

Geriatric Social Work Competency Scale
Developed by the Hartford Practicum Partnership Program
and revised/adopted by the CSWE Gero-Ed Center

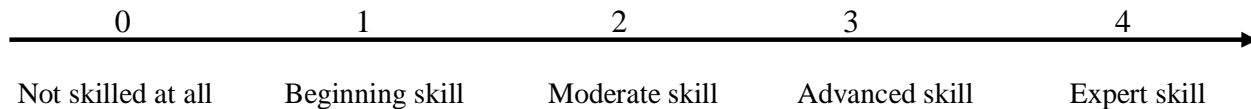
To Be Used For Rating Student Competency Attainment

The following is a listing of skills recognized by gerontological social workers as important to social workers effectively working with and on behalf of older adults and their families. Completion of this scale requires careful self-assessment and recognition that few practitioners would receive the rating of 4 for all skills. This scale can capture self-assessment of scale development across the learning continuum, from BSW, to MSW and post-MSW.

Please use the scale below to thoughtfully rate your current skill:

- 0 = Not skilled at all (I have no experience with this skill)
- 1 = Beginning skill (I have to consciously work at this skill)
- 2 = Moderate skill (This skill is becoming more integrated in my practice)
- 3 = Advanced skill (This skill is done with confidence and is an integral part of my practice)
- 4 = Expert skill (I complete this skill with sufficient mastery to teach others)

Please note that field supervisors could also use this scale to assess students' competencies.



Please add any comments and/ or suggestions regarding the skills in each section.

I. VALUES, ETHICS, AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES Knowledge and value base, which is applied through skills/competencies.	Skill Level (0 -4)
1. Assess and address values and biases regarding aging.	_____
2. Respect and promote older adult clients' right to dignity and self-determination.	_____
3. Apply ethical principles to <i>decisions</i> on behalf of all older clients with special attention to those who have limited decisional capacity.	_____
4. Respect diversity among older adult clients, families, and professionals (e.g., class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation).	_____
5. Address the cultural, spiritual, and ethnic values and beliefs of older adults and families.	_____

6. Relate concepts and theories of aging to social work practice (e.g., cohorts, normal aging, and life course perspective).	_____
7. Relate social work perspectives and related theories to practice with older adults (e.g., person-in environment, social justice).	_____
8. Identify issues related to losses, changes, and transitions over their life cycle in designing interventions.	_____
9. Support persons and families dealing with end-of-life issues related to dying, death, and bereavement.	_____
10. Understand the perspective and values of social work in relation to working effectively with other disciplines in geriatric interdisciplinary practice.	_____

Comments _____

II. ASSESSMENT	Skill Level (0 -4)
1. Use empathy and sensitive interviewing skills to engage older clients in identifying their strengths and problems.	_____
2. Adapt interviewing methods to potential sensory, language, and cognitive limitations of the older adult.	_____
3. Conduct a comprehensive geriatric assessment (bio-psychosocial evaluation).	_____
4. Ascertain health status and assess physical functioning (e.g., ADLs and IADLs) of older clients.	_____
5. Assess cognitive functioning and mental health status of older clients (e.g., depression, dementia).	_____
6. Assess social functioning (e.g., social skills, social activity level) and social support of older clients.	_____
7. Assess caregivers' needs and level of stress.	_____

8. Administer and interpret standardized assessment and diagnostic tools that are appropriate for use with older adults (e.g., depression scale, Mini-Mental Status Exam).	_____
9. Develop clear, timely, and appropriate service plans with measurable objectives for older adults.	_____
10. Reevaluate and adjust service plans for older adults on a continuing basis.	_____

Comments _____

III. INTERVENTION	Skill Level (0 - 4)
1. Establish rapport and maintain an effective working relationship with older adults and family members.	_____
2. Enhance the coping capacities and mental health of older persons through a variety of therapy modalities (e.g., supportive, psychodynamic).	_____
3. Utilize group interventions with older adults and their families (e.g., bereavement groups, reminiscence groups).	_____
4. Mediate situations with angry or hostile older adults and/or family members.	_____
5. Assist caregivers to reduce their stress levels and maintain their own mental and physical health.	_____
6. Provide social work case management to link elders and their families to resources and services.	_____
7. Use educational strategies to provide older persons and their families with information related to wellness and disease management (e.g., Alzheimer's disease, end of life care).	_____
8. Apply skills in termination in work with older adults and their families.	_____
9. Advocate on behalf of clients with agencies and other professionals to help elders obtain quality services.	_____

10. Adhere to laws and public policies related to older adults (e.g., elder abuse reporting, legal guardianship, advance directives).	_____
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Comments _____

IV. AGING SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND POLICIES	Skill Level (0 - 4)
1. Provide outreach to older adults and their families to ensure appropriate use of the service continuum.	_____
2. Adapt organizational policies, procedures, and resources to facilitate the provision of services to diverse older adults and their family caregivers.	_____
3. Identify and develop strategies to address service gaps, fragmentation, discrimination, and barriers that impact older persons.	_____
4. Include older adults in planning and designing programs.	_____
5. Develop program budgets that take into account diverse sources of financial support for the older population.	_____
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of practice and programs in achieving intended outcomes for older adults.	_____
7. Apply evaluation and research findings to improve practice and program outcomes.	_____
8. Advocate and organize with the service providers, community organizations, policy makers, and the public to meet the needs and issues of a growing aging population.	_____
9. Identify the availability of resources and resource systems for older adults and their families.	_____
10. Assess and address any negative impacts of social and health care policies on practice with historically disadvantaged populations.	_____

Comments _____