

## M10-EN.14 SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOME CARE SERVICES

Social workers work with a variety of kinds of people. They usually work in community health centres, schools, hospitals, day care facilities, public and private child welfare organisations, etc. Very often, social workers visit homes for inspections of home conditions, or interviews.

The most common hazards a social worker might face are work related stress and violence.

- Social workers help their clients to solve problems on the most personal level, something that makes them very vulnerable
- The clients do not always want to see a social worker (i.e. a child welfare where parental abilities are being evaluated)
- Language barriers might exist, affecting the easy of communication

Therefore, for the prevention of stress or violence at work, proper training, and modification of the work environment, as well good communication system are essential. Especially those working in hospitals, they are vulnerable to exposure to infectious diseases.

Home care workers provide services depending on the needs of the clients that are being served. These can be: “basic activities of daily living”, (e.g. bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, feeding), and “instrumental activities of daily living” (i.e. housekeeping, shopping, food preparation and serving, etc). Home care workers may give injections, dispense medications and provide treatments such as passive exercise and massage as prescribed by the client’s doctor. The most important service is that of companionship and assisting the client to participate in recreational activities.

The most common **hazards** home care workers have to face are:

- Working alone without assistance
- Sometimes lack of education or training or supervision
- Back pain and musculoskeletal injuries (during lifting, transferring clients, etc)
- Violence
- Infectious diseases
- Household chemicals and detergents
- Sexual harassment
- Work related stress

Possible solutions can be the proper training and education of home care workers on recognizing and avoiding any hazards, on lifting and handling the clients, as well regular meetings with supervisors.

Both Social Services and Home Care Services can be analysed further and in more detail, but they are beyond of the scope of this module.