

# National Association of Social Workers – Texas Chapter:

## Presentation to the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging

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# National Association of Social Workers – Texas Chapter (NASW/TX)

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**Mission:** NASW/Texas is a professional membership association that advocates for social workers, advances the profession of social work, and promotes sound public policy that is designed to ensure that human needs are met.

- 23,000 Social Workers in Texas
  - Almost 6,000 are members of NASW/TX
- According to SAMHSA Social Workers make up 60% of all mental health providers

# Levels of Social Work Licensure

**Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker (LBSW)**

**Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW)**

**Licensed Master Social Worker-Advanced Practitioner (LMSW-AP)**

**Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)**

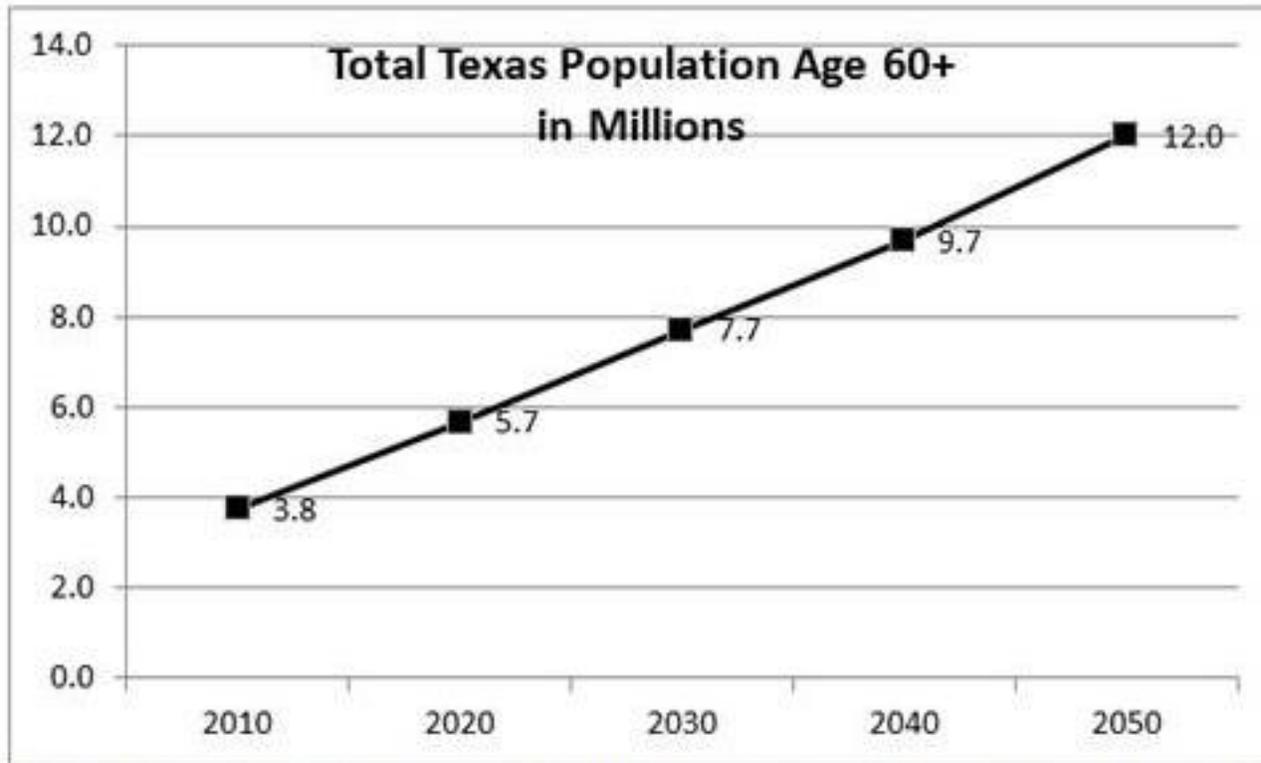
General social work services, which may be provided by all licensed social workers, include interviewing, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, case management, mediation, counseling, supportive counseling, direct practice, information and referral, problem solving, supervision, consultation, education, advocacy, community organization and the development, implementation, and administration of policies, programs and activities.

Clinical social work services, which may only be provided by an LCSW or an LMSW in an agency setting, include the application of specialized clinical knowledge and advanced clinical skills in the areas of assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders, conditions, and addictions, including severe mental illness in adults and serious emotional disturbances in children.

# Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)

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- LCSWs are uniquely qualified by their skills and training in health, mental health, diversity and social issues to treat vulnerable populations.
- Texas LCSWs are authorized to practice autonomously. An LCSW may provide services in an independent office, with a group, or in an agency without clinical supervision from another health care provider.
- LCSWs, MDs, and PhD Psychologists are authorized by The Center for Medicare/Medicaid to practice independently.
- LCSWs are trained in evidence based practice, with a variety of specializations in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Informed Therapy, and other advanced techniques.



Source: US Census 2010 and Texas State Data Center, University of Texas at San Antonio.  
Population projections based on the 1.0 scenario.

In 2010 there were **3.8 million** people in Texas age 60 and older; they made up approximately 15 percent of the total Texas population of **25 million**.

U.S Census Bureau

# Statistics

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- In FY 2015 Adult Protective Services (APS) provided services in 12,876 validated investigations
- 62.6% of these clients were aged 65 and older
- Approximately 15% of adults aged 60 and over suffer from a mental disorder
  - Most common neuropsychiatric disorders are dementia and depression
- Evidence suggests that 1 in 10 older people experience elder abuse

# Social Work Role in Gerontology

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Social Workers provide a complex array of services through their role as first responders in addressing the mental health needs of aging Texans. They act as educators on a diverse array of issues involving the disease process, caregiving stress and recovery interventions. Social Workers serve as guardians, advocates, counselors and direct service providers for mental health care.

# Social Work Services Provided to the Aging Population

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- In-home assessment
- Care coordination and management
- Crisis intervention
- Assistance with legal and financial issues
- Collaboration with medical, legal and financial professionals
- Private professional guardians of the person and estate
- Trustees
- Nursing home placements
- Supports and services assessments
- Family guardian assistance
- Supportive decision making
- Help with community resources
- End of life care
- Help with decision making

# Challenges Facing Social Workers

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## FUNCTIONAL AGE

- Combination of physiological, psychological and social age
- Individuals are younger: 45-65, but exhibit issues associated with aging
- Poor health (often due to poor diets and large amount of side effects from multiple prescriptions) and challenge affording medication
- Need attendant care, live off social security exclusively, have inadequate housing and food, lack of transportation

## COORDINATION BETWEEN MHMR/HHSC POLICIES & MEDICAID WAIVER PROGRAMS

- Hospital discharge
- In-patient and out-patient services
- Correct delivery of services
- Serving as representative payee in non-licensed board and care home, nursing homes and other housing choices
- Dual relationships, such as being guardian and remainder/successor beneficiary

# Challenges Facing Social Workers (Cont.)

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## EXPLOITATION

- Financial literacy education
- Lack of planning
- Loss of ability to live independently due to limited mobility, chronic pain, frailty or other mental or physical problems, and require some form of long-term care
- Dual diagnoses, behavioral health, intellectual disability, developmental disability
- Living longer with disabilities

## RELATIONSHIPS

- Loss of spouse/partner
- Isolation from family
- Stigma related to mental health treatment
- Interrelationship of physical, social, and economic problems
- Families with two or more family members with disabilities

# Recommendations

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- Schools of Social Work in Texas should receive support for continuing education focused on working with older adults
  - Current providers may not have much, if any, training in gerontology or public benefits, such as Medicare, Medicaid and waiver programs; nor have knowledge of community resources
- In the aging arena collaboration is key
  - Pull expertise from various agencies and collaborate to provide enhanced services to older adults to reach more people and make the money last
- Support the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC's)  
<https://www.dads.state.tx.us/care/findanadrc.html>
  - Single access point to long-term services and support program benefits for older adults, those with disabilities and their caregivers
- Focus on and prosecute financial exploitation

# Resources

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- Partnership between Social Workers and Geriatricians
  - University of North Texas (UNT) Health Science Center - Center for Geriatrics  
<https://www.unthsc.edu/newsroom/story/multi-generational-geriatrician/>
- Social Work Education on Geriatrics through the Hartford Foundation
  - <http://www.jhartfound.org/grants-strategy/transforming-geriatric-social-work-education-gero-rich>
- Huffington Center on Aging in Houston
  - <https://www.bcm.edu/centers/huffington-center-on-aging>
- Supervisory Leaders in Aging (SLA) Program through NASW: improving the delivery of health care and social services to older adults by strengthening the supervision of staff providing direct social services to older adults and their families
  - <http://www.socialworkers.org/sla/>

1. [Http://www.elderoptionsoftexas.com/texas-aging-population.htm](http://www.elderoptionsoftexas.com/texas-aging-population.htm)
2. Licensed Mental Health Professionals in Texas A Fact Sheet for Consumers - [https://www.dshs.texas.gov/socialwork/sw\\_consumer.shtm](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/socialwork/sw_consumer.shtm)
3. What is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker? – NASW/TX
4. [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About DFPS/Annual Reports and Data Books/2015/pdf/FY2015 AnnualRpt Databook.pdf](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About%20DFPS/Annual%20Reports%20and%20Data%20Books/2015/pdf/FY2015%20AnnualRpt%20Databook.pdf)
5. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs381/en/>

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## REFERENCES

# Contact Information

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