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## Inside Flap

### Welcome

This brochure is for the consumer of mental-emotional healthcare services, and is intended to do the following:

- ❖ *Introduce Clinical Social Workers as experienced professionals whose skills include psychotherapy, counseling, and case management.*
- ❖ *Identify the services that Clinical Social Workers provide.*
- ❖ *Describe Clinical Social Workers credentials, including state licensure and national board-certification.*
- ❖ *Suggest some questions that you should consider asking at the outset of your relationship with a Clinical Social Worker.*

This brochure is published by the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (ABE), which sets standards and issues a national certification, the Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work, for clinical social workers who are advanced in their profession.

ABE encourages consumers to use the services of Board Certified Diplomates and to inform themselves about their education, experience, and credentials. Remember: you deserve to have a clinician whom you trust and feel comfortable with.

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## Back Cover

### Clinical Social Work Services & You

You, as a consumer, have a right to get answers to your questions, before your first face-to-face meeting with a clinician.

#### *Are Clinical Social Workers services covered by insurance?*

Most services offered by Clinical Social Workers are covered by your healthcare benefits plan. Check the directory of your insurance carrier to see if his/her name is listed, and *ask the clinician about this.*

#### *What about privacy?*

Privacy is at the heart of the relationship between you and your Clinical Social Worker. With very few exceptions, clinicians are ethics-bound to keep their discussions with you totally private. *Ask the clinician about this.*

#### *Other questions to ask the Clinical Social Worker...*

- How long have you been in practice?
- What credentials do you hold?
- How can I verify the credentials?
- What are your specialty areas (i.e. eating disorders, family issues, etc.)?
- How will you help me with my problem?
- How many sessions will I need?
- What are your fees and how do you bill?
- How do you protect the privacy of records?

*Remember: you have a right to receive competent services, and to report unethical practice to the state's social-work licensing board and (in the case of a Board Certified Diplomate) to the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work.*

## Front Cover

# Help & Healing...

### **What to expect from Clinical Social Workers –**

*America's largest group of professionals treating personal and inter-personal problems, from daily crises to life's most difficult situations-*

*And, how to identify those who are board-certified at the national level.*

## Inside Spread

### **Clinical Social Workers – Helping People Change Their Lives for the Better**

#### *What Is A Clinical Social Worker?*

Clinical Social Workers are social workers with a difference: their work is like that of psychologists or psychiatrists, for they counsel people to deal with and solve problems. Clinical social workers are usually psychotherapists, and they are the largest mental-healthcare provider group in the U.S., assisting millions of people in every state and almost every county and town.

Clinical Social Workers are educated at the master's level (some hold doctorates), and are trained for years, under supervision from advanced professionals, to provide expert services.

#### *What Kind Of Help Do Clinical Social Workers Provide?*

They use an approach that values each person as an individual, that considers the many factors that can create personal problems, and that helps individuals, couples, and families to reach the goal of health and well-being.

The benefits that Clinical Social Workers can help people to achieve - coping with and resolving problems, better relationships and physical health, greater productivity, and peace of mind - can be life-changing.

#### *What Do Clinical Social Workers Do?*

Clinical Social Workers are experts at helping people to deal with personal and inter-personal issues and with matters relating to workplace, family, race, culture, and community. They offer services in a very wide range of treatment areas, some of which are the following:

- ❖ *Family issues*
- ❖ *Aging*
- ❖ *Anxiety disorders*
- ❖ *Marital/couples issues*
- ❖ *Divorce and custody*
- ❖ *Identity disorders*
- ❖ *Chronic pain*
- ❖ *Mood disorders (e.g. depression)*
- ❖ *Substance abuse*
- ❖ *Eating disorders*
- ❖ *HIV/AIDS*
- ❖ *Psychotic disorders*
- ❖ *Trauma*
- ❖ *Post-traumatic stress*
- ❖ *Developmental disorders*
- ❖ *End-of-life*
- ❖ *Sexual disorders... and the list continues.*

Most Clinical Social Workers' specialize in treating a few of these problems and disorders, but are able to recognize other kinds of problems and can arrange for people to get help in those areas too. This comes from the Clinical Social Workers training, which is to act as a member of a treatment team, and to put the client's needs first.

#### *Clinical Social Workers' Credentials*

In order to practice professionally, a Clinical Social Worker, after graduate school and years of supervision, must have a state-issued license or registration. In most states, there is an extra level of licensure that applies only to Clinical Social Workers. State licensure protects the public and ensures that minimal standards of competency are met.

At the advanced level of practice, Clinical Social Workers may earn national certification. The Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work, issued by the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work, is one such certification - and a strong statement about the clinician's commitment to advanced practice. Every year, Board Certified Diplomates attest to being current in practice, state-licensed, and knowledgeable about new developments in treatment and skills.

Board Certified Diplomates are among the leaders in their field. They work in every state and almost every county, and are easily found through a free website-based OnLine Directory (see [www.abecsw.org](http://www.abecsw.org) and click on "Directory of BCD Clinicians"). Most of them have a minimum of 15 years of post-graduate experience, and none has less than five years.