

Social Work Month: Compassion + Action

Each day, social workers help countless Richland County residents navigate life's challenges. These social workers work in many areas of our community—in hospitals, schools, social service agencies, libraries and hospitals to name a few.

Driven by empathy, social workers use their expertise to impact people in profound ways. Their skills are needed now more than ever. They are on the frontlines of critical societal struggles. For instance, they push back against racism, inequality, abuse and homelessness. They support individuals impacted by their socioeconomic status to receive services and benefits they need to be successful members of our community.



The reasons above are the reasons why the theme for Social Work Month 2025 is **“Social Work: Compassion + Action.”** In a world currently fraught by political turmoil and societal upheaval, the theme speaks to the core of our profession: the need to transform compassion into tangible action and produce positive, tangible results. It calls on social workers to not only provide support, but to engage in advocacy, influence policy, and work toward lasting, systemic solutions. Social workers play a pivotal role in transforming empathy into effective strategies. From ensuring equitable access to health care to addressing mental health needs in our community, social workers are working tirelessly to build a more just society.

Social workers have shaped our society in a myriad of positive ways for more than a century. They pushed for Social Security, a minimum wage, a 40-hour work week, Medicare, and equal rights for people who are Black, women, and people who are LGBTQIA2S+. However, this work is complex and social workers face numerous challenges that can cause stress, fatigue, and even disillusionment. Marrying compassion with action can also apply to self-care. Just as we provide unwavering support to others, we must also nurture our own well-being with the same level of care and commitment.

Self-care isn't just a luxury; it's an essential form of action that ensures we can continue to show up for those who depend on us. By prioritizing our own physical, mental, and emotional well-being, we are not only honoring ourselves, but also strengthening our capacity to be present, effective, and compassionate in our work. Being compassionate to self helps fuel the resilience needed to take meaningful action for others.

We need to empower social workers to continue doing this vital work. This means supporting policies that enhance workplace conditions, such as raising reimbursement rates for clinical social workers under Medicare, providing student loan forgiveness, and supporting workplace safety. It also means continuing to advocate for the Interstate Licensing Compact, which would allow social workers to practice across state lines, expanding access to care in underserved areas.

We ask for your support in recognizing the importance of social workers, not only during Social Work Month, but year-round. Together, we can make sure social workers have the resources they need to transform compassion into action and make a real difference in the lives of those we serve, while maintaining a work life balance that empowers them so they can do the positive work they do.

Sincerely,

Roxanne Klubertanz-Gerber, CSW

Manager, ADRC of Eagle Country – Richland County office