



# Investing in the Social Work Workforce: An Advocacy Agenda for Social Work Education

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Council on Social Work Education

Lewis-Burke Associates LLC

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# Council on Social Work Education



- Founded in 1952.
- Nonprofit national association of more than 3,000 individual members and 650 baccalaureate and master's programs of professional social work education.
- Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as the single accrediting agency for social work education in the United States.
  - Develop accreditation standards for schools of social work that define competent preparation and ensure compliance with these standards.
- *Social work education* focuses students on leadership and direct practice roles helping individuals, families, groups, and communities by creating new opportunities that empower people to be productive, contributing members of their communities.
- Developed the *Public Policy Initiative* in 2008.

# CSWE's Public Policy Initiative



- Goal: *Enhance social work education and the profession through thoughtful public policy that is focused on providing the very best education, training and financial assistance for social workers.*
- Audiences:
  - United States Congress
  - Federal Agencies
  - Other organizations throughout the social work, health care, and higher education communities

# Four Pillars of CSWE's Public Policy Initiative



# Advocacy for Social Work Education



## Objectives:

- Portray social workers, social work educators, and CSWE as resources to federal policy makers.
- Enhance the basic understanding of social work and social work education among federal policy makers.
- Engage social work educators and students in advocacy.
- Nurture champions on Capitol Hill to help enact policies that enhance the social work workforce.
- Stay nimble so as to keep on top of a constantly changing political environment:
  - Adjust our advocacy strategy as needed.
  - Identify realistic and measureable outcomes.
  - Know what “winning” is.

# Social Work Education & the U.S. Congress



- Social Workers in Congress:
  - Sen. Mikulski (D-MD)
  - Sen. Stabenow (D-MI)
  - Rep. Davis (D-CA)
  - Rep. Gutierrez (D-IL)
  - Rep. Lee (D-CA)
  - Rep. Schwartz (D-PA)
  - Rep. Towns (D-NY)
  - Rep. Tsongas (D-MA)
- Congressional Social Work Caucus
  - Purpose: *Elevate social work on Capitol Hill, provide information to Members of Congress about social work, and support legislation that would yield positive outcomes for the profession.*
- Many other champions who are not social workers themselves.

# Social Work Education & the Federal Agencies



- Department of Health and Human Services
  - Health Resources and Services Administration – training/scholarship/loan repayment programs for social workers
  - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – CSWE Minority Fellowship Program, mental health training, behavioral health equity
  - National Institutes of Health – social work/behavioral/social science research
  - Administration on Aging – geriatric training, care coordination, continuing education
  - Administration for Children and Families – Children’s Bureau, child welfare training
  - Indian Health Service – cultural competency, sub. abuse/mental health needs of AI/AN populations
  - Office of Minority Health – health disparities
- Department of Education
  - Implementation of the Higher Ed. Act, accreditation, student aid, community college articulation
- Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Scholarships/loan repayment for VA service, development of competencies
- White House Initiatives and Activities
  - Military Families – *Strengthening Our Military Families: Meeting America’s Commitment* (Jan. 2011)
  - Health care and education initiatives

# Social Work Education & the Community



## Coalition Participation:

- Action Network for Social Work Education and Research (ANSWER)
- Coalition for the Advancement of Health Through Behavioral and Social Science Research (CAHT-BSSR)
- Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)
- Eldercare Workforce Alliance (EWA)
- Friends of HRSA
- Friends of Indian Health
- Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research (FOVA)
- Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC)
- Mental Health Workforce Coalition

## Community Outreach:

- American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
- American Council on Education (ACE)
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)
- Association of American Universities (AAU)
- Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU)
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)
- Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH)
- Association of VA Social Workers (AVASW)
- Council of Graduate Schools (CGS)
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
- Direct Care Alliance (DCA)

# Successes for Social Work Education



## Elevation of Social Work Education

- Increased awareness of social work education by federal policy makers.
- Establishment of key contacts across federal government.
- Engagement of the social work education community.
- Strong alliances with other organizations/associations/stakeholders.
- Community efforts – Joint initiatives/advocacy activities.
  - Social Work Reinvestment Act
  - Congressional Social Work Caucus

## Select policy successes:

- Higher Education Policy
- Health Care Reform
- VA Scholarship

# Higher Education Policy



- Ongoing implementation of the *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008*
- Accreditation policy – Program integrity
- For-profit institutions of higher education
- Federal Student Aid – Direct loans, Pell, Perkins, loan forgiveness
- Community Colleges

# Health Care Reform

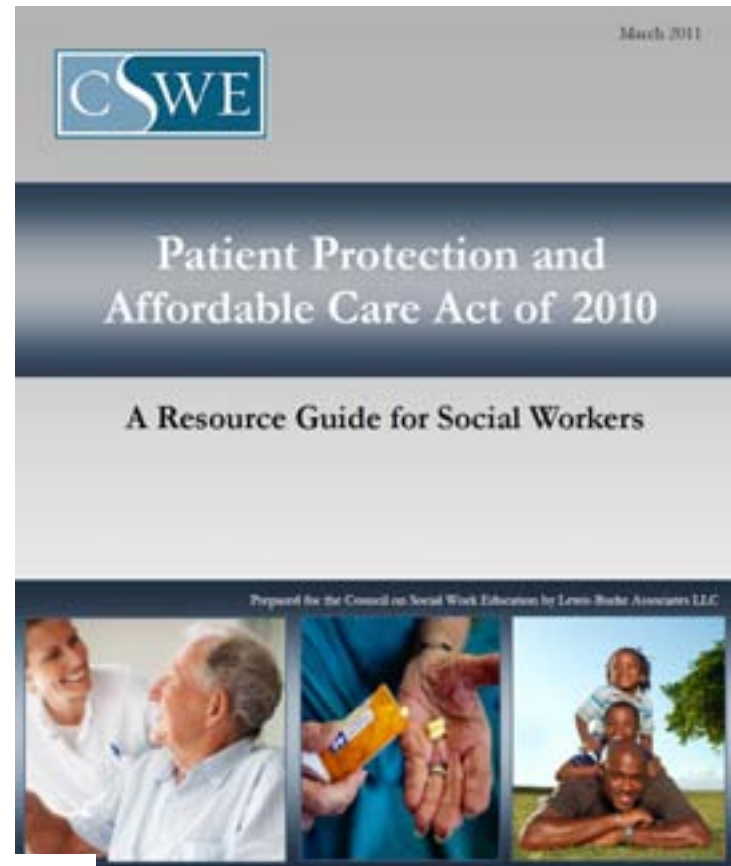


- New and enhanced programs to advance the social work workforce:
  - National Center for Health Care Workforce Analysis
  - Data Collection
  - Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program
  - Geriatric Education and Career Awards
  - Diversity Programs
  - Mental and Behavioral Health Education and Training Grants

“(d) PRIORITY.—

“(1) In selecting the grant recipients in social work under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that—

“(A) are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education;



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# VA Scholarship Program



## Health Professionals Educational Assistance Scholarship Program

- Language passed as part of omnibus veterans health legislation in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- Reinstate and broaden eligibility for the scholarship program which existed in the 1990s.
- Scholarships for tuition, other educational expenses, and stipend in exchange for service within the VA.
- Anticipated implementation: Fall 2011 or Spring 2012.

# Engaging Educators & Students in Policy



CSWE PUBLIC POLICY MONTHLY REVIEW  
April 28, 2011

#### New This Month:

##### MEMBER ACTION ALERT

- Contact your Members of Congress Today about Support Act

##### CSWE Advocacy & Outreach

- CSWE Participates in White House Meeting to Discuss M
- CSWE Testimony Urges Increased Funding for Training
- CSWE Participates in Community Meeting with Leaders
- HRH Briefing on Health Professions Funding
- CSWE Advocates for Increased Health Professions Traini

##### Member Resources & Opportunities

- New Elders are Workforce Resources and Website Availa
- New Community Advocacy Material Released
- HRSA Releases State Funding Profiles

##### Capitol Hill News

- Congress Completes Work on FY 2011 Appropriations

##### White House & Federal Agency News

- SAMHSA Releases Plan to Advance the Nation's Behavior
- HRH Releases Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Dis

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- Keeping members informed
  - *Public Policy Monthly Review*
  - Public Policy Web page
- Getting members involved
  - Advocacy Handbook
  - Action Alerts
  - Advocacy Days
- Helping to guide policy development
  - Nominations to Federal Advisory Committees
  - Opportunities to testify

# Ongoing Work



- Health care reform implementation
- Funding for loan forgiveness
- Minority Fellowship Program advocacy
- Military families and VA social work
- Higher education and accreditation policy
- Minority health and health disparities
- Indian health and health professions
- Social work research
- Disabilities
- Child welfare training
- Geriatric social work
- Funding advocacy
- Testimony
- Congressional briefings
- Coalition participation and association outreach
- Nominations
- Monthly newsletter
- Respond to federal agencies requests for information
- Advocacy days
- Action alerts and blast emails
- Congressional champion development

Thank you!



**CSWE Government Relations**

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