

Why Register?

Benefits and Responsibilities of your Registration

As the regulatory body for the social care and social work workforce, the role of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) is to register social care workers; to set standards for their training & practice and to support professional development across the workforce. Being registered means that staff are required to meet the NISCC Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers.

There are over 35,000 people working in social care across NI. This workforce includes social care workers, social care managers, social workers, probation officers, education welfare officers and social work students. They work across a range of care services, in residential and day centres, community facilities and in people's homes.

Registration for certain groups of staff has been introduced in phases since 2003. The following groups of workers are currently required to be registered:

- **Social Care Workers: Adult Residential Homes, Nursing Homes & Children's Homes**
- **Managers: Residential Care Homes, Day Care Settings or Domiciliary Care Settings**
- **Social Workers**
- **Social Work Students**

Next Phase:

- **Day Care Workers**
- **Supported Living Workers**
- **Domiciliary Care Workers**



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The aim of registration is therefore:

To protect the public through improving safeguards for vulnerable people, raising the standards of social care practice and strengthening the professionalism of the workforce.

NISCC Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers

The Standards are of benefit to:

- Social Care Workers - by providing a framework against which to measure conduct and practice.
- Service Users and Carers - by ensuring the service they receive is of a high Standard.
- Social Care Profession - by raising the profile of social care as a regulated valued profession.

What do the Standards do?

- They protect the rights of services users and carers and make sure they are listened to.
- They help you earn and keep the trust and confidence of the people with whom you are working.
- They help service users to be independent and take risks while protecting them as far as possible from danger and harm.
- They help service users to protect themselves and others.
- They encourage public trust and confidence in social care services.
- They help you to be accountable for your work and take responsibility for your professional development.

The Registered Social Care Worker:

- Displays good character.
- Is physically and mentally fit to practise.
- Has up-to-date skills and training.
- Is competent and conducts themselves appropriately in line with their role.

NISCC Continuous Learning and Development Standards

Social Care Workers must meet 90 hours of Post Registration Training and Learning activity in their registration period (3 or 5 years). This is known as PRTL. This helps to maintain and develop competence and consequently improves services provided. It also develops and improves job skills, knowledge and behaviour. It can help update social care workers on new practice developments, legislation and policy.

PRTL Audit

Twice a year social care workers are audited by NISCC in terms of their PRTL activity. If you are selected for audit, you must submit evidence of completion of PRTL, including a summary of your role, your Personal Development Plan and a list of your PRTL activities. This process supports you as a worker in ensuring that you have opportunities for learning and development.

Once registered, it's important you meet with your line manager to agree your Personal Development Plan, if you do not already have one.

For more detailed information about PRTL, please see:

“Post Registration Training and Learning Guidance for Social Care Registrants”

Available on the NISCC website (www.niscc.info)