

Clinical Social Work Association and National Association of Social Workers Social Work Reinvestment Message

LAURA GROSHONG:

Hello, my name is Laura Groshong and I am the Government Relations Director for the Clinical Social Work Association. As you know, CSWA has a rich and successful history of advocacy on behalf of clinical social workers. I am proud, today, to be speaking to you from the National Association of Social Workers headquarters in Washington, DC. CSWA and NASW have begun building a historic partnership, working together on important government relations initiatives that seek to benefit and strengthen clinical social work. We have been successful in lowering the co-pays for Medicare mental health services, protecting Medicaid case management and rehabilitative services, and influencing the progress of bills which affect mental health parity and privacy protection. Both organizations recognize the importance that clinical social work plays in our society, as clinical social workers are the largest group of mental health providers in the country with almost 200,000 practitioners.

Most recently, CSWA and NASW have partnered in support of the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act. This Act will provide our profession with the information we need to advocate for the adequate reimbursement, consistent regulation, and workplace safety for all social workers. I represent the clinical social workers who care for the mental health needs of millions of Americans, including returning veterans, adolescents, the elderly, and ex-offenders reentering their community. This Act will gather the information about the importance of clinical social work services and the impact that workforce challenges will have on access to these services. For these reasons, CSWA is pleased to support this bill. I urge you to take a moment to contact your members of Congress and ask for their support as well.

I would now like to introduce NASW Executive Director Betsy Clark, who is committed to strengthening the clinical social work community.

BETSY CLARK:

Thank you, Laura. Many NASW members are clinical social workers. In fact, clinical social workers provide the majority of mental health services in this country. We recognize the critical work that these professionals do to strengthen our society and to help individuals across this country.

As we look to the future, the Clinical Social Work Association and the National Association of Social Workers will continue to advocate for clinical social work services, whether in congressional debates on health care reform, or when seeking to improve Medicare payments for clinical social work. These efforts will help us recruit new clinical social workers as well as retain experienced clinicians, who are so necessary if we are going to keep pace with the rapidly increasing demand for clinical social work services in this country. This is a major goal of the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative, at the federal level and at each state. We ask that you show your support for this critical initiative.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Clinical Social Work Association and I thank Laura for joining me today in this important message.