



SOCIALWORK AGING&HEALTH



RUTGERS

School of Social Work

SOCIALWORK&AGING

By 2034, the United States Census projects that the number of people age 65 and older will surpass the number of children under the age of 18. The aging population is not only growing in size, but also in diversity. With this growth will come a rise in demand for professionals with expertise in working with older adults, their families, and communities.

“Being in the aging & health certificate program broadens my perspective regarding how important it is for social workers to work with the aging population in healthcare. Social Workers will be needed in every level of social work practice.”

NONI - IFE TAYLOR
MSW MAY 2020

WHAT DO SOCIAL WORKERS WORKING WITH OLDER ADULTS DO?

Social Workers who work with older adults have the opportunity to do so in a variety of different contexts unique to the older person(s) themselves and their life experiences. They can:

- Provide therapy with individuals, couples, families and groups
- Perform general case management, offer education and concrete resources
- Counsel for substance misuse
- Support victims of elder abuse
- Help reduce social isolation
- Counsel individuals living with acute and chronic illnesses
- Support individuals who are adapting to the role of caregiver for a parent, partner, spouse, or adult child
- Advocate for “solo” agers
- Plan and secure care for end of life
- Engage in macro level social work practice through designing, implementing and evaluating large scale interventions which address social injustices

WHERE DO SOCIAL WORKERS WORKING WITH OLDER ADULTS PRACTICE?

Social Workers who work with older adults do so across a range of settings, including but not limited to:

- Healthcare settings like hospitals, hospice and home care agencies, dialysis units and rehabilitation facilities for short-term and long-term care
- Assisted living facilities, naturally-occurring retirement communities (NORCs) and other residential spaces where older adults may live, such as subsidized housing units
- Social service settings, including Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and other nonprofits
- Advocacy organizations and private practice

AGING AT RUTGERS

There is a critical shortage of social workers trained to work with older adults, their families and the communities in which they live. Although many social workers will work with older adults in various fields of practice, very few indicate “aging” as a desired subspecialization.

The Rutgers School of Social Work is committed to helping to grow a “bigger and better” gerontological workforce for the State of New Jersey and beyond through its degree programs and continuing education offerings. Community partnerships are critical to fulfilling this commitment. The School partners with local communities in a variety of ways to meet the needs of our rapidly aging society.

Examples of this partnership include:

- Maintaining a community-based advisory board of professional leaders in the field of gerontology, who meet regularly to ensure that the School’s aging-focused curriculum reflects the dynamic and diverse local needs of aging populations.
- Supporting graduate social work interns in healthcare and aging-related service organizations throughout New Jersey and neighboring states.
- Collaborating with educational programs in the health professions at Rutgers to promote interprofessional training.
- Partnering with the state to develop and implement training sessions for New Jersey’s Adult Protective Services workers to promote elder justice.

RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MSW CERTIFICATE IN AGING AND HEALTH

This certificate program is embedded in the MSW program at the School and provides students the opportunity to engage in classroom and field-based learning at the interface of aging and health.



MSW students must complete courses that address both areas and an advanced field placement that focuses predominantly on older adults and caregivers.

MSW FELLOWSHIP IN AGING

As part of its continuing commitment to fostering excellence in social work and aging, RSSW offers fellowships in aging to MSW students. Fellows are selected based on their commitment to work with older adults, their families and communities, as well as on their potential for enacting leadership in the field of social work and aging populations.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS IN AGING

RSSW offers continuing education workshops and certificates for professionals in the area of aging. The four Continuing Education Certificates include the:

- Advanced Certificate in Program in Gerontology
- Basic Certificate Program in Gerontology
- Certificate Program in Senior Housing Issues
- Certificate Program in Senior Services Management

CONTACT INFORMATION

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