



# Insights from Research on Library Social work

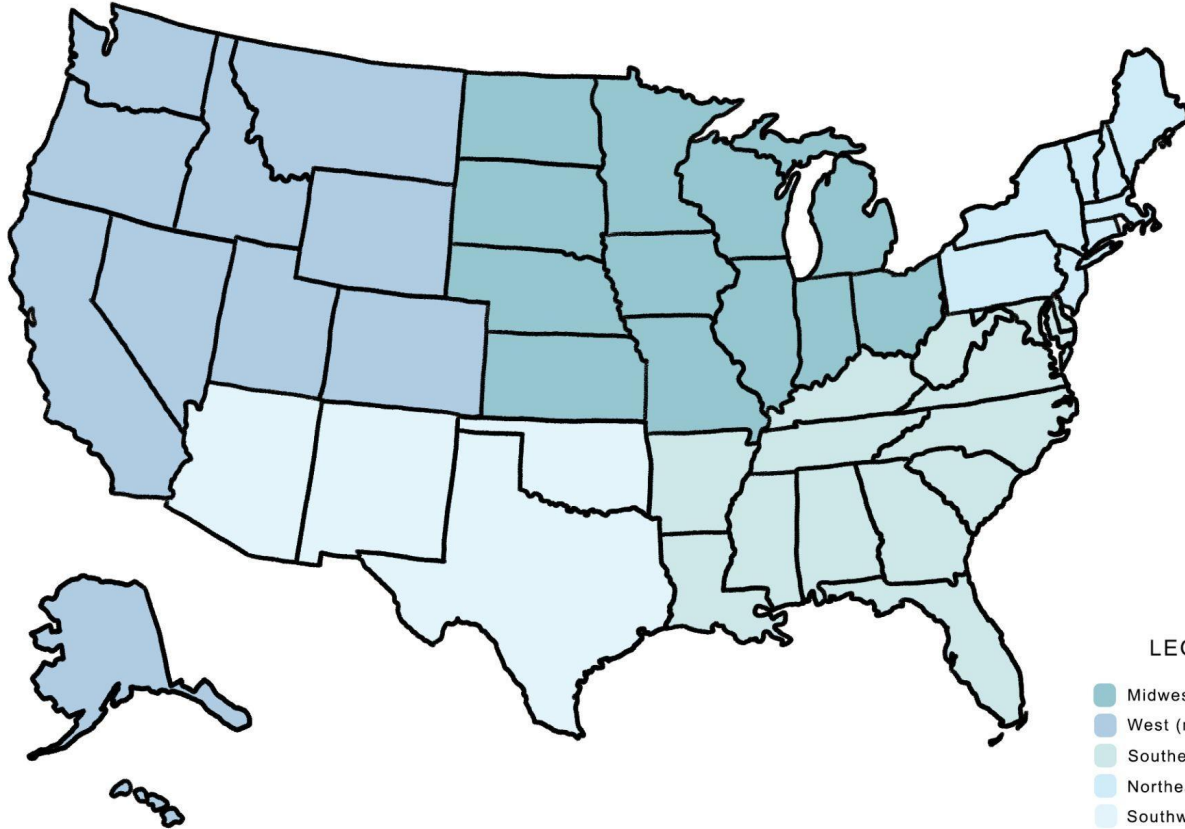
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# Practitioner Professional Composition

- Library titles varied
  - Average length of time working in the library: 19 months
  - 80% MSW
  - 67% social work license
  - Prior practice experience: community mental health, community organizing, health/hospital settings
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# Practice Setting

- Average program length: 2.64 years
  - Most were the first social workers in their positions (67%) and were the only library social workers in their library system (84%)
  - 50% hosted interns/ 50% did not
  - 60% reported no supervision
  - Funding: the city or local government (34%), internally funded through the library (31%), and/or in combination with grants (25%)
  - 94% worked with people experiencing homelessness and 94% with people experiencing food insecurity
  - 90% worked with people with serious and persistent mental illness
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# Practice Tasks & Duties

- Micro
    - 95% worked with patrons directly
    - 54% of their time was spent providing direct service to patrons
      - Assisting with resource linkage to basic needs
      - Providing assistance with government applications
      - Providing emotional support
  - Mezzo
    - 92% worked with library staff & 90% with community based organizations
    - Outreach to community-based organizations, individual support for library staff, engaging in library programming, developing and providing library staff training
  - Macro
    - 77% worked with library administration
      - Policy revisions
      - DEI initiatives
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# Experience in Practice Setting

- Most challenging
    - Lack of community resources
    - Program visibility/marketing
    - Navigating confidentiality
  - Most important
    - Access to community resources
    - Funding opportunities
    - Library staff buy-in
  - Most lacking
    - Access to community resources
    - Library staff buy-in and access to administration
    - Supervision or support from the field of SW
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# Barriers & Facilitators

- Role clarity
  - Lack of understanding of social work
  - Differences in professional philosophies
  - Buy in and support
- Space
- Supervision
- Funding
- Lack of community resources

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# Recommendations

- Role clarity
    - Librarians should be fully informed about all social work practice components
    - Familiarize themselves with the NASW code of ethics
  - Supervision: incorporate more opportunities for oversight
  - Space: confidential but visible
  - Funding: more than just a salary
  - Community resources: advocacy by the library
  - Future research: standardization of program components
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**Thank  
you!**

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