

**Social Work Professional advisory Group
Summary of Meeting/Teleconference
August 2006**

The SWPAG met during the USSW conference last week. This update will further serve as the August meeting/conference call.

1) USSW Meeting

The meeting was a great success with over 300 attendees and standing room only for most of the sessions! The conference offered 24 CEU's which include 3 CEU's in Ethics! PHS Social Workers did an outstanding job of representing PHS and holding our own against the social workers from the other services.

Congratulations and thank you to the following social workers that did an outstanding job with their workshop presentation: Capt. Armen Thoumaian, Capt. Davis Morrissette, Capt. Peter Delany, CDR Barbara Olaniyan, CDR Janet Hawkins, LCDR Donald Schmidt. Retired Captains Richard Schulman and Rebecca Asherry were also in attendance.

A special thanks also to Capt. David Rutstein, a physician. Capt. Rutstein participated in the opening plenary panel on Tuesday, representing PHS and describing the PHS participation in President's Bush commission on lessons learned from Katrina.

2) PHS sponsorship of the 2007 USSW conference

Because neither SWPAG nor PHS have conference budget monies, discussions are underway to combine future USSW conference with other national conference/meetings. Options are:

- a) combine the 2007 meeting with a VA national conference in the spring
- b) combine the USSW conference with the 2008 AMSUS conference (PHS is the lead service and I am the newly appointed PHS rep to AMSUS) This would mean that PHS would not sponsor the USSW conference in 2007 but would sponsor both in 2008 AMSUS.

3) Updating social work appointment standard

Once again I have included a suggested revision of the current standard (different than discussed during the June call). **Please-please** read and understand what is happening within our profession. There is still confusion as to the removal of the word "clinical" from our appointment standard. We are removing the word clinical because: a) social workers can obtain one of many types of licenses, and 2) the vast majority of PHS social workers are not performing "clinical" social work as defined by ASWB.

Please read the attached document entitled “Suggested Revision”.

Also go to ASWB’s website to understand the difference between “clinical” social work and “independent” social work. Upon reading, you will see that the term “independent social work” more accurately reflects the broad area of work we perform within PHS and accommodates the variety of social work licenses.

- 1) Go to http://www.aswb.org/Model_law.pdf
- 2) See page 9, Sections 105 and 106
- 3) See also pages 28-31, Sections 303 to 306

After further discussion with OCFAM, I inserted the word “grandfather” in the suggested revision. Reason: Without grandfathering, every social worker would have to find the standard from their state to document which title was in effect when they obtained their original license.

I think that the point is that PHS social workers are trained and experienced to perform in our day to day billets as well as on deployment.

Recorded by
CDR Gail Davis, Chair