

## DHEC Regions

### Upstate

Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg, Union

### Midlands

Aiken, Barnwell, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lexington, Newberry, Richland, Saluda, York

### Pee Dee

Clarendon, Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Sumter, Williamsburg

### Lowcountry

Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, Jasper, Orangeburg



### Central Office

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## Public Health Social Work



**Making a  
difference  
since 1944.**



# Philosophy

Public health social workers address health from a broad perspective by **identifying and implementing strategies and interventions** that focus on times of transition from one developmental phase

to another throughout the life cycle. The major characteristic of public health social work is an epidemiological approach to identifying social problems affecting the health status and social functioning of all

population groups, with an **emphasis on primary prevention**. We focus on the **promotion of positive health behaviors** in the development of lifestyles by individuals, families and groups.

## History

Throughout the over 70-year history of social work services within the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), social workers have performed a variety of activities and functions including direct service, population-based public health planning and program administration. DHEC has a long history of being nationally recognized in the field of public health social work.

DHEC social workers are an essential part of the public health team who strive to improve the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities. They work across programs and are found in a variety of settings such as county health departments, schools and primary care facilities. Functions and activities include:

- Psychosocial assessment and counseling
- Family treatment
- Client advocacy and education
- Community organization and outreach
- Consultation and technical assistance
- Training and continuing education
- Emergency response
- Research
- Program development and evaluation
- Administration

## Mission

The mission of Public Health Social Work at DHEC is to promote the identification, prevention and alleviation of bio-psychosocial, environmental and health problems of the citizens of South Carolina. The social work profession is rooted in a set of core values, namely:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

## Practice

Public health social workers address health from a broad perspective by identifying and implementing strategies and interventions that focus on times of transition from one developmental phase to another throughout the life cycle. The major characteristic of public health social work is an epidemiological approach to identifying social problems affecting the health status and social functioning of all population groups, with an emphasis on primary prevention. We focus on the promotion of positive health behaviors in the development of lifestyles by individuals; families and groups; enhancement of the environment; and avoidance of risk.

## Populations Served

- Individuals, families, groups and communities
- Children and adolescents
- Adults with health risks
- Seniors with health problems
- Women of childbearing age
- Pregnant women and teens
- Children with special health care needs

Public health social workers are skilled in dealing with critical issues including: adjustment to health status, suicide, family and youth violence, disaster response, child abuse and neglect, elder abuse, substance abuse, family dysfunction, and teenage pregnancy prevention.

The benefits of social work intervention may be seen in a community's or individual's ability to manage major health concerns and health conditions, enhance access to appropriate medical and behavioral health care and overall improve the quality of life.