


Social Work Assistant

Support worker model for hospital
settings

Drivers for change

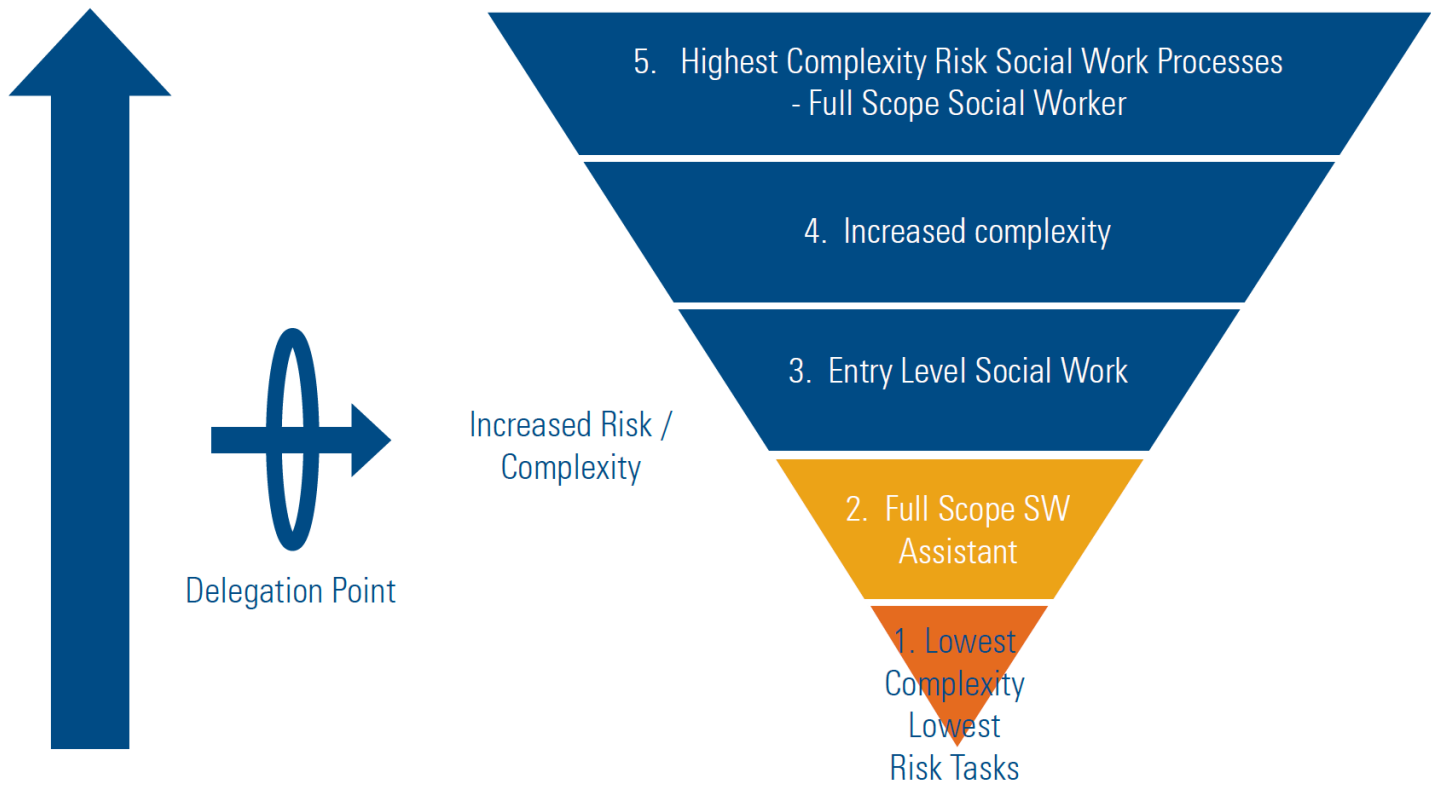
- Social workers spend significant amounts of time on low level tasks
 - Important therapeutic work not being prioritised
 - High levels of accrued time-in-lieu
 - Poor staff morale due to fears of professional deskilling
 - Lack of allied health assistant role out of step with other allied health disciplines
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Key elements of role

- Social work assistant (SWA) tasks and competencies identified
- SWA operates within delegation model
- Social workers carry out more complex tasks as per task complexity hierarchy developed

Task complexity hierarchy

Social Work Task Complexity and Delegation Model



Evidence of impact

- SWA tasks and competencies identified
- Social Work Task Complexity and Delegation model developed
- SWA functions developed in terms of clinical service delivery, clinical governance, quality and safety, etc
- Support for creation of SWA qualification

Outcomes

- Increased productivity and cost effectiveness
 - 20% increase in new patients seen
 - 47% reduction in time-in-lieu accrual
 - 11% reduction in cost per occasion of service
- Better alignment of resources i.e.. skill level matches task
 - 81% social worker time spent on more complex (Levels 3-5) tasks indicating full scope SW practice
- Increased social worker job satisfaction