting organisational goal and objectives.

Dissemination of specialised knowledge and ethical awareness to existing agency staff.

The provision of an information resource for agency colleagues.

The undertaking of evidence-based research on behalf of the Service.

## **How a Snr. Practitioner Might Operate in Specific Settings**

### **Community Care Setting**

- Supervised by Principal Social Worker.
- Induction Training for new staff.
- Mentoring role for newly qualified staff.
- Particular focus on specialised areas as identified by the employer including Refugee/Asylum Seekers, Travellers and Homeless Adolescents.
- Keep abreast of current practice and ensure that knowledge is presented to the S.W. Dept.
- Assisting management in relation to evidence based research pertinent to service development.
- Supervision of students and support to colleagues in their supervision of students.
- Role in evaluation of the service on a periodic basis.
- Acting as an information resource for research papers, journals, videos etc.
- Carrying of case lead as appropriate.

The assignation of duties will be as determined by the Principal Social Worker

- Evidence based research in relation to service development e.g. continued statistical analysis of client data for the development of improved social work and client service provision.

## HOSPITAL SETTING

- Supervised by Principal Social Worker.
- Contribute to Induction Training Programmes for newly qualified social workers and for social workers new to the agency.
- Identify personal development plan for new staff in conjunction with principal, social worker and training co-ordinator.
- Monitoring role to newly qualified social workers and new staff to the agency.
- Specialist knowledge, skills and competencies are retained within the team e.g. knowledge and understanding of bereavement counselling (with appropriate courses in area) Oncology, stroke management, specialist knowledge associated with working with terminally ill people, risk assessment in A & E departments, maternity (preparation for child birth, post natal depression, pre-adoptive counselling, welfare entitlement knowledge) gerontological knowledge.
- To keep abreast of current practice and act as a conduit for the dissemination of knowledge to the Social Work Department.
- To keep up to date with current and pending legislation and its impact on practice.
- Supervise students and support colleagues in the supervision of students.
- Evidence based research in relation to service development e.g. continuous statistical analysis of client data for the development of improved social work and client service provision.
- Carry a caseload commensurate with duties of Snr. Practitioner.



## **VOLUNTARY SETTING**

- Supervised by Principal Social Worker.
- Contributing to Induction Training Programmes for new Social Workers and staff new to agency.
- Monitoring role.
- Specialised knowledge, skills and competencies are retained with the team e.g. knowledge of syndromes, chromosomal abnormalities and related medical casualties. Knowledge of specialist services/programmes and entitlements are preserved and retained and available to other team members.
- Keep abreast of current practice and act a conduit for the dissemination of knowledge to the Social Work Department.
- Supervise students and supports colleagues in supervision of students.
- Carry a caseload commensurate with duties of Senior Practitioner.
- Evidence based research in relation to research to service development e.g. continuous statistical analysis of client data for the development of improved social work and client provision.