

Promoting human rights by developing the division of labour between highly educated social welfare professionals

Act on Social Welfare Professionals clarifies the rights and obligations of social welfare professionals

The right to practice as a licenced social welfare professional (social worker or social services professional) is in Finland legislated by the Act on Social Welfare Professionals. There are approximately 6 800 licenced social workers and 27 000 licenced social services professionals in Finland.

Based on the dual model of higher education social workers graduate from the universities with a master's degree in social work (European Quality Framework level 7). Social service professionals on the other hand get their bachelor's degrees (EQF level 6) at the universities of applied sciences.

One of the aims of the act is to develop the division of labour between professionals and thus to promote the benefit and security of clients and to guarantee services of good quality based on professional ethics too.

Human rights promotion integrated in Talentia's guideline for the division of labour

Union of Professional Social Workers Talentia has developed guideline to promote human rights-based division of labour between social workers and social service professionals. It emphasizes also the core competencies of licenced professionals and the objectives and methods of their work in relation to the active role of clients.

The framework of the guideline is based on the Act on Social Welfare Professionals and on the other social welfare legislation. The framework includes also the national definition of the clients' service process: the initiation of client service, the evaluation of service need, the recording of a client plan and the organizing and the implementation of services. Evaluation of the services and structural social work was added to the clients' process in Talentia's guideline to draw attention to them too.

The protection and promotion of human rights form the core of Talentia's guideline which makes visible the interdependence of social services and fulfilment of human rights in each phase of the clients' service process.

Collaboration and co-creation

The guideline can be applied both in social services and in multiprofessional and multidisciplinary working environments. It is of course necessary that clients too are participated. The re-evaluation and continuous development of the division of labour are embedded in the guideline.

Besides the collaboration and co-creation of the professionals and the clients the process needs also support and participation of leadership.

The challenges of implementation of the guideline lie in pressures and limited resources of every day social work. Therefore, the human rights -based division of labour between social welfare professionals should be part of strategic goals and objectives. The added values of the guideline are increased client satisfaction and wellbeing at work.

Read more in Finnish:

<https://www.talentia.fi/tyonjakomalli>