

Capabilities Statement for social workers in England who work with older people



BASW
England

The professional association for
social work and social workers

www.basw.co.uk



Department
of Health &
Social Care

dh.gov.uk

Contents

Forewords	3
Statement overview	4
Social work with older people	5
Capabilities at qualification	7
Capabilities at the end of the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment	8
Capabilities at social worker to experienced social worker level.....	9
Capabilities at advanced social worker level	14
Capabilities at strategic social worker level	15
Appendix 1: Acronyms	16
Appendix 2: Levels of this Statement	17
Appendix 3: How this statement fits with other frameworks	18

Forewords

I am delighted to endorse this British Association of Social Workers (BASW) Capabilities Statement for social work with older people, setting out the knowledge, skills and values that social workers need to work with older people. This statement has been developed by the social work profession, in partnership with older people, carers and diverse partner organisations. It aims to highlight the importance of this area of work, strengthen social workers' practice at all levels and build support and expertise, so that excellent social work with older people in England can flourish.

A large proportion of social work is with older people and will become even more of a priority as the population ages. It is important that we recognise the value, expertise, and knowledge of the current social work workforce and have talented, committed, recognised and supported social workers in this area of practice for the future.

Evidence points to social work being able to support older people successfully to have good relationships, remain at home for longer and plan and live a good life until the end of life.

Social work with older people requires specific

expertise, as during a lifetime, people experience complex situations, change and loss. Social workers can identify the strengths that older people can bring to maintain their independence and quality of life and ensure that their rights and wishes are upheld.

We hope this statement will help social workers and other professionals to recognise the importance and value of working in this area.

It is intended as helpful guidance to support the development of social work and increase recognition for this essential area of practice. The statement will enable social workers to plan their professional development and to aim for great practice that can change older people's lives for the better.



Jacqui Doyle-Price, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Care and Mental Health



Social work with older people is one of the most important areas of social care and as the population ages, demand for social workers specialising in this area of practice is set to increase. In spite of this, however, there has been less focus in developing and

implementing practice standards to support high quality social work in this crucial area.

While we have seen a move in recent years from specialist areas of adult social work to generic teams working with people of all ages, for social workers working with older people, there is a need for additional skills, knowledge, values and approaches which recognise the increasingly complex needs of the older population and which enable social workers to lead and challenge across an integrated health, care and housing system.

To do this will require increased awareness and understanding of the range of factors which characterise ageing and older age – including the impact of diversity and generational inequalities – alongside a willingness to develop and improve services, set practice standards and demonstrate leadership across social workers' professional boundaries.

Adapting conversations and approaches to the individual's personality and preferences, taking the time to listen, understand and respond to the issues, concerns and fears the older person may have, is essential to developing and enhancing this key area of practice and ensuring that people are supported to live well until the end of life.

This statement and development pathway, developed by the British Association of Social Work (BASW), follows publication in 2016 of resources for social work with older people by the Department of Health. The statement sets out the importance of this specialist area of practice; the knowledge and skills required for social work at all levels, from newly qualified to senior practitioners and senior managers; and shows how these capabilities develop and deepen through experience and ongoing professional development.

I commend these resources to you and hope they will prove a valuable addition to developing excellent social work practice and improving the quality of life for older people and those who care for them.



Lyn Romeo, Chief Social Worker for Adults

Statement overview

“It’s important for social workers to know what we expect and need, so they know if they’re doing a good job and can be measured on it.” (Older person’s view)

This Capabilities Statement (the Statement) sets out the knowledge, skills and values that social workers need to work well with older people.

The Statement was developed by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) in partnership with stakeholders, including social workers and older people, those who support them as carers and family members, and relevant organisations. The Statement is owned by the social work profession, through BASW. It is endorsed by the Department of Health and implemented by the adult social care sector.

The Statement sets out enhanced capabilities for five different levels of a social work career, based on the levels in the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) for social workers in England. The main capabilities are aimed at social workers and experienced social workers who work directly with older people in any setting. This is where particular knowledge, skills and values relating to older people are most required. The Statement also sets out capabilities to consider in social work qualifying courses and in the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), where it is important to consider social work with older people. It also includes capabilities for social workers working at advanced and at strategic levels. These levels will oversee and lead social work with older people. (See Appendix 2).

These capabilities do not duplicate the registration standards, the capabilities in the PCF or the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS). Instead they provide *more specific and detailed capabilities that enhance social work with older people.* (See Appendix 3).

We recognise that many social workers who work with older people also work with younger adults and families. Social workers in any role can look at the capabilities and see how, in particular, they can develop in order to work well with older people.

The Statement provides a national set of capabilities for social work with older people in England. There is no requirement to meet all of the capabilities. They are not mandatory and are not a checklist. They are intended as helpful guidance to enhance social work development and recognition in this essential area of social work. They reflect what the evidence suggests will promote older people’s well-being.



Developing individual capabilities requires a commitment to continuing professional development (CPD) by social workers. It also requires appropriate support from educators, managers, employers and government. Alongside this Statement there is a CPD Pathway that sets out how social workers can learn and develop, and be supported to acquire the capabilities in the Statement.

There is a list of acronyms in Appendix 1.

For more information on the revised PCF guidance see www.basw.co.uk/pcf

Social work with older people

“It is important that it isn’t assumed that anyone can work with older people; older people deserve to have people with the right knowledge and skills working with them. Some of the knowledge and skills is the same as for working with other people, but there are some specialist elements too.” (Older people’s feedback)



Social work “is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance well-being.”¹

Social workers “work alongside people, to empower them to make positive change in their lives in order to improve their well-being and independence... They work in a way that takes account of all parts of a person’s life whilst striving to keep them at the centre of decision making. This includes close working with other agencies... Social workers seek to understand the views and wishes of the person in order to ensure their voice is heard in decision making. Social workers use their knowledge of the law to support their decision making where an individual is unable to make their own decisions and ensure the protection of the person’s human rights.”²

¹ Global Definition of Social Work, approved by the International Federation of Social Workers General Meeting and the International Association of Schools of Social Work General Assembly in July 2014

² Taken from Skills for Care (2017) Occupational description for the Social Work apprenticeship standard



Older people are a large and very varied group. Often older age is defined as over 65 years old. However, older people have varied experiences of ageing and the life course. Most older people in contact with social workers have complex needs. Many older people are carers. Social work with older people is concerned with maintaining and enhancing the quality of life and well-being of older people and people close to them, and with promoting dignity, choice, independence and interdependence.³

Gerontological social work is social work with older people.

Social work is a single profession with core knowledge, skills and values. Social workers work in a personalised and strengths-based way, upholding rights and assessing for care and support needs alongside people's strengths, resilience and potential.⁴

For experienced social workers working with older people the core 'skill set' that all social workers possess is enhanced by an additional set of more specific capabilities.⁵ These enhanced capabilities derive from evidence from research, practice experience and from older people themselves. This evidence highlights that:

- Older people face particular complex needs and situations arising across the life course with its associated changes and transitions
- Inequalities persist, deepen and widen across the life course
- Age discrimination (and its interaction with other areas of inequality) impacts on older people's access to appropriate care and support.

Social workers are in a unique position to work with older people and to complement the roles of other professions and agencies. The Statement will:

- Highlight the importance of social work with older people and attract social workers to work in this area (at all levels, and particularly qualifying and ASYE levels)
- Strengthen and consolidate the practice of social work in this area (social worker to experienced social worker level)
- Build recognition, oversight, value and support for social work with older people (advanced level)
- Promote and develop practice, research and education in this area through leadership (strategic level).

The Statement will be useful for others, including older people and people close to them, to identify what social workers offer and to support partnership working. We acknowledge and value the expertise of other staff who work with older people, and trust that the Statement may be useful in their professional development as well.

³ Milne A, Sullivan MP, Tanner D, Richards S, Ray M, Lloyd L, Beech C and Phillips J (2014) Social work with older people: a vision for the future

⁴ Think Local Act Personal (2015) Developing a wellbeing and strengths-based approach to social work practice: changing culture

⁵ Milne et al, Social work with older people

Capabilities at qualification

The capabilities below should be incorporated into learning during a generic social work qualification course. All capabilities are *more specific and detailed* than the registration standards and the PCF.

I have an understanding and appreciation of social work with older people as part of general social work practice

Values and ethics

I understand the principles of strengths and rights based social work with older people, I recognise that later life is not a static experience or the same for everyone, and recognise the value and importance of different social and cultural perspectives on later life

Diversity and equality

I recognise the impact of age discrimination and its interaction with other areas of discrimination and oppression

Rights, justice & economic wellbeing

I recognise the impact of powerlessness on older age, for example from poverty, social exclusion or lack of capacity to make a decision, and start to explore the role of social workers in countering this

Knowledge

I value and take account of the expertise and experience of older people, know the [United Nations Principles for Older Persons](#)⁶, understand the implications of age as a protected characteristic in the Equality Act, and start to learn from gerontological theory and research

Critical reflection and analysis

I start to reflect on the different impacts of ageing, of significant life events, and of the older person's understandings of meaning and aspirations in their life

Skills and interventions

I recognise the complexity of older people's lives and situations, including the impact of caring and being cared for, and am able to engage with and build relationships with older people

Contexts and organisations

I understand that older people experience multiple needs and circumstances, and require a joined-up response from care and support

Professional leadership

I start to advocate for the importance of social work with older people and their carers

Professionalism

I recognise that social work with older people has distinctive elements due to the impact of life course experiences and of ageing



⁶ www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OlderPersons.aspx

Capabilities at the end of the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

The capabilities below should be incorporated into the ASYE for social workers who have contact with older people. These capabilities are *more specific and detailed* than the PCF, ASYE and Knowledge and Skills Statement for Social Workers with Adults.

I am able to work confidently and capably with older people, and seek specialist input as needed

Values and ethics

I take a strengths and rights based approach in recognising and responding to the complexity and uniqueness of experiences of ageing for older people and for their relationships

Diversity and equality

I challenge age discrimination, including structural discrimination in resource allocation, and its interaction with other forms of discrimination and oppression

Rights, justice & economic wellbeing

I recognise the combined impact of experience across the life course, societal attitudes to older people, and loss – including of capacity to make specific decisions – and I uphold older people's rights to make decisions and choices

Knowledge

I understand and apply knowledge about: the impact of ageing, changing health and transitions in older age; the most common age-related physical and mental health issues – including dementia – and their nature and impact; law, policy and systems relating to older people; and relevant gerontological theory and research

Critical reflection and analysis

I start to develop a critically reflective understanding of how people discuss age, as well as my own beliefs and biases around ageing, and tailor my practice in response

Skills and interventions

I recognise the complexities arising from ageing and the life course, and I use this understanding to overcome barriers to forming a relationship, to inform my interventions and to work co-productively in partnership with older people

Contexts and organisations

I demonstrate awareness of changes in the social, cultural, political and economic context for older people, in demography, and in welfare, and how these impact on social work with older people and the availability of resources

Professional leadership

I actively advocate for social work with older people as a distinct area of practice within a generic social work profession

Professionalism

I am able to explain and demonstrate the purpose and value of social work with older people within the wider care system and to develop my own expertise



Capabilities at social worker to experienced social worker level

The capabilities below should be acquired by social workers who work with older people to enhance their practice as they develop expertise and experience in this area of work. This is where the focus of the Statement is because most older people who have contact with social workers are likely to have complex needs. These capabilities are *more specific and detailed* than the PCF.

I demonstrate and model expert and effective practice, and a commitment to developing specific capabilities

Values and ethics

“See the strengths in people not just problems.” (Older person’s view)

I have absolute respect for the lives older people have lived and live, and the experience they have gained, and work with them to develop their own strengths and capabilities.

I manage ethical dilemmas of conflicting views, aspirations and opportunities relating to older people. I challenge overprotective attitudes to older people and promote their agency. I address possible tensions between my own professional stance and that of the older person. I engage ethically with older people at risk who do not want social work intervention to achieve the best outcomes possible.

I apply the [United Nations Principles for Older Persons](#)⁷. I enable and encourage aspirations that older people have, including when mental capacity is lacking and at end of life. I maintain optimism about what older people can and do contribute to society as individuals and as a group. I challenge limited assumptions about older people.

Diversity and equality

“Too often assumptions are made about what older people should like and how they should behave.” (Older people’s feedback)

I understand the diversity of an increasingly varied older population including strengths, needs, characteristics, preferences and circumstances. I strive to make sense of older people’s individual experiences and explain how current society relates to these.

I understand how age discrimination can intersect with other dimensions of social inequality such as sexism, racism or other oppressions. I address the interrelated impacts on health and well-being of disadvantages across the life course, long-term physical and/or mental ill health, frailty, poverty, vulnerability, uncertainty, change, risk, and transition. I understand the intersection of religion, spirituality and ageing. I work explicitly against abuse of power and age discrimination, and promote empowerment, equality and social inclusion. I challenge limitations on older people’s choices, for example about sexuality, sexual identity and gender identity. I support others to recognise and challenge age discrimination.

I work with older people who are at risk of unnecessary or inappropriate care in order to prevent or minimise transitions that are likely to have adverse consequences for their well-being, and to improve the quality, outcomes and efficiency of the care provided.



⁷ www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OlderPersons.aspx

“Know how not to patronise people.” (Older person’s view)

I understand and respond to evidence around inequalities in relation to income, social class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability persisting into later life. I actively research and challenge structural age discrimination in resource allocation.

I enable older people to enhance their social networks and activity, and reduce isolation and loneliness. I support older people to preserve goals, values and relationships and to adapt by employing cognitive coping mechanisms, as well as practical strategies.

I advocate alongside older people, including self-funders, their carers and people close to them to navigate the complex system of services. I strive to ensure information and services for older people are available, including age related benefits. I am able to support older people undergoing complicated financial assessments for services. I identify and promote what quality means from older people’s perspectives and facilitate them to communicate this. I advocate for the right of older people to access good quality care including through work with regulators.

I use the law to uphold older people’s rights, including when there is conflict, when someone does not have capacity to make a decision, and at the end of life.



Knowledge

“Understand the impact of loss, of things that matter.” (Older person’s view)

I have extensive knowledge about specific practice, research, theory, and law and policy relating to ageing. Detailed areas of my knowledge may include:

- The impact of social, cultural, economic and other contexts on experiences across the life course and in older age
- Gerontological social work research and theory
- Models and approaches for intervention in older age
- Grief, loss, bereavement and the impact of cumulative or concurrent losses
- Loneliness and social isolation in older age
- Critical understandings of the concepts of independence and dependency in relationships
- Intergenerational approaches across families, networks and communities
- A critical understanding of the development of the history of older people’s services and their impact
- Law, policy, guidance and practice relating to older people, including the application of the Care Act 2014, Equality Act 2010, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, Making Safeguarding Personal, Lasting Powers of Attorney, Advance Care Planning, Court of Protection, Mental Health Act 2007, role of the Approved Mental Health Professional, Continuing Health Care
- Age-related health conditions and the impact of multiple health conditions
- Age-related sensory impairment and dual sensory loss

- The impact of age on disability and vice versa
- Dementia, depression and other mental health issues in older age
- Medication associated with common age-related conditions
- Frailty as a distinctive health state related to the ageing process and its impact
- The necessary interplay between the social and medical models in responses to health changes in ageing
- Knowledge of specialist services related to older age including housing, health care, finance
- Ethical practice in the use of emerging technologies and their potential to support older people's well-being
- The role of the Care Quality Commission and quality assurance frameworks for older people's services
- The impact of and interventions in specific settings including prisons, hospitals, care homes
- Individual-specific knowledge including the culture, history and beliefs that an older person identifies with
- The impact of life changes as factors for older people in self-harm, suicidal ideation and behaviour
- Other age-related professional guidance including NICE guidelines and best practice from other professionals and agencies.

I actively maintain my knowledge as these areas develop.

Critical reflection and analysis

“Know where people are on their life journey.” (Older person's view)

I engage reflexively with my assumptions, hopes and fears about my own ageing, and how these are shaped by encounters with older people.

I grasp the complexity of older people's lives. I undertake clear analysis, critical thinking, decision making, planning and recording with older people. I recognise and combat the tensions between policies and the realities of older people's lives in order to promote service improvements.

Skills and interventions

“Be able to help people help themselves.”
(Older person's view)

I have developed expertise in rights and strengths-based work with older people and their carers, families, networks and communities - based on gerontological research and theory, practice experience and older people's views, and I act as a role model for others. Detailed areas of my practice expertise may include:

Relationships:

- Expertise in communication with older people, for example with sensory impairment, aphasia or memory impairment
- Ability to engage older people who are socially invisible or excluded

Assessment

- Person-centred, bio-psycho-social assessment that addresses all of the person's needs, including their medical, psychological, emotional, social, personal, sexual, spiritual and cultural needs; sight, hearing and communication needs; and accommodation and environmental care needs
- Use of biographical and narrative approaches with older people as a sensitive way of developing insights into needs and how these might be addressed



Care and Support

- Use of evidence-informed approaches to sustain and build older people's strengths, life course coping strategies and resilience – physical, social and emotional
- Preventative work to combat the impact of poverty, isolation, disability, health problems etc. across the life course
- Development of care plans that recognise the inter-related nature of multiple long-term conditions
- Integrated and partnership work to address complexity and enable transitions
- Coordination of care and support for older people across a range of organisations, agencies and settings, and navigation for older people through systems
- Integrated responses for older people who have the highest level of health and care needs, so they can retain control of their care and support



Risks

- Specific attention to and work with older people to safeguard from risks associated with ageing including from historic neglect and abuse, institutional or social oppression, complicated grief, harmful coping strategies, undetected mental health problems, loss of capacity
- Challenging age-related assumptions about best interests
- Provision of a continuous supportive relationship to older people through times of crisis and change, ensuring continuity and contingency
- Individual and community work to counter loneliness and social isolation

Interventions

- Coaching and provision of education for older people and people close to them to ask the right questions of their care providers and increase self-care skills
- Skilled use of counselling techniques
- Motivational interviewing and behavioural change work to support older people with acute and long-term illness
- Crisis intervention work to support older people in times of sudden change
- Work with older people, carers and other people close to them at transition points to explore possible options with them and their family, uphold wishes and manage change
- Systemic family approaches, including family group conferences, to support older people and their networks facing uncertainty, risk or conflict
- Specific work with people with dementia and their carers at various stages, including early intervention, diagnosis, support planning and rehabilitation
- Applied knowledge of reminiscence and memory improvement methods
- End of life work with older people as an advocate, navigator, co-ordinator and facilitator, to enable them to achieve a dignified death

Carers

- Recognition and effective response to dilemmas arising from the overlapping roles and experiences of older people, carers, partners, parents etc.
- Ability to support older carers to plan for the future with the cared for person and others
- Bereavement support to carers and families.

I actively maintain my expertise as these areas develop.

Contexts and organisations

“Know how the world works now; the pace of change is great.” (Older person’s view)

I am able to advise on the changing and developing needs, wishes and expectations of older people. I challenge and improve responses to changing demographic demands. I challenge disempowering or ageist services or systems.

I understand the perspective and values of social work in working effectively with other disciplines within gerontological interdisciplinary practice. I advocate for older people in interdisciplinary and interagency contexts. I am able to access appropriate specialist gerontological support including medical, housing and other services and to advocate for new ways of working for service improvement. I am able to secure a coordinated response to complex needs and situations.

Professional leadership

“Be an effective networker.” (Older person’s view)

I champion the development of the specific area of social work with older people. I act as a role-model for positive change in how services work with older people across social care and other agencies. I oversee, mentor and educate other social workers working with older people. I work co-productively with older people and their advocates.

I advocate for appropriate resources to carry out rights and strengths-based social work with older people. I help to develop new social models of care, better suited to the needs of older people, which build on the resources and networks surrounding the older person.

I carry out research on social work with older people and ensure this is used to effect positive change. I contribute to local and national knowledge.

Professionalism

“Social workers should keep a sense of hope and optimism and communicate this to others.”
(Older people’s feedback)

I meet specific capabilities relating to social work with older people. I am able to carry out, explain and be accountable for the expert professional role that I undertake with older people.



Capabilities at advanced social worker level

The capabilities below should be acquired by social workers working at an advanced practice, education or management level in settings that support older people. These capabilities are *more specific and detailed* than the PCF and Practice Supervisor KSS.

I am an expert in working with older people (practice) and/or I supervise others who work with older people (manager) and/or I contribute to learning and development locally and nationally (educator)

Values and ethics

I create and sustain an environment for ethical, quality social work that enables the achievement of older people's outcomes

Diversity and equality

I create and sustain an environment where people feel supported to challenge age discrimination, and where resources are used to meet diverse needs relating to ageing

Rights, justice & economic wellbeing

I work with older people to co-produce services and build community capacity, and I identify and develop strategies to address service gaps, fragmentation, discrimination, and barriers that impact on older people

Knowledge

I contribute to a strong gerontological knowledge base, including through my own research and support of research, sharing, promoting and facilitating practice experience and co-producing knowledge

Critical reflection and analysis

I create and sustain an environment for critically reflective thinking about the well-being of older people which has a direct influence on the quality of services

Skills and interventions

I facilitate use of the best evidence to co-produce positive interventions with older people, and I help to evaluate the impact of interventions and apply learning from this

Contexts and organisations

I use knowledge of local demographics to develop appropriate support for older people, recognising the progressive nature of many conditions, and build collaborations to improve support to older people

Professional leadership

I promote and support the development of expertise in social work with older people for example through supporting access to learning, coaching and mentoring, participation in research and innovation in service developments

Professionalism

I uphold and oversee practice that demonstrates specific capabilities for rights and strengths-based social work with older people



Capabilities at strategic social worker level

The capabilities below should be acquired by social workers working at a strategic practice, education or management level in settings that support older people. These capabilities are *more specific and detailed* than the PCF.

I am a leader in working with older people and develop practice, education and research locally and nationally

Values and ethics

I ensure that the conditions exist for ethical, quality social work practice that enables the achievement of older people's outcomes

Diversity and equality

I actively monitor equality issues and lead strategic approaches to diversity in older age, address any negative impacts of social work policies on practice with historically disadvantaged populations, and challenge barriers that prevent older people from living well

Rights, justice & economic wellbeing

I ensure service developments are co-produced with older people, and advocate and organise with others to enhance the voice and contribution of older people, and to meet the needs of a growing older population

Knowledge

I ensure development of and access to critically evaluated knowledge and engagement in gerontological debates, commission education and training to ensure social workers use the best available evidence, and I apply expert knowledge about older people to strategic decision making

Critical reflection and analysis

I facilitate and promote critically reflective and innovative thinking about the well-being of older people

Skills and interventions

I advise on and support expertise in assessment and intervention in complex practice situations with older people, and I evaluate the impact of interventions and apply learning from this



Contexts and organisations

I work at local and national levels across boundaries to champion socially just practice and to leverage resources to optimise services for older people, and I build collaborations across disciplines, services and systems to ensure continuity and reduce gaps in services to older people

Professional leadership

I collaborate with others and exchange knowledge in order to pursue a vision, strategy and plan that will raise the quality, impact and visibility of social work with older people, including through practice development, research and education

Professionalism

I develop, promote, model and embed practice that demonstrates specific capabilities for rights and strengths-based social work with older people

Appendix 1: Acronyms

AMHP	Approved Mental Health Professional
ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
BIA	Best Interest Assessor
BASW	British Association of Social Workers
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DoLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
KSS	Knowledge and Skills Statement
MCA 2005	Mental Capacity Act 2005
MHA 2007	Mental Health Act 2007
PCF	Professional Capabilities Framework for social workers in England



Appendix 2: Levels of this Statement

“The levels are helpful in making clear that people in more senior positions need higher level skills. It reinforces the message that people should be looking to develop and improve their knowledge and skills throughout their career and not just ‘resting on their laurels’.” (Older people’s feedback)

The basis of social work practice is generic qualifying education. *It is important to consider these capabilities in qualifying education.*

Newly qualified social workers undertake ASYE and become social workers, generally either in children’s or adults’ services where they meet the KSS. *It is important to consider these capabilities in the ASYE for social workers who work with older people.*

As they become more experienced social workers develop expertise. *This is where social workers working with older people can acquire the main capabilities as they: develop critical reflection and professional judgement; engage with complexity and challenge; grow in confidence; become more resilient; develop anti-oppressive practice; and start to mentor and lead.*

Advanced and strategic roles are either in practice, education or management. *It is important to consider these capabilities in order to strengthen social work with older people locally and nationally through good oversight and leadership.*

Stage of career	Current frameworks	Capabilities statement for social work with older people
AT QUALIFICATION	PCF pre-qualifying levels ⁸ Qualifying course Registration standards ⁹ (apply at all levels)	Capabilities to be incorporated into learning during a generic social work qualifying course
END OF FIRST YEAR OF QUALIFYING	PCF End of ASYE ¹⁰ Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adults services ¹¹ (linked to ASYE)	Capabilities to be incorporated into the ASYE for social workers who have contact with older people
SOCIAL WORKER	PCF Social Worker ¹²	Capabilities to be acquired by social workers who work with older people and who develop expertise and experience in this area of work
EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKER	PCF Experienced Social Worker ¹³ Specialist roles and qualifications including AMHP, BIA, Practice Educator	
ADVANCED SOCIAL WORKER	PCF Advanced level ¹⁴ Knowledge and Skills Statement for Practice Supervisors (forthcoming) Specialist roles and qualifications	Capabilities to be acquired by social workers working at an advanced practice, education or management level in settings that support older people
STRATEGIC SOCIAL WORKER	PCF Strategic level ¹⁵ Principal social worker training Specialist roles and qualifications	Capabilities to be acquired by social workers working at a strategic practice, education or management level in settings that support older people

⁸ www.basw.co.uk/pcf

⁹ hpc-uk.org/publications/standards/index.asp?id=569

¹⁰ www.basw.co.uk/pcf/capabilities/?level=6

¹¹ www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/411957/KSS.pdf

¹² www.basw.co.uk/pcf/capabilities/?level=5&domain=1

¹³ www.basw.co.uk/pcf/capabilities/?level=4&domain=1

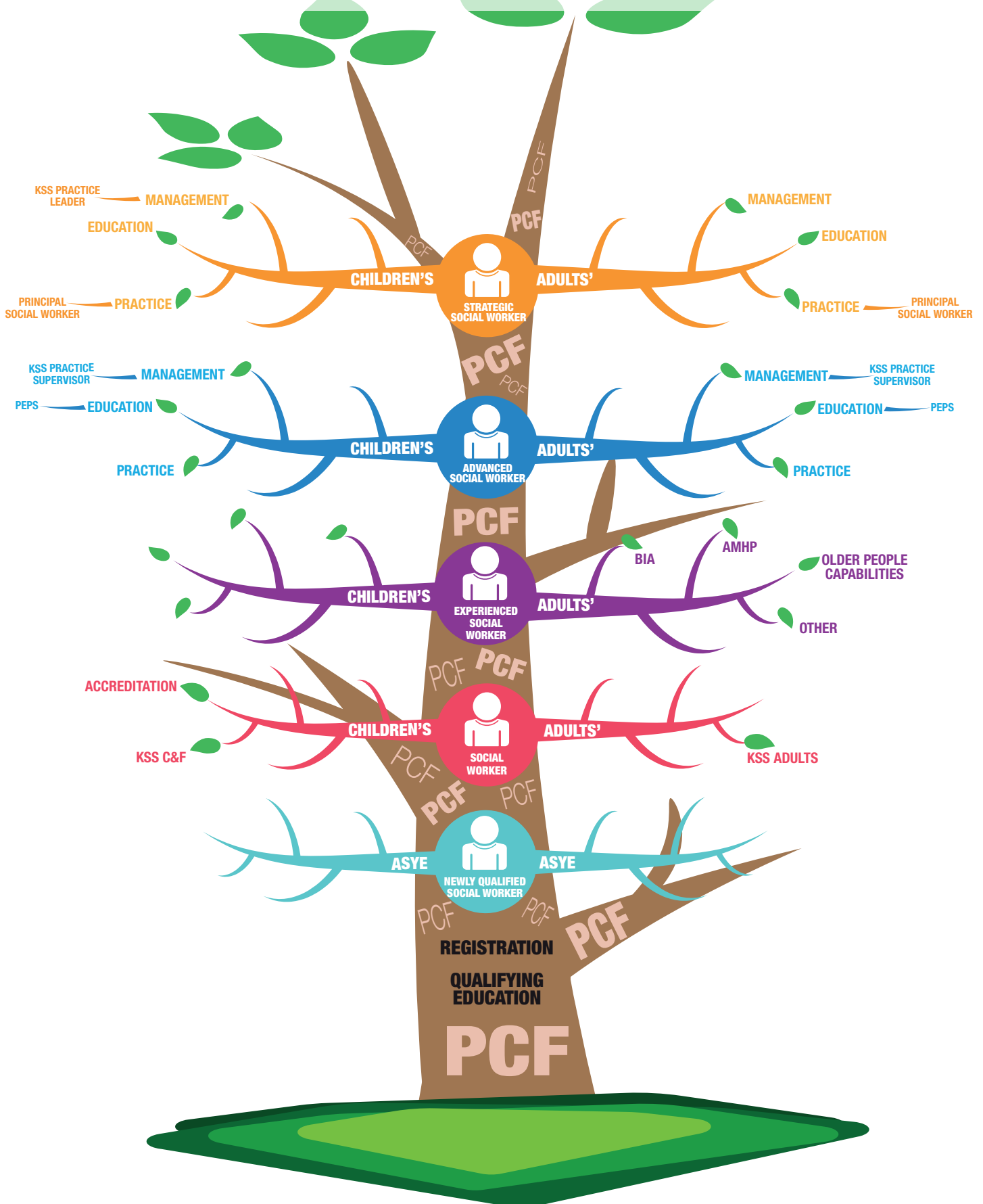
¹⁴ www.basw.co.uk/pcf/capabilities/?level=3&domain=1

¹⁵ www.basw.co.uk/pcf/capabilities/?level=2&domain=1

Appendix 3:

How this statement fits with other frameworks

This Tree gives a non-exhaustive representation of how the various social work frameworks fit together. The Capabilities Statement for social work with older people is shown as one of the branches for experienced workers in adults settings, as this is where its focus lies.



**British Association of Social Workers
Wellesley House
37 Waterloo Street
Birmingham B2 5PP**

Tel: 0121 622 3911

www.basw.co.uk

First published: October 2017
Updated: July 2018

**This document is owned by the social work profession, through BASW.
It is endorsed by the Department of Health and implemented
by the adult social care sector.**

Copyright © British Association of Social Workers

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any material form without the written permission of the copyright owner.