



THE COLLEGE OF
SOCIAL WORK

The College of Social Work

A voice for the profession

In late 2009, the Social Work Task Force called for the creation of an independent and strong organisation to represent and support the social work profession. That organisation is The College of Social Work and it is now well on the way to being established.

Throughout 2010, we consulted with frontline social workers, managers, social work students, lecturers, academics, people who use services and carers to find out exactly what was needed from a future College of Social Work.

Over the past year, a College Development Team alongside two Co-Chairs and an Interim Board including frontline practitioners and a service user, have been working hard to develop a strong organisation, which will represent, guide and support you at every level and through every stage of your career.

The Task Force said The College would need to be a credible, well-informed and independent voice for social work.

That is exactly what we are striving for – a College developed and led BY social workers FOR social workers.

Working with you to make change happen – Prospective Members

In January 2011, we launched a major recruitment drive, urging social workers to join us as Prospective Members to help influence, create and test our services before we launch a full package of membership benefits to our paying members in 2012.

Over **4,000** people have already signed up to become Prospective Members of The College of Social Work and this number is still climbing.

Our Prospective Members are now actively engaged in helping us to develop and test The College's services. This way, we can make sure we really are offering social workers the expert support, guidance and advice that they have called for.

Speaking up for social work

The Policy and Communications Unit (PCU)

The College of Social Work's Policy and Communications Unit is now being set up with the support and involvement of our Prospective Members.

We want to change the current public perception of social work and will work hard to show people the benefits and changes that the profession is bringing to so many individuals, communities and families across England.

The PCU will generate and promote positive coverage of social work by developing sound relationships with the media and through representing the profession in public debates. We will work with Prospective Members to draw up thoughtful, well crafted policies on social work with children and adults, and will take a clear line on relevant government policy initiatives.

Media spokespeople

We are now assembling a group of social workers and social services managers who will act as spokespeople for the profession. Media training is now taking place. Our Prospective Members will rapidly become key spokespeople who will be available to comment on local and national news stories, helping to promote the public understanding of social work as a public service and a profession.

Separately, we are also working with employers to ensure that social workers are able to speak out on matters of general importance to their profession.

The Policy Group of the PCU

As part of the Policy Group of The College of Social Work, our Prospective Members will become advocates for the social work profession and will work alongside key decision makers in the government to influence and develop national policy and legislation that impacts on social work.

There are a number of major challenges facing the profession and we are now working with our Prospective Members to develop our own policy positions on the following areas:

- cuts to services and the impact on social workers
- employer standards and the provision of structured support for social workers
- initial and post qualifying education and training standards
- the need for clear career frameworks and guidance on specific capabilities that social workers must display at all stages of their careers.

Raising professional standards

The Social Work Reform Board will pass responsibility for raising standards through the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) to The College later this year. When fully developed, the PCF will set out clear and exacting standards for the education and professional development of social workers at every stage of their career.

We will support our members to meet these standards.

Working with students

We want to make sure that we give our future student members access to the best learning resources and to do this, we need to know how and where students look for information.

Our Student Prospective Members are now working with us on a number of 'Knowledge seeking behaviour' projects, so that we can determine the best way to provide extensive and high quality learning resources to students at every stage of their studies.

Join today as a Prospective Member and help to make the change

We don't expect things to change overnight, but we do know that we need your involvement and support to make an impact and to improve the future of such a valuable profession.

Prospective Membership is completely free! To find out more about becoming a Prospective Member and helping to shape the future of your College of Social Work, please visit our Prospective Membership pages at **www.collegeofsocialwork.org**

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