Instructions-Community Change

**Getting Started**

As discussed in your course textbook, the community is one of the most important contexts of social work practice, providing experiences of need and risk as well as opportunities for resources, policies, and programs that could impact positively those in need. In this activity, you will attend an important community meeting and consider how the issues discussed and decisions made currently or potentially will impact the client population(s) with whom you work at your field agency. You will reflect on this experience through a paper submission.



**Resources**

* Textbook: *The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students*
* File: APA Template for Dropbox Assignments.docx
* File: APA Guide.pdf



**Background Information**

Throughout the history of social work practice, the awareness of social injustices and oppression and the involvement and consideration of greater community change have set this field apart from other “helping” clinical professions. Social workers are often involved with or at least aware of community meetings involving other citizens, professionals, and officials who discuss issues and make decisions that have a direct, significant impact on vulnerable populations. Understanding the operation of community decision making is important for social worker awareness, even if the social worker’s primary level of practice is in individual or small group work. Decisions about key issues, such as the location of subsidized housing or funding for social service agencies, have an impact on all clients. Social workers must integrate key orienting theories and models of practice, such as social exchange and systems, as well as community resilience and social policy development perspectives.



**Instructions**

1. In your textbook *The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students*, review Chapter 5, “The Community Context of Practice.”
2. Use the Internet to locate an important community meeting, such as a township council meeting, or community collaboration meeting that your agency participates in or that impacts your client population(s). Discuss with your field supervisor and other social workers a local community meeting that would be relevant to attend. Attend this meeting and take notes (if allowed) about key issues and discussions that are related to your clients’ needs and experiences. Be particularly mindful of:
   1. Phrases and terms that are used to describe needs, risks, and strengths of individuals living in the community and affected by community decisions
   2. Research, anecdotes, historical information, and/or assumptions made that drive important community discussions and decisions
   3. The participation and input of any social justice leaders in the community meetings, and how they use their skills, knowledge, and values to advocate
   4. Specific ways your field agency may be impacted by the discussions and decisions at this meeting
3. Synthesize the information above as collected from attendance at the meeting into a two- to **three-page APA-formatted paper**. Apply your reading from *The Social Work Practicum* and at least one additional scholarly article about community change.
4. Next, describe your reaction to attending the local community meeting. Do you feel hopeful about positive changes in the local community, or worried about any policies or issues which could negatively impact your client population(s)?
5. Finally, explain why it might be important for social workers at your agency to be aware of local community conversations. How might this awareness be beneficial for practice?

Additional Instructions.

1. **The research must be relevant to Parkview Medical Hospital, Fort Wayne Indiana.**
2. **Examples of a few Populations served are Cancer patients, (Parkview has a Ronald McDonald House within the Hospital), Burmese patients, Amish community as well as we deal with Human Trafficking division of Fort Wayne, Indiana.**
3. **Tutors choice on what to write on however, it has to be pertaining to one of these populations.**