

**PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF MSW PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL FROM ACADEMIC COUNSELLOR AT STUDY CENTER**

Enrolment No.: .....

Date of Submission: .....

Name of the study center: .....

Name of the guide: .....

Title of project: .....

Signature of the student: .....

Approved /not approved

Signature: ..... Name & Address of the student: .....

Name & Address of the Guide: .....

.....

.....

Date: .....

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN PUBLIC  
HOSPITALS: THE CASE OF TIKUR ANBESSA AND MENILIK II HOSPITALS,  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA.**

**BY**

**ELFINESH KASSAHUN FELEKE**

Project Proposal

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of MSW to Indira Gandhi National Open University  
(IGNOU)

Supervisor

Mossisa Kejela

November 2018

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Table of Content

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.3.1 General Objective .....	5
1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.5 Significance of the study.....	5
1.6 Scope of the study.....	6
1.7 Universe of the study .....	6
<b>Interview</b> .....	8
<b>Observation</b> .....	8
<b>Document Analysis</b> .....	8
1.10 Data analysis .....	9
1.10 Chapter plan.....	12

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background of the Study**

Social work has been practiced in various places and with many different groups (Blewett, Lewis and Tunstill (2007). As Payne (2006) indicated that there are three historic models for the role of social work; Social Order, Therapeutic, Transformationall. In relation to the social order, social work is all about providing support and protecting people from the negative impacts of social inequalities. Apart from creating social integration, social work is also dealing with malfunctions in different policy areas such as crime, health and education (Asquith, Clark, and Waterhouse, 2005).

Meanwhile, In the process of treating patients, like other health practitioners who are engaged on the treatment of physically sick patients. The social workers have also played a critical role in health institutions mainly hospitals by treating patients who have faced mental or psychological disorder. In addition, they also support the families of the patient to address the impact of illness and treatment. Gambrell as cited in Browne (2012) agreed that social workers are essential to the delivery and design of optimal health care. They contribute via direct clinical contact with patients and their families as well as through roles in macro level settings. Therefore, social workers are a part of health professionals' team. They work on health teams comprised of direct patient-care professionals and as administrators overseeing health care delivery program planning and implementation. Health related social work services are congruent with the goals of the profession of social work and include helping clients to solve their problems, cope up with life stressors; linking individuals with resources, services and opportunities and developing and improving social policy. Social workers, as part of the health care team, provide assessment and appropriate interventions to assist the patient in achieving optimum recovery/rehabilitation and quality of life. This

includes maximizing the benefit of the patients and their families to receive medical treatments and transitioning to risk-reduced, timely discharge.

In the context of Ethiopia, social workers have played greater role in hospitals, they have carried out activities such as support and treatment of patients with psychological or mental disorder, support of People living with HIV/AIDS in creating linkage with grant providers and other services, provide counselling service to the families of patients when they face stress because of patients whom they care for. In general, the social worker who are working in hospitals are engaged on provision of psycho social support service and others.

In performing their duties and responsibilities, the social workers in hospitals have faced various challenges which are ranging from facing communication gaps with other health practitioners to lack of facility that helps them to assist or treat patients. Because of this, the social workers could not deliver quality service. Besides, they are forced to be engaged other service out of their duties.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Many researchers conducted their studies to explore the activities of social workers in hospitals. It has been clearly seen that there are some attempts to deeply investigate the activities of social workers in hospitals found in Addis Ababa such as the studies conducted by Rahel (2014) and Hiwot (2012). Even though it is a good start, it is believed there are still many issues of social work that are not yet been discovered by previous researchers. For instance, the challenges of social workers face during practice in hospital is not yet well studied and the opportunities of the social workers in hospital setting has not been given much attention. Therefore, what makes this study to be different from previous researches are that it tries to further explore and provide recent information on different aspects of social work practice in the selected hospitals in Addis Ababa. Besides, it tries to investigate

what is convenient and inconvenient situations of hospitals found in Addis Ababa for the social workers.

Social workers are a part of health professional team who have critical role in support of patients to recover from their mental and social health. In Ethiopia, the involvement of professional social worker in a hospital setup is started a decade ago and people don't understand social work as a profession. The reforms developed by the Federal ministry of health have created both opportunities and challenges for social work as a profession. However, social workers take part in hospitals in eliminating the mental or psychological effects of diseases on patients. Moreover, social workers are also engaged in helping patients to become familiar with the hospital environment, cope with the challenges they face, and facilitate the whole treatment process and contribute to their well-being. This shows that the social workers found in the hospital institution provides to the patients and their families a multifaceted service. Even though the role of social workers in hospitals is immense, it is failed to be well appreciated and given less value. (Kovalčíková, Pavelek, Slaná, Žáková, 2014, p. 16). As in other professions such as teaching and nursing, social work continues to advocate for respect as a profession and equity in compensation.

In the process of delivering various services in hospitals, like other professionals the social workers have faced different challenges. For example, the very nature of the work and interaction with human beings and multiple systems can make a career in this profession a challenging. The social worker is working with individuals, families, groups, communities to help people with complicated and complex psychological, health, financial, social problem. The commitment of social workers in helping people has brought a challenge to deal with the system in which they work that makes them to be emotionally draining and sometimes result in disappointments with oneself and clients. In Ethiopian context, the challenges social work professional is: shortage of

appropriate and adequate linkage in referral of clients leads to burn out of social workers. The low perception of other professionals towards the social workers role. Taking this into consideration, it is found to be very important to study the challenges for social workers in Hospitals found in Addis Ababa. Thus, this paper tries to examine the challenges and opportunities the social workers face in their delivery of the service in hospital in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The rationale to select this topic is that most of the time the social workers who are working in health service are not considered apart of health professional team by the community of the hospital. They are rather assumed to be care givers of the patients. Besides, the social workers treatment of mental and psychological disorder persons does not give attention by the health professionals or administrative bodies of the hospitals. Because of this, the social workers have faced various challenges such as low` perception of the health professionals towards social workers job and the administrative bodies do not give due attention for the social workers work so that they do not fulfill the necessary facilities for the social workers that helps them to delivery service. This is what I see as a major challenge of social workers who are working in few hospitals of Addis Ababa. Therefore, this enables me to select the topic and to conduct this research,

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The objective of this study is to explore the challenges and opportunities of social workers in Hospital found in Addis Ababa (Tikur Anbessa hospital and Meneilik II Hospital).

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of this research are

- To assess the application of global standards for social work practice in health care setting as compared to the service currently delivered by social workers in selected public hospitals in Addis Ababa.
- To explore the challenges and opportunities of social workers in hospitals found in Addis Ababa.
- To indicate the opportunities of social workers working in the hospitals.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the above objectives, the following research questions are to be formulated and to be addressed as part of the research inquiry

1. What are the general standards being applicable for social work practice in the selected hospitals in Addis Ababa?
2. What are the services provided by social workers in the selected hospitals?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities that social workers face while practicing social work in hospitals?

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study is important for the following major purposes. First, it helps to show the challenges of social workers in health institutions mainly hospitals. Secondly, it will be used as a reference



for other researchers who want to study on challenges of social workers in hospital. Furthermore, since the social workers are not considered as part of health professionals team, this study will help to influence the hospitals and the Ministry of Health in general to give due attention in fulfilling the necessary facilities for social workers to work in hospitals.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

Geographically, this study will focus on those social workers who are working in Tikur Anbessa and Menilik II hospitals found in Addis Ababa. Meanwhile, the study will specifically emphasis on the challenges and opportunities of social workers working in Hospitals. It does not deal on other issues of the social workers. So, the findings in this study cannot be generalized to a larger population. In addition, this study may not reflect the experiences of other social workers engaged on other business.

### **1.7 Universe of the study**

There are 11 government Hospitals in Addis Ababa. Among these hospitals, two government hospitals will be chosen using a non-probability sampling will be used in selecting the informants. The sample from each category will be analyzed. Selected key informants using a purposive sampling will be interviewed. In relation to the sample size, the study participants for this research are social workers, health professionals (nurses and physicians who work with social workers) and individuals in administration position who have direct relation to the issue raised and are currently working in the selected hospitals. In general, sixteen (16) respondents will take part in the study.

### **1.8 Sampling and sampling methods**

There are 11 government Hospitals in Addis Ababa. Among these hospitals, two government hospitals are selected randomly. They are: Tikur Anbessa and Menelik II Hospital. These hospitals were chosen because they have multi-disciplinary professionals and they have professional social workers. The sample from each category will reflect the proportion of the hospitals in the categories. Meanwhile, in the process of selecting key informants' interviewee and the social workers, a purposive sampling is used.

In relation to the sample size, within the two target hospitals four social workers, two nurses and one Doctor and one administration staff from each hospital will be target informants of this study. A total of 16 will involve in the study as an informant.

In the process of selecting the informants, inclusion and exclusion criteria will be used.

Moreover, appropriate data collection tools will be chosen and applied.

## **1.9 Tools for Data Collection**

**Interview-**a semi-structured interview and key informants interview will be deployed with social workers and the other participants; nurses, physicians and hospital administrators respectively. They will be asked to share their understanding about the general social work practice standards in health care settings. Moreover, there will be a discussion on their role as a social worker as well as the challenges and the opportunities they face during practice in the hospital they are working in.

The interview guides will be developed with open-ended questions believing that the participants will share their views and experiences freely regarding the issue raised. The interview guides will be prepared in accordance with the issues raised in the specific objectives, research questions and literature review.

**Observation-** a non-participant observation will be applied. In non-participant observation, the researcher does not become part of the activities he/she is observing. The researcher will be systematically observing matters such as social workers' office setting, social workers' record keeping mechanisms, social workers' interaction with other professionals in the hospitals they are working in and so on.

**Document Analysis-** Secondary data sources will be also used for collecting and verifying data in the process of conducting this study. Document analysis will be one instrument for data collection. In document analysis, documents are pre-produced texts that have not been generated by the researcher.

## **1.10 Data analysis**

Being a qualitative research, a descriptive method of data analysis will be employed. The information obtained through various techniques: semi structured interview, key informant Interview, document review and systematic observation are believed to be helpful to get reliable information that contains personal and groups view on the same topic. Accordingly, information that will be obtained through the different data collection methods is going to be recorded and then transcribed from Amharic into English. Next, the information categorization based on their content and framework will be done. In addition, the data obtained from the secondary sources will be used for authentication purpose. The data obtained through different techniques will be analyzed,

In general, a descriptive analysis will be used to describe the social worker job satisfaction. Exploratory analysis will be used to find out if there are any associations between the various additional organization culture, pay scale, evaluation by fair and tension and employee turnover.

### **1.11 Chapter Plan**

This research study will comprise of five chapters. The first chapter will deal with the introductory part, which will comprise the introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and scope and limitations of the study. The second chapter will focus on literature review. The third chapter will deal with research design and methodology such as description of the study area, universe of the study, sampling and sampling methods, tools for data collection and data analysis. The fourth chapter will focus on data interpretation and analysis. Finally, the fifth chapter will deal with conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the findings.

## Reference

- Asquith, S., Clark, C., Waterhouse, L. (2005). The Role of the Social Worker in the 21st Century- A Literature Review. University of Edinburgh
- Blewett, J., Lewis J. and Tunstill, J. (2012). The Changing Roles and Tasks of Social Work. <http://socialwelfare.bl.uk/subject-areas/services/activity/social-work/careservices/socialcareworkforceresearchunit/changing07.aspx>
- Abay, H. 2012. MA Thesis (Unpublished), Department of Social Work, Addis Ababa University. An assessment of the Role of “Social Workers” in Selected Hospitals of Addis Ababa. 1(1), pp.
- Abate, R. 2014. MA Thesis (Unpublished), Department of Social Work, Addis Ababa University. The Practice of Health Professionals in Medical Social Work in Minilik II Hospital. 1(1), pp.