



CSWE Principles for Role of Social Work Research in Public Policy

Our nation faces a wide variety of existing and emerging societal needs, including escalating health-care costs and disparities in access to services. Congressional and federal policymakers respond to these needs by creating legislation and programs to improve human conditions. In order to develop and revise social service policies and programs, legislators and implementers evaluate care and service models of existing programs and adapt them based on evolving trends. The evaluation process of social service programs considers the effectiveness of interventions intended to address specific societal challenges, scale effective successful models, and broaden access to larger populations.

Social workers in academia and in practice conduct research to develop an evidence base for effective social service programs to address the complex needs of a diverse population. In partnership with the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR), CSWE advocates for such research to inform policy and program development to guarantee and enhance the quality of individual, family, and community well-being.

In preparation for the profession, social work students are taught to apply, evaluate, and investigate various models of care for diverse populations to support the best outcome achievable. Social work research also extends to the evaluation and implementation of services and policies. The educational training of social workers positions them to play a major role in people's health, which we are growing to understand is largely impacted by societal factors. This grounding in evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence is the foundation for continuous improvement in policies and services. Through federal advocacy, CSWE shares social work research with policy makers to ultimately improve the development, delivery, access, and evaluation of federal social service programs. CSWE encourages policy makers to consider these principles as they draft legislation and implement policies and programs:

- Federal investment in social and behavioral science research that coordinates basic and applied research to scale successful models of social services and support the full diversity of our nation's populations.
- Policies and programs that recognize and have the ability to adapt to evolving societal needs, ensuring the social work workforce is prepared for population changes.
- The federal government needs to invest in research to study social determinants of health and supports investments in methods to identify and meet the needs of unique and underserved populations.
- Incorporating evidence-based approaches in social service policies and programs. This includes the need for and importance of better data on the social work workforce in order to ensure federal investments in education and workforce training are commensurate with the need.

CSWE is a national association of social work education programs and individuals that ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional practice that promotes individual, family, and community well-being, and social and economic justice.



- Integrating social and behavioral science research with education and training programs, ensuring interprofessional care providers are well-prepared to develop and execute coordinated, individualized care plans and at other levels.
- Ensuring social workers have a voice in policy based on their research and that they continue to be a part of the discussions and eligibility regarding research, services, and programs.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact CSWE's government relations Otto Katt (otto@lewis-burke.com).

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