



# New York State Society for Clinical Social Work...

## the professional voice for **CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK**

### laying the groundwork...

The New York State Society for Clinical Social Work (the Society) was founded in 1968 to provide a voice for what was then still an emerging area of social work practice. Visionary founding members Charles Smith and Robert Lampert asked themselves how they could best establish a powerful identity for members of their profession... and an equally effective collegial support system. The Society was born.

They began by looking at the profession's name and felt that "psychiatric social worker" did an inadequate job of communicating their distinct identity. By adopting and popularizing "clinical social worker" our unique approach to psychotherapy would be more effectively conveyed. What's in a name? In our case, a historic advance in professional standing.

In those early years, our growing advocacy organization fought for groundbreaking legislative action in support of independent credentials for the profession, created the prestigious Clinical Social Work Journal—disseminating innovative ideas and concepts across the field—and later established a code of ethics that has become the model for the profession.

Since that time, the Society has been at the forefront—representing and supporting a major area of social work practice in New York State where there are now over 45,000 licensed social workers, over 50% of whom are licensed clinical social workers. In recent years, the Society successfully fought for a licensing bill that provides clinical social workers with a comprehensive scope of practice that is second to none in the U.S. We were instrumental in the passage of the Vendorship Law, which established our right to receive reimbursement from insurance companies without physician referral or supervision.

Through our education programs, conferences, networking events and ongoing advocacy in ten chapters across New York State, we foster professional growth and opportunity for our members and the clinical social work community.

**By adopting and popularizing the term “clinical social worker”—they could more effectively communicate their autonomy, specialized training and expertise.**

“I am an active member because the Society supports and advances my professional identity and practice, represents my professional interests and links me to my peers.”

*Jonathan Morgenstern, LCSW  
Westchester Chapter*

“The Society was a lifeline when I was working in a small agency with few other clinical social workers. It provided a forum for networking and expanded my knowledge of the therapeutic community while offering me opportunities to learn new clinical skills.”

*Judy Crosley, LCSW  
Syracuse Chapter*

Through peer consultation groups, mentoring and educational programs, Society members can showcase their talents and skills.

## advancing professional goals...

As a clinical social worker in New York State, you are part of a diverse community of practitioners. Our locally based groups are committed to providing the targeted programming and resources you need to stay on top of a constantly shifting and challenging professional environment whether you are...

- An agency-based practitioner
- A private practitioner
- A social work student

From mentoring groups for new professionals...to networking opportunities that help build a referral base

among peers...to formal and informal educational events and assistance in dealing with ethical, practice and vendorship issues, the Society is responsive to your specific interests and needs.

Our sensitivity to the uniqueness of our local chapters makes us able to advocate for the diverse needs of clinical social workers. The Society's full-time New York lobbyist continues to ensure that we remain competitive with other health and mental health professionals as we move further into the 21st century and beyond.

## creating a community of peer practitioners...

In our professional roles we guide patients to create support systems that help sustain healthy, successful lives. Yet, in the establishment and maintenance of our own careers, the need for communal support is often overlooked. The Society provides a caring environment—wherever we are in our professional journeys—in which to build a natural network of colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

At the chapter level, the Society offers opportunities for clinical social workers to network at formal and informal educational and social meetings as well as through online listservs. At the state level, educational conferences and programs are sponsored on an annual basis—providing a broader outlook on the profession and its diverse practices.

For MSW's and clinical social workers just starting out, the Society

offers mentoring groups and opportunities to connect one-on-one with more seasoned clinical social workers. Guidance on locating the right job, how to obtain your license, how to deal with managed care issues...dealing with ethical and practice concerns are particularly helpful to clinical social workers new to the field. Mentors, in turn, get a chance to give back to the profession that has nurtured their own careers. Peer consultation, a natural outgrowth of membership, offers more established professionals an effective arena for sharing clinical skills and solving clinical dilemmas.

Through mentoring, peer consultation groups and educational programs, Society members can showcase their talents and skills. The personal and professional relationships that develop create opportunities for referrals among peers that strengthen with participation and over time.

“The Society has provided me with the opportunity to work with dedicated, like-minded colleagues to fulfill our ethical responsibility to advocate for high standards of excellence in clinical social work education and practice.”

*Hillel Bodek, LCSW, BCD Brooklyn Chapter*

## promoting professional excellence through education...

One of the primary priorities of the Society is to promote professional growth through education. With a comprehensive range of over 100 lectures, workshops and conferences at the state and local level each year, the Society keeps clinical social workers abreast of the latest practice issues and treatment modalities.

**E**ach chapter has its own unique array of forums and formats—educational workshops and lectures, dinner meetings, new member and networking meetings—either free or at low cost to members. Opportunities to communicate with other members via online listservs extend the educational dialogue.

### AT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER...

Chapter events, developed in direct response to members' needs, feature speakers on a wide range of issues from an eclectic selection of theoretical approaches. Recent events have included Palliative Care, Sexual Abuse, Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment, Independent Practice, Supervision, Testifying in Court, Use of Dreams in Treatment, EMDR Training and Couples Therapy.

### THE BIGGER PICTURE...

On a Society-wide level, our annual membership meeting held in January and our annual educational conference held in May address a variety of timely topics. In the recent past conferences have focused on issues including: Ethical Issues in Clinical Social Work Practice, HIPAA Training, Holistic Care and Wellness, Psychopharmacology and the New York State Mandated Training in Child Abuse and Maltreatment Identification and Reporting.

“The Society encourages and supports member involvement, inviting members to write clinical articles for publication in state and local chapter newsletters, present at conferences and education programs and develop leadership skills with committee work.”

*Maureen Buckley-Fox, LCSW, BCD Nassau Chapter*

## advocating for a strong professional identity...

How do we ensure that our profession remains strongly competitive with other mental health professionals? By monitoring state legislative, regulatory and policy issues which directly impact on clinical social work...by advocating forcefully for utilization of clinical social work services in health, mental health and social service settings and for consistent excellence in and standards for social work education, training and practice.

**T**hrough our collaboration with other professional state and national associations on issues of common interest, we work to present a united front on key state and national health and mental health issues related to clinical practice. Out of such alliances we have established ourselves nationally as one of the three traditional mental health professions and won recognition as reimbursable providers for federal health programs including Medicare, TRICARE and FEHBA.

“The Society is the only group that fought for licensing levels of training and standards of excellence—which is what is keeping us professional, respected and competitive as providers of mental health services.”

*Nancy Wright, LCSW  
Syracuse Chapter*

## connecting with your chapter...

Our ten chapters across New York State offer opportunities to expand your professional universe. Local chapter meetings are an opportunity to connect with peers in a friendly, supportive, dynamic environment. Monthly meetings are open to members from other chapters, and often include non-members who are interested in learning more about the Society and its educational, networking and advocacy activities.

Committee work brings members further into the work of the Society by focusing on concerns of common interest to clinical social workers. We encourage members to create communities within community by getting involved at the committee level. Find your area of interest and join us...

### SOCIETY COMMITTEES...

#### Ethics & Professional Standards Committee

Provides advice, education and advocacy regarding issues pertaining to confidentiality, regulatory, insurance and other ethical, legal and practice problems that arise in clinical social work practice.

#### Legislative Committee

Monitors current regulations, legislation and changes in state policy which impact on clinical social work practice.

#### Practice Committee

Practice Committees exist at both the state and chapter levels, and are formed in response to varying practice interests. They include, among others: Arts & Creativity in Clinical Practice, Child and Adolescent Therapy, Disaster Preparedness, Family Practice, Forensic Clinical Social Work, Psychoanalysis, Palliative and End of Life Care and Spirituality in Clinical Practice.

#### Public Relations

Conducts outreach to inform the public, other professionals and organizations about the skills and expertise of clinical social workers.

#### Society Newsletter-The Clinician

Involves the researching, editing and production of the Society newsletter dealing with a large variety of clinical, policy and practice issues.

#### Vendorship/Managed Care Committee

Supports members in becoming more effective and efficient in managing practice reimbursement by providing information about current insurance and managed care trends and effective treatment authorization and billing practices.

“Taking an active role in chapter work has jump-started my new life as a clinical social worker. How fortunate to be able to network and grow professionally with such a large group of talented, caring, supportive and informed individuals.”

*Judy Price, LMSW Metropolitan Chapter*

“I joined the Society the same year I graduated with my MSW. In the intervening years it has become one of my stable educational resources. I have come to look forward to the monthly peer consultation sessions as well as the lectures.”

*Martin Lowery, LCSW  
Westchester Chapter*

## where are we headed?

As the professional voice for clinical social work, the Society has brought recognition and excellence to our profession. But we know our work is not yet done.

As we move further into this new millennium, we will continue to search for ways to establish models of excellence for the entire field. We are committed to broadening our educational scope at the chapter and state level through additional clinical and regulatory educational programming. As legislative watchdog and as a staunch advocate for high standards of education and practice, our work is ongoing and will remain a significant priority.

As our membership grows, so will the diverse resources of the Society. We invite you to join our ranks and get involved in our future work.

For more information and to find out about how to become a member, please call 1-800-288-4CSW or visit our web site at [www.clinicalsw.org](http://www.clinicalsw.org).

### **What are the benefits of membership if you are still a student or new to the profession?**

The Society connects clinical social workers new to the field with more established professionals, helping you deal with everything from how to obtain your license to ethical issues. Comprehensive educational programs on the latest clinical practice issues are offered statewide—stimulating professional development and growth.

### **Does the Society address issues of managed care?**

We speak to these issues through advocacy, ongoing educational events and relevant, updated insurance information as it affects your practice location. Vendorship/managed care committees at the chapter and state level serve as watchdogs for issues as they emerge.

### **How will membership help me as an agency professional?**

The Society is committed to helping clinical social workers with diverse backgrounds, areas of practice and employment settings. Outreach, support, education, mentoring and networking for clinical social workers in agencies have parity with that for clinical social workers in private practice.

### **What about networking? Will membership help me expand my professional universe?**

Planned networking events, committee work, educational forums and opportunities to present workshops and papers offer new and seasoned clinicians many opportunities to increase and enhance the potential for referrals between colleagues.

### **Is there a chapter in my area?**

There are ten chapters throughout New York State, including Brooklyn, Metropolitan (Manhattan and the Bronx), Mid-Hudson (Duchess, Orange, Putnam, Sullivan, Ulster), Nassau, Queens, Rockland, Staten Island, Suffolk, Syracuse (Central New York region) and Westchester. Visit our web site at [www.clinicalsw.org](http://www.clinicalsw.org) for specific locations.

### **How do I become a member?**

Please call our membership office at 1-800-288-4CSW or visit our web site at [www.clinicalsw.org](http://www.clinicalsw.org) to request membership materials. Membership is open to all social workers interested in clinical issues, whether you are a student, in an agency or in private practice. We look forward to welcoming you and your participation.



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for Clinical Social Work**  
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