

Is this you?

- emotionally mature
- thoughtful, tolerant and compassionate
- possess keen analytical abilities
- able to view other people's problems objectively
- able to relate to people and make them feel comfortable
- good communication and organisational skills
- able to work as part of a team and independently
- commitment to social justice.

“What I love about my job is making a difference to people's lives or helping them cope during a time of crisis – Social Work is a journey on which you'll meet remarkable and courageous people”

Angela Tonge, Social Worker

What is a Social Worker?

Social Work involves working with people in the context of their environment and social systems at critical points (often at a time of crisis) to promote social change, problem solving in human relationships and empowerment for patients, their families and carers.

Social Workers provide information, counselling, emotional and practical support. They operate as members of the multidisciplinary health care team that provide services in a broad variety of areas, but their primary concern is to address the social and psychological factors that surround patients' physical and/or medical presentations.

What does a Social Worker do?

Social Workers may perform the following tasks:

- Provide assessment, advocacy, liaison and supportive counselling services to patients and the families of patients who are critically unwell or have suffered serious trauma or an exacerbation of a chronic illness and thus require intensive medical support
- Assist with problems such as drug and alcohol addiction, mental illness, homelessness, suspected child abuse and neglect, rape and sexual assault
- Support individuals who have suffered a sudden death in the family, experienced a major trauma or health crisis, sustained a permanent disability, attempted suicide or self harm, have been victims of domestic and family violence or crime, or who require permanent residential care in an aged care facility
- Facilitate support groups and education programs for patients, their families and carers to share experiences and gain information and coping strategies
- Provide clients with information on or referral to other support services in the community
- Assist patients and their families with issues of a practical nature, such as income support applications and general financial management, travel and accommodation subsidies, priority government housing and disability support applications,
- Work with and for the community to improve the social environment and maximise life potential
- Analyse statistics and write reports, develop policy and evaluate programs, and undertake evidence-based practice and research.



Where can Social Workers work in Queensland Health?

Social Workers employed by Queensland Health work in multi-disciplinary teams in hospitals, community health centres and child development centres.

Patients can be referred to Social Workers for counselling and support after suffering loss or bereavement, attempted suicide or self harm, child abuse/neglect, a major health crisis, domestic violence or language or cultural barriers.

Queensland Health offers employment opportunities for social workers in the following areas of clinical practice:

- Psychiatric and general mental health
- Family, youth and child and welfare services
- Community health
- Palliative care
- Aged care
- Maternal health
- Paediatrics
- Emergency department
- Rehabilitation and outreach services (acquired brain and spinal injuries)
- Hospital in-patient services (including intensive care, cardiac and cancer services and transplantation).

How do you become a Social Worker?

To become a Social Worker you have to study social work at university. Applicants may also be required to provide written/reference material. The various universities have different prerequisites and some have flexible entry requirements or offer external study. Contact the universities you are interested in for more information as requirements may change.

Degree courses:

Central Queensland University – Distance Education:

- Bachelor of Social Work, 4 years full time or equivalent

Griffith University – Logan Campus:

- Bachelor of Social Work, 4 years full time

James Cook University – Cairns, Mackay and Townsville Campuses:

- Bachelor of Social Work, 4 years full time or 7 years part time or external

Queensland University of Technology – Carseldine Campus:

- Bachelor of Social Work, 4 years full time

University of Queensland – St Lucia Campus:

- Bachelor of Social Work, 4 years full time or 4 years part time and 2 years full time

University of Sunshine Coast:

- Bachelor of Social Work, 4 years full time or equivalent

Registration

Individuals wishing to practise as a social worker in Queensland are required to be eligible for membership with the Australian Association of Social Workers. Completion of an AASW accredited Bachelor of Social Work degree automatically confers eligibility for membership of AASW.

What scholarships are available?

There are a variety of scholarships and financial assistance available. Check out the respective tertiary institutes' website for details. Also available is the Queensland Health Rural Scholarships Scheme.

What graduate opportunities are available?

Some Queensland Health facilities specifically offer new graduate social work positions or have a prerequisite that a person identify with a particular cultural background.

Is it possible to get work experience while studying?

Yes! Field education or 'work experience' is a core component of social work education. Field education subjects are taken over two years within the professional social work program of study. Students are required to successfully complete a minimum of 980 hours in at least two fields of practice and practice settings. Contact the Field Education Co-ordinator at a university which offers Social Degree courses.

Where can I find out more info?

James Cook University

School of Social Work and Community Welfare

Cairns Campus: (07) 4042 1207

Townsville Campus: (07) 4781 4301

Website: www.jcu.edu.au

Queensland University of Technology

Social Work and Human Services

Phone: (07) 3138 4697

Email: swhs.enquiries@qut.edu.au

Website: www.hlth.qut.edu.au/swhs

The University of Queensland

School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences

Phone: (07) 3365 2068

Email: socwork@social.uq.edu.au

Website: www.uq.edu.au

Griffith University

School of Human Services

Phone: 07 3382 1235

Email: hsv@griffith.edu.au

Website: www.griffith.edu.au/school/hsv

University of the Sunshine Coast

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Phone: 07 5430 1259

Email: artsfaculty@usc.edu.au

Website: www.usc.edu.au

Central Queensland University

Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences

Phone: (07) 4930 9862

Email: ahs-program2@cqu.edu.au

Website: www.cqu.edu.au

Australian Association of Social Workers

Phone: 1800 630 124

Email: aaswnat@aasw.asn.au

Website: www.aasw.asn.au

The QTAC website has a list of universities and tertiary institutions with links to universities and courses offered. Go to www.qtac.edu.au and select Institutions.

To find out more about the exciting career opportunities Queensland Health can offer you go to www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus