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TO THE ISSUE OF SOCIAL WORKERS TRAINING IN THE USA

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У статті розглядаються питання підготовки фахівців соціальної роботи різних рівнів у США. Дана характеристика основних етапів розвитку соціальної освіти в США (бакалаврських та магістерських програм). У США акредитуючим органом в сфері освіти соціальної роботи є Рада з питань освіти в соціальній роботі (CSWE). На сьогодні в США пропонується 367 програм підготовки бакалавра соціальної роботи, приблизно 102 школи соціальної роботи надають ступінь магістра соціальної роботи. Дослідження, проведене у 1991 році, показало, що в США 39% соціальних працівників працює в державному секторі, 29% працює в приватному секторі, 37% – в неприбутковому секторі.

Ключові слова: акредитація, рада з питань освіти в сфері соціальної роботи, асоціація шкіл соціальної роботи, волонтери, фахівець соціальної роботи, професійна підготовка фахівців соціальної роботи.

In the 90s of the twentieth century there has appeared the necessity to establish Social Work in Ukraine, the main objective of which is to regulate the legal, economic relations of an individual and society, to provide each person with the help and support, solving different social problems as well as effective social protection of every member of a society.

Professional social work is one of the main ways to respond to the new society social situation, its problems, opportunities. However this is one of the most important and complex tools of social control.

Professional training of social work specialists began in Ukraine only in the mid of the 90s of the XIX century and was associated with considerable difficulties conditioned with both the lack of practical experience in this sphere and significant research, theoretical developments on the current social work issues and

training of specialists for social services. The works of such home scientists as V.Vasylyev, I.Zvyeryeva, A.Kapska, I.Kozubovska, H.Laktionova, I.Myhovych, L.Mischyk, V.Polischuk, H.Popovych, V.Sydorov, N.Sobchak etc. research theoretical and methodological foundations of social work and some aspects of training of social workers and social pedagogues in Ukraine and abroad.

The issue of professional training of social workers in Ukraine is not enough researched unlike in many other countries (e.g. in the U.S.A, UK, Germany, etc.), where social services are well developed and original systems of professional social workers training at different levels are established. With the establishment of social education system in Ukraine, that meets the needs of society and international standards of training, the study and use of international experience of social education acquires special importance. Foreign experience bears the considerable interest for Ukraine, especially of those countries, where social work and social education have a long history and rich traditions. Great Britain and the USA are the countries with significant experience in training of social workers (professional training for social started here in the 90s of the XIX century).

Thus, the topicality of the problem lies in the possibility of creative use of foreign (the U.S.A) experience in the training of home social workers. The object of the study is the social system of higher education in the United States. The subject of research is: the basic stages, the content and forms of training of social work specialists in the higher American educational institutions.

At the end of the XIXth and beginning of the XXth century in many European countries (Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, France etc) and in the USA, Canada social work emerged as a particular type of professional activity that was developing alongside with

the activities of charitable organizations [1].

Nowadays the integral part of the USA higher education is the system of social workers training. At present social work schools, colleges and universities perform the training of social workers. Their programmes are performed at three levels: with bachelor degree, master degree and doctorate in social work on any accredited educational programme specializing in "social work".

Not all social services are provided by competent certified social workers. Many services are provided by people acting as, in scientific literature called, "indigenous workers". These could be the clients themselves, former clients or other people who know well the situation of a client, or it may be a group of clients having similar experience in dealing with problems of a different nature [2, p.78]. These workers are sometimes able more quickly than professionals to establish the contact with social work clients.

One should not underestimate the role of volunteers. The desire to give oneself, without getting paid, to help others is a characteristic of human society and is reflected in the activities of millions of people who give their time, energy and talents to make this world a better place. Today social workers work closely with volunteers in many agencies. Qualification of volunteers varies depending on the activities they perform.

Public colleges train "unprofessional" staff to work in social agencies and offer a degree program of Associates of Arts, which by its content may vary depending on the college that it offers. The purpose of this programme is to prepare specialists for the very narrow profile – technician in institutions for the mentally disturbed people, an assistant on the provision of public services, etc. This training programme usually involves the study of the following subjects: human growth and behavior, social problems, social service delivery systems, personal values and self-awareness, basic communication skills, as well as practice with the ability to apply the theory of obtained knowledge.

Social work has traditionally had close links with the social sciences. It starts with basic knowledge of psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, developing the theoretical framework for understanding the individual, family, group, organization, community and the impact of culture on them. Often the baccalaureate program in social work can be found at Sociology Faculties. Graduates of this programme are able to perform specific tasks that include: interviews with collecting the necessary data, collection of money, food delivery, housing services etc.

For *basic social workers* it is necessary to acquire professional practical skills, theoretical knowledge and values that under normal circumstances one cannot get from daily experience, only through formal education with specialty of "social work." Such knowledge is different from the pilot as it is based on a conceptual and theoretical knowledge of personal and social interaction. For a *basic social worker* the bachelor degree in social work is required on a programme that is accredited by the Council on education in the field of social work. In 1984 an important step has been made in raising the quality of social education at the undergraduate level. New standards for accreditation and solid curriculum have been developed. The standards clarified expectations of

the specific programme in accordance with its purpose, structure, resources [3].

For the *specialized social worker* the master degree in social work is required on a program that is accredited by the Council on education in the field of social work. Practice at this level requires specific skills, therapeutic techniques in at least one method, as well as general knowledge of human development, the impact of social factors on human personality. Specialized practice requires the ability to build relationships with individuals and groups using the methods of research, administration, planning methods and solving social problems.

Before the appearance of bachelor degree in social education and a basic social worker, the generally accepted level of training in the practice of social work was the level of social work specialist. Historically master degree in social work education was based on training course.

Nowadays in the United States 367 programmes of Social Work Bachelor are offered, about 102 social work schools offer master degree in social work [4, p.458]. Almost all schools of social work invite individuals from all educational levels (from those who just graduated from college to those returning to study after many years of professional and life experience). Overall, social work schools provide benefits to those who already have experience. The average age of students entering the speciality is 25-30 years. Many schools also provide combined degrees. The popular combination of degrees is law and public health.

The *independent social worker* requires a master degree in social work on an accredited programme and at least 2 years of post-paster experience under appropriate professional supervision as it is necessary to demonstrate the proper practice management skills and expertise in own training. Independent level of practice is based on continuous professional development under supervision, it certifies the regular use of professional skills and abilities in an independent private practice. An independent social worker has to develop and integrate knowledge, values and skills of social work in at least one of the areas of social work practice. He also needs to work independently in any situation, be prepared to practice outside social agencies, be able to carry out supervision and consult with other social workers.

Membership in the Academy of Certified Social Workers is one of the indicators of achievements of an independent social worker. This Academy was established in 1960 to protect clients from incompetent inadequately trained practitioners. The Academy also aims at establishing the more favorable image of the profession to the public. To join the Academy you must be a full member of the National Association of Social Workers, have at least 2 years of experience in practice, submit letters of recommendation from professionals, get enough points on the exam (test), which is conducted by the Academy.

National Association of Social Workers has developed two other certified programmes (with the qualification of clinical and school social worker) to confirm the fact that employees are ready to practice independently in specialized areas. In order to get the level of qualified clinical social worker, social worker must complete a minimum of 2 years of clinical practice (after obtaining

a master degree in social work) at an agency, which is under the supervision of an experienced clinical social worker. In addition, an applicant must obtain a license from the Academy of Certified Social Workers or state license and submit positive recommendations from colleagues.

School Social Work Specialist must meet similar requirements and receive a passing score on the test (School Social Worker Specialty Area Test), which is conducted by the National Teacher's Examination.

Practice *social worker of the highest level* foresees the performance of social and organizational obligations with the aim of professional development, analysis, research, policy assignments. This level requires a special skill in theoretical, practical, managerial or political sphere, the ability to conduct research in the field of social welfare. Usually a social worker of the highest level holds a PhD in social work in addition to a master degree in social work. This level is provided to the most experienced practitioners. Compared to other professions there is relatively small number of professionals trying to get

this professional level.

To get this level one needs to be a Diplomate in Clinical Social Work offered by National Association of Social Workers. In turn, to be recognized diploma holder, the applicant must complete training in a master degree in social work, or have the highest clinical state license, have at least 5 years post-master experience in clinics, pass an exam (essay on a specific case), get the highest score from supervisor. A similar classification – Board Certified Diplomate – with similar requirements is provided by independent American Board of Examiners in Clinic Social Work. Education on the doctorate level (DSW or Ph.D.) is a parallel path to becoming a qualified social worker of the highest level.

Thus, the United States became one of the first countries where social work took shape as a special kind of professional activity. In this country the training of social workers began in the 80-90s of the XIXth century. At present social services and their staffing has reached a very high level of development.

Література та джерела

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В статье рассматриваются вопросы подготовки специалистов социальной работы разных уровней в США. Дана характеристика основных этапов развития социального образования в США (бакалаврских и магистерских программ). В США аккредитующим органом в сфере образования по социальной работе является Американский совет по вопросам образования в сфере социальной работы. В настоящее время существует около 367 программ подготовки бакалавров социальной работы. Примерно 102 школ социальной работы обеспечивают подготовку по степени магистра социальной работы. В США социальные работники предоставляют услуги в государственном секторе – 39%, 29% – в частном, 37% – в некоммерческом.

Ключевые слова: аккредитация, совет по вопросам образования в сфере социальной работы, ассоциация школ социальной работы, волонтеры, специалист социальной работы, профессиональная подготовка специалистов социальной работы.

The article considers the issues of content and forms of organisation of Social Work specialists training on different levels (bachelors, masters) in the USA. The USA accreditation body in the sphere of Social Work education is Council on Social Work Education. At present there are approximately 367 programmes of training of social work bachelors. Approximately 102 schools of social work provide degrees of masters of social work. In the USA 39% of social workers provide services in the state sector, 29% – in the private, 37% – in the non-for profit.

Key words: accreditation, Council on Social Work Education, Association of Schools of Social Work, volunteer, specialist of social work, professional training.