

HISTORY

History

The New York State Society for Clinical Social Work (NYSSCSW) traces its roots to 1968 when a group of social workers recognized the pressing need for professional support and advocacy for private practitioners, particularly in navigating insurance reimbursement issues. Established in 1968 and incorporated in 1970, NYSSCSW has been a steadfast provider of educational, professional, and legislative services to its members.

Notable achievements include:

- Collaborative efforts to develop a Code of Ethics
- Legislative efforts to increase the role of clinical social workers in service delivery
- Advocacy for insurance reimbursement opportunities

NYSSCSW played a pivotal role in the enactment of New York State's licensing system for clinical social workers, marking a significant milestone for the profession statewide.

Through the decades, NYSSCSW's commitment to supporting, advocating for, and advancing the profession of clinical social work has remained unwavering. Through legislative victories, educational initiatives, and community engagement, the Society continues to uphold the highest standards of practice while empowering its members to thrive in an ever-changing healthcare landscape.

The Beginning

The Society's inception in the late 1960s was catalyzed by the frustrations of practitioners like Charles Smith and Robert Lampert, who sought professional support for issues surrounding private practice, including insurance reimbursement disparities. Despite the formation of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in the 1950s, support for social workers in private practice was minimal, leading to the establishment of NYSSCSW as an independent entity. Initially named the Society of Clinical Social Workers, the organization faced identity challenges within the profession, eventually adopting the term "clinical social worker" to distinguish its members' specialized practice.

The 1970's

Throughout the 1970s, the Society expanded its influence, forming local chapters and advocating for legislative measures to protect and advance the profession. Efforts included defeating proposed legislation that would subordinate social workers to psychologists or psychiatrists and championing laws to ensure insurance coverage for clinical social work services. Additionally, the Society contributed to the development of a Code of Ethics for Clinical Social Workers at the national level, further solidifying its commitment to ethical practice standards.

The 1980's

In the 1980s, NYSSCSW continued its legislative advocacy, notably securing the passage of laws mandating insurance coverage for clinical social work services. Legal recognition of clinical social workers' expertise in mental health assessment and treatment bolstered the profession's standing within the healthcare landscape. As managed care emerged as a prominent concern, the Society initiated programs to address vendorship issues and provide training on navigating evolving healthcare systems.

The 1990's

The 1990s marked the beginning of NYSSCSW's prolonged endeavor to obtain clinical social work licensure, a complex process spanning over a decade and a half. Legal victories in New York State courts highlighted the distinct role and qualifications of clinical social workers, paving the way for licensure efforts. Meanwhile, the Society continued its educational initiatives, including mentorship programs for aspiring clinical social workers and efforts to adapt to the changing healthcare landscape shaped by managed care.

The 2000's

The 2000s brought further challenges and opportunities for NYSSCSW. In response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Society established a Disaster Preparedness Committee, reflecting its commitment to serving both members and communities in times of crisis. Legislative achievements included the enactment of a licensure law for clinical social workers in 2002, marking a significant milestone in professional recognition. Collaborative efforts with national organizations and ongoing educational programs ensured the Society remained at the forefront of advancing clinical social work practice in New York State.

Chronological list of NYSSCSW Presidents

Robert Lampert, 1968-1969
Florence Radin, 1970-1971
Alan Grossman, 1972-1973
Crayton Rowe, 1974-1975
Nancy Palazzolo, 1976-1977
Abbie Blair, 1978-1979
Marsha Wineburgh, 1980-1981
Margaret Isbell, 1982-1983
Jacinta Marschke, 1984-1985
Adrienne Lampert, 1986-1987
Robert Evans, 1988-1989
Philip Banner, 1990-1991
David Phillips, 1992-1993
Helen Hinkley-Krackow, 1994-1997
Allen A. Du Mont 1998-2001
Helen Hinkley-Krackow, 2002-2003
Hillel Bodek, 2004-2007
Jonathan Morgenstern, 2008-2011
Marsha Wineburgh, 2012-2015
Shannon Boyle 2016-2021
Karen Kaufman 2022-2024
Beth Pagano 2025-

Seven of the Society's Presidents Have Been Designated as Distinguished Practitioners of Social Work by the National Academies of Practice, a national organization that honors up to one hundred fifty clinicians in ten healthcare disciplines as distinguished practitioners in their discipline. This honor recognizes healthcare providers who have shown sustained superior performance in clinical practice, dedication to the furtherance of high-quality interdisciplinary healthcare in the United States through clinical practice, education, and research, and have made significant and enduring contributions to the practice of their profession which merit recognition at a national level.

In addition to the seven Society Presidents who have been designated as Distinguished Practitioners of Social Work by the National Academies of Practice, twenty-four (24) additional members of the Society have also been so designated, making a total of thirty-one (31) Society members who have been so honored.