

Referral Guide: Social Worker

What they do, how they can help with your patients

Summary:

Primary Care Network (PCN) Social Workers seek to address the Social Determinants of Health that have, or the potential to have, a significant impact on health status. PCN Social Workers use a holistic and strengths-based approach in their assessment, treatment, and evaluation. PCN Social Workers strive to increase attachments to health care teams, coordinate resources and services, provide short term counselling and improve accessibility to health care and other supportive services. Additionally, PCN Social Workers provide advocacy for clients and their families.

Reason for Referral	Can Provide
Mental health and substance use support	• Brief counselling to promote stabilization, enhance coping capacities and gain self-management • Assessing risks and safety regarding abuse and/or neglect (physical, emotional, financial, sexual) or self-neglect • Creating safety plans with clients around intimate partner violence or suicide risk • Referrals to MH&SU resources • Caregiver support
Decision-making concerns and Advance Care Planning	• Information on Power of Attorney/Enduring Power of Attorney, Pension Trusteeships, Representation Agreements, Advanced Directives, Committee ships and referrals for help creating these documents. • Information on End-of-Life planning • Information on legislative requirements regarding capacity for specific decision making (ie health care consent, facility admissions, financial management) and referrals to appropriate resources if further assessment/intervention is required • Assist and support clients and their supports to navigate systems
Indigenous cultural support	• Provide culturally safe care to assist with addressing the barriers Indigenous peoples face within the health care system. • Collaborate with Indigenous agencies. • Provide information on Indigenous resources and benefits
Disability supports	• Goal setting and problem solving related to management of chronic disease • Health care system navigation

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	• Chronic disease and self-management education and support • Facilitating and coordinating referrals to other VCH programs (i.e. Home Health, Complex Rehab Supports) • Referrals to disability-related resources including financial, employment, social and peer support • Assist and support clients to apply for disability benefits, such as Persons with Disability, CPPD, Long Term Disability
Financial stressors	• Information and referrals regarding financial resources and benefits • Support with financial benefit applications
Legal support	• Information and referrals regarding legal supports and resources • Information and referrals regarding employment standards, citizenship and immigration, family and children
Care coordination	• Support and education to improve health literacy. • Arrange and coordinate required services and resources. • Facilitate and broker required interventions. • Facilitate communication amongst involved Health Care Professionals, patients and caregivers. • Support continued client engagement in care • Assisting client and team to create a holistic care plan
Health issues, medical benefits, and prescription needs	• Psychoeducation and support regarding new/changing diagnosis and chronic disease management. • Information and support applying for Provincial health benefits programs (i.e. MSP, Fair Pharmacare, Health Supplements, Medical Services Only, Health Supplements under Income Assistance) • Advocacy in accessing resources. • Referrals to community resources
Housing	• Information and help with applying for subsidized housing resources – for individuals, families with children, older adults. • Assistance with eviction or homelessness concerns (e.g. help accessing shelters, landlord or tenant rights, emergency funding) • Advocacy and liaising with community partners for complex housing issues
Immigrant, refugee, and newcomer supports	• Information on agencies, sponsorship concerns, family counselling, foreign worker support programs, networking and integration programs for newcomers, language resources, Interim Federal Health Program

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Transportation	• Information on affordable transportation options (e.g. BC Bus Pass Program for low-income seniors and Persons with Disabilities, HandyDART, HandyPass) • Assistance applying to transportation assistance programs (e.g. Volunteer Cancer Drivers Society, Better at Home)
Palliative/End of Life support	• Brief individual and family counselling • Resource referrals (ie support groups, bereavement information and supports, information and supports for children) • Support with Advanced Care Planning • Provide information and support on the legal provision of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)

PCN Social Work exclusion criteria (in addition to overarching PCN Program exclusion criteria):

- Locating housing
- Case management
- Legal direction/advice