

**BASW**  
England

The professional association for  
social work and social workers

# Social Work in Disasters

## Develop your workforce

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020**  
**11am – 12pm**



# Welcome & Introduction

## Gavin Moorghen

Professional Officer, BASW England

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# Maris Stratulis

## National Director, BASW England

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# A global profession

- International Context
- The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) & the International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) joint definition Social Work is universal, but needs to be adapted locally to cater for cultural traditions and contexts
- BASW Code of Ethics (IASSW-IFSW Ethics Document)
- Human Rights, social justice (including environmental justice) and relationship based social work



# International definition of social work

“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 wellbeing.** The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels”. (*IFSW 2014*)



# Learning from each other

- Hillsborough Football disaster, April 1989 - 96 people died, hundreds injured
- Manchester Arena, May 2017 - 22 people died, hundreds injured
- Grenfell Tower, June 2017 - 72 people died, 70 injured
- London Bridge and Borough Market, June 2017 - 8 people died 47 injured
- Westminster Bridge, March 2017 - 5 people died more than 50 injured
- Lockerbie, December 1988 – 259 people died
- Dunblane, March 1996 - 18 people died
- We know many more children, adults and communities have been directly affected by these terrorist attacks and disasters.
- Countless floods, heatwaves and other natural disasters in UK



# What social workers have shared with us

Different experiences, responses and support relating to:

- Co-ordination
- Pre/post-training
- Self-care
- Political nuances
- Community responses
- Co-production with community responses
- Prevention and building resilient communities



# Getting social workers on the map

- BASW England Steering Group
- Course - Durham University 2018
- Fringe Event – Voices of lived experience Manchester National Directors Conference
- Partnership work with Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)
- Continuous Professional Development
- UK Special Interest Group
- Stirling 2019 – short course Disaster intervention and social work – 19/20 September
- November 2019 Conference – Voices shared experience and promoting good practice
- [Joint statement with ADASS](#)
- [CPD Guidance](#)
- [Learning during Covid](#)





# Professor Lena Dominelli

## University of Stirling

### Social Work during Disasters: Lessons from Abroad



# Social Worker Roles and Responsibilities: Lessons from Abroad

Learning of the experiences of others working in disaster situations overseas is as important as learning from experiences in the UK.

The key lessons that can be taken forward are that social workers:

- Undertake a wide range of roles in supporting victim-survivors and other emergency workers.
- Undertake one-to-one work, group work and community development work.
- Understand the social, cultural and political dimensions of responses and that these are locality specific, e.g., China, India.
- Promote community solidarity, e.g., China in neighbourhood-based work.
- Support marginalised and disenfranchised groups, e.g., migrants in India.
- Maintain, consolidate and develop social relationships between different members of communities, e.g., South Africa.
- Utilise and build upon generic theories, knowledge, and skills as well as learn how to apply them in disaster situations, e.g., crisis interventions, interviewing, providing practical support, safeguarding children and adults, resolving family relationships, counselling, work on bereavement and loss.
- Improvise and innovate constantly.



# Social Work Roles and Responsibilities: Lessons From Abroad (continued)

- Use of technologies to deliver services and maintain connections with team members among practitioners, student groups and academic staff, e.g., radio counselling, Zoom meetings in South Africa, highlighted inequalities of access and lack of adequate infrastructures including electricity supplies and broadband access.
- Ethical dilemmas experienced by practitioners, e.g., lack of PPE (personal protective equipment) for workers and residents in social care homes and nursing homes, e.g., Slovenia; lack of food for service users, e.g., India; being unable to undertake home visits, e.g., Canada.
- Work across agency, professional and disciplinary divides, e.g., China.
- Work with service users as equal partners, e.g., Slovenia.
- Leave no one behind, e.g., disabled people in China.
- Undertake regular training to be research-informed practitioners.
- Training available now: MSc in Disaster Interventions and Humanitarian Aid and Continuing Professional Development at the University of Stirling. Register at: <https://www.stir.ac.uk/courses/pg-taught/social-sciences/disaster-interventions-humanitarian-aid/>



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# Joe Hanley

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# Learning Outcomes

## Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of this training, attendees should be able to:

1. Explain the role of the social worker in disaster preparedness, response and recovery.
2. Explain legislation, policy and procedures that are pertinent to this context.
3. Utilise research informed practice in this area, and apply relevant evidence.
4. Apply relevant social work theories and models to this context.

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# Learning Outcomes

## Evaluation and Analysis

By the end of this training, attendees should be able to:

1. Evaluate the impact of disasters on individuals, families and communities.
2. Reflect on the wider contexts, causes and implications of a disaster.
3. Prioritise the perspectives of people who have been impacted by a disaster.
4. Develop creative and ethical responses to the unique/unpredictable challenges.



# Learning Outcomes

## Skills and Application

By the end of this training, attendees should be able to:

1. Utilise social work skills for psychosocial, practical and emotional support.
2. Promote the importance of the social work role in and advocate for the highest quality social work services for people before, during and after a disaster.
3. Engage with multi-professional teams to provide a coordinated response
4. Practice self-care and utilise available support.



The training will include the perspective of those with lived experience of disasters and the challenges of this working environment, including those affected or impacted by disasters, social workers and other professionals. This is highlighted under learning outcomes 1 and 7. Ideally this should be through having someone with direct experience involved in the training; however, this perspective can also be provided through videos, written accounts/quotes, artwork etc.

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