



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY 2019

On 19 March 2019 the world is celebrating World Social Work Day (#WSWD2019) under the theme “Promoting the Importance of Healthy Relationships”. The South African Council for Social Service Professions recognise this day in appreciation of 32092 social workers, 10992 social auxiliary workers, 17160 student social workers and 11386 student social auxiliary workers who are registered as prescribed in the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978. Council’s Professional Board for Social Work oversees the regulation of social work profession, which include setting of standards, promoting ethical conduct, continuous professional development and the registration of specialties in social work.

In South Africa, social work has a long and rich history. Pre-democracy, many social workers were at the forefront of advocacy for equal rights and social justice for all South Africans. Still today, social workers, whether working at the coalface of service delivery in communities, in non-government organisations, in government, in business, or in private practice, the betterment of society, human rights and social justice remain central to the profession’s practice. Everyday social workers deal with the abuse of children, the elderly, women and other vulnerable groups through protection services, counselling and interventions. They also ensure quality services to persons with disabilities; income generation initiatives for unemployed persons; rehabilitation services for persons who have committed crimes; prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol abuse; mental health services; community development work to ensure sustainable livelihoods for people living in poverty; research on matters that impact our society; advocacy for change – the list is endless. All of this requires social workers and social auxiliary workers that have the knowledge and skills to build healthy relationships in families, communities and workplaces.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions has a legal obligation to ensure that social workers and social auxiliary workers practise in accordance with minimum standards; adhere to their code of ethics and be licensed to register to practise. No-one who is not registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions may practise as a social worker or social auxiliary worker.

As Council, we recognise that social workers and social auxiliary workers face many challenges every day in the course of their work, but also in their places of employment. High caseloads, lack of supportive infrastructure such as vehicles, access to other tools of the trade, amongst others, impact on the professional and personal lives of many. Council is urging employers, whether in the non-governmental sector or government sector, to create working environments that support social workers to execute their professional duties in an ethical manner.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions, the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work salute all social workers and social auxiliary workers in

our country and reminds them and other social service professionals about the motto, **NON NOBIS – Not for ourselves.**

More information about World Social Work Day is available here: <https://www.ifsw.org/social-work-action/world-social-work-day/world-social-work-day-2019/>

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ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/ Council) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 (the Act). Council has two Professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. Council, in conjunction with its Professional Boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration; education and training; professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with professional standards. It protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with Council in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practicing social work and child and youth care work. Registration is mandatory for social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, learner social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers and student child and youth care workers.