

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Available Training Facilities in Canada	3
Shortage of Trained Personnel in Alberta	4
Documentation of Need in Alberta	6
- The Alberta Social Work Education Research Committee	6
- 1966 Survey Conducted in Greater Edmonton	7
Recommendations	10
 APPENDIX I - Course Content	
APPENDIX II - Copy of Letter to Agencies	
APPENDIX III - Copy of Questionnaire	
APPENDIX IV - Planning Committee	

INTRODUCTION

In the past several years many social welfare agencies and institutions have experienced difficulty in recruiting skilled workers to fill the vacancies created by the changeover of the staff, expansion of services, and public demand for specialized programs.

In our own Province, both lay and professional people in the field of social welfare are more and more recognizing the principle that while many of these positions require highly professional skill, yet great numbers of these can be handled and delegated to sub-professional workers with technical skill under supervision of professionals.

Mrs. Dorothy Bird Daily, who is Director of the Social Work Education and Manpower Task Force, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., in her article "Personnel in Public Welfare" published in the Public Welfare Journal of July, 1965, states:

"The shortage of staff in social work is even more severe than in the other helping professions. Roughly four out of five people employed as social workers lack the two years of graduate social work education. This shortage affects every area of social work practice. The need is particularly acute in group work, correctional agencies, medical and health services and services to the aging. But whether the program and the methods used are able to call upon the knowledge and experience depends upon our efforts to resolve the manpower dilemma.

"The fact is that the development and expansion of programs in social welfare has far outstripped the capacity of educational centres in social work to increase the number of properly prepared individuals entering the field."

The following excerpts are taken from "Report of the Departmental

Task Force on Social Work Education and Manpower", U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Closing the Gap in Social Work Manpower.

"There is need to develop in the high schools and community colleges organized basic curricula to prepare students for permanent satisfying careers and immediate employment as social welfare technicians, and in ancillary services such as home-makers, child care workers, as custodial staff in detention and treatment facilities in the field of corrections, as aides to the aged and community action aides.

The present goals are to train 50,000 such aides by the end of fiscal 1966."

This level of personnel can be trained to perform many functions in direct service to clients that will extend the effectiveness of the service and make it possible for the professional workers to reach many more people.

Realizing the manpower shortage in the field the Youth Services Division of the Edmonton Welfare Council, in consultation with public and private social welfare agencies, in 1965 appointed a committee to investigate the needs and demands in this field with particular emphasis on the technicians.

Over the past several months the committee has been able to examine the problem of the manpower shortage in the social welfare field in Northern Alberta, the needs and demands in this category of workers, recruitment, educational and other essential qualification requirements, and how it best can be met.

This brief is the result of the work of the committee and aims to bring to your attention the need for the establishment of a permanent

technical course in the social welfare field.

AVAILABLE TRAINING FACILITIES IN CANADA

There are very few educational institutions in Canada which provide a comprehensive welfare technician course.

Most courses offered in various Provinces are in the form of weekly evening classes and in-service training primarily geared to up-grade or re-train personnel already engaged in the field and to provide a source of knowledge for those who are interested in the social welfare field.

Evening classes serve a worthwhile purpose, but are only a temporary solution to the problem of having technically trained personnel available. Evening classes cannot hope to produce the qualified personnel required.

In the Edmonton area, some evening classes have been and are being offered by the University Extension Department. A number of these classes were first organized and planned by the Edmonton Welfare Council being concerned by the lack of training facilities for non-professional welfare workers.

In-service training is the most common method used by various agencies and organizations. The prime purpose of these in-service training courses is to acquaint the new staff with the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the agency, to assist the new workers to carry out their day-to-day routines in a more efficient manner.

In Alberta, Mount Royal Junior College in Calgary offers a two-year transfer program in arts, community service training (Social Welfare Major) which leads to Associate in Arts diploma. Students can transfer

to Sir George Williams College and some American Universities.

The following provinces have felt the need to offer some formal training below college level for those presently or potentially employed in the welfare field: British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland, Ontario and Quebec. The Province of Nova Scotia is in the process of establishing such a course.

The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto has been the pioneer in Canada providing a two-year diploma course following Grade 12, called "Welfare Services". The year-old Manitoba "Welfare Services" course offered by the Manitoba Vocational Centre in Brandon is under review, and in all likelihood will be made into a two-year course this fall. The Memorial University in Newfoundland also provides a two-year course for welfare technicians.

SHORTAGE OF TRAINED PERSONNEL IN ALBERTA

The lack of educational facilities, the increasing demand for more skilled workers, and public pressure for new services, have created a most serious problem with regard to staffing for the public and private agencies in our area.

Mr. G. Stangier, Director of Staff Development and Training, Department of Public Welfare, Province of Alberta, in his paper "Orientation of New Staff Members" presented to the American Public Welfare Association Mountain States Regional Conference, states:

"Until 1950, or thereabouts, it was generally assumed that

there would eventually be enough graduates from schools of social work to fill all the social work positions in Canada. Since then, there has been a tremendous growth in social services with an increasing demand for professionally-educated social workers. While there has also been an increase in the numbers of graduates from the schools of social work, there nevertheless seems to be a progressively widening gap between the demand and supply of professionally-qualified workers. Between 1950 and 1960 the enrollment in Canadian schools of social work increased by 30%, but in 1960 only 20% of the people employed in welfare positions had any graduate social work education."

Mr. Stangier, in the same paper, states:

"Since 1960 the Department of Welfare has expanded from a staff of about 50 field workers and 12 supervisors working out of 8 regional offices, to what will be by the end of this year (1965) a staff of 220 field workers and 52 supervisors working out of 29 regional offices distributed throughout the Province."

Mrs. W.F. Bowker, in her Supplementary Report on Adoption in Alberta (1965), has dedicated a chapter on Staff Qualifications and Training. Referring to this problem, she states:

"The shortage of professional social workers in both Canada and the United States has reached almost a crisis stage. In Canada there are approximately 3,200 qualified social workers for whose services great numbers of agencies are competing, which have only recently come to recognize the need for such personnel on their staff: hospitals, schools, industry, mental health associations, welfare councils, child care institutions, counselling agencies, city and personnel welfare departments, and penal institutions.

In the United States, the situation is even more serious, and it has a very marked effect on the Canadian position. At the recent Conference of the Child Welfare League of America at Tacoma, which the writer attended, the Dean of the University of Washington School of Social Work, Dr. Charles B. Brink, made some interesting observations in his address entitled "The Manpower Crisis in Social Work". He stated that in the United States today there are approximately 35,000 professionally trained social workers. The 65 schools of social work are graduating about 3,000 students a year. A 1950 professional

census listed 80,000 positions in the United States requiring professional social workers; in 1960, it listed 120,000 such positions. To implement social legislation recently enacted by the United States Congress in the field of health, education and welfare, the Bureau of Family Services in Washington, which now employs 40,000 people, will by 1970 require a staff of 80,000 of whom a fifth (or 16,000 people) need to be professionally trained. Dr. Brink suggested that if each school of social work in the United States were to triple its output of graduates, and if the number of schools were likewise tripled, the needs of the Health and Welfare Department in Washington, D.C. alone could not be met. The figure most frequently heard in social work circles in the United States is that there are 15,000 vacancies in social work positions in the United States today.

It is obvious then that for some time to come the available supply of social workers throughout the United States and Canada will fall far short of the demand. Certainly in Alberta the Department should be urged to make every effort to obtain all the social workers it can, but we must be realistic in our expectations.

Dean Brink offered several suggestions for meeting the "Manpower Crisis", among them the following: more intensive use of the personnel we now have; more persons in supportive roles (child care workers, foster parents, cottage parents); a better differentiation between professional duties and tasks that can be performed by persons of lesser academic training, reserving for professional social workers matters of judgment and decision-making (similar to medical, engineering and nursing professions which use technicians and auxiliary services, leaving matters of analysis and diagnosis to the professionally-trained)."

DOCUMENTATION OF NEED IN ALBERTA

THE ALBERTA SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION RESEARCH COMMITTEE

As early as 1962, there were indications of both need and effective demand for education at the technical level in the welfare field. In its study to determine the need for a graduate school of social work in this Province, the Alberta Social Work Education Research Committee

examined the broad span of educational requirements for existing and proposed positions in welfare. The findings from this study of employer groups showed that 23% of the 98 welfare positions added during the previous 12-month period required less than a B.A. or no University training at all. Employer groups also projected that in the forthcoming year (1963), 24% of their 109 positions expected to be added could be filled by personnel with similar qualifications. Employer groups further reported that 15% of their current unfilled positions required employee qualifications involving less than a University degree. With regard to stated preference for educational qualifications, employer groups indicated that they would prefer to fill 20.3% of some 581 positions with personnel trained at the technicians' level.

The study of social welfare employees conducted concurrently involved a total of 550 respondents. These employees showed strong indication of interest in a training program at the technical level. The largest single group reporting (164) involved employees with less than University training; and of this group, 81 or 49% requested either part-time or occasional courses to assist them in the performance of their duties. Interestingly enough, nearly 60% of these 164 employees were 40 years of age or over. This committee takes the view that the technical course proposed in this brief would best serve the educational requirements of this group.

1966 SURVEY CONDUCTED IN GREATER EDMONTON

A survey was conducted in 1966 by the Welfare Services Course Committee of the Edmonton Welfare Council to determine the need for

technical training facilities in Greater Edmonton.

Questionnaires were sent to 35 different agencies, institutions, hospitals and welfare departments in Edmonton inquiring whether they are in favour of technician training for welfare personnel workers; and if so, requesting that they indicate their requirements for a period of three years.

Of the 23 replies received, all agencies except one have indicated that they are in favour of such training.

A total of 46 graduates were requested for employment in the first year, and a total of 123 over a three-year period.

As this survey was conducted in the Edmonton area, it does not show the requirements for all of Alberta. Our guess is that the total provincial requirements could easily be twice or three times as many.

It is evident in our analysis that a substantial number of social welfare agencies have come to recognize the importance of such a training opportunity as the logical solution in alleviating the ever-increasing problem of manpower shortage in the field.

We believe that their endorsement and support of the proposal are clear indications of the need and mandate for establishment of such a course in our Province.

Father Govenlock, Director of the School of Social Work, University of Montreal in his letter of September, 1965 to Mr. E.F. Watson, Executive Secretary, Commission on Education and Personnel, Canadian Welfare Council, remarks:

"The problem of devising effective and diversified educational and training programs to keep pace with the rapidly expanding need for personnel with various competencies in the welfare field has increasingly occupied the attention of welfare policy-makers, program administrators and professional educators during the past more than fifteen years. At the present time, this problem probably ranks as the number one priority in Social Welfare Administration."

RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. Based on the foregoing documentation, the Edmonton Welfare Council recommends that the Provincial Department of Education establish a two-year diploma course in "Welfare Services" at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton.
- II. Realizing the urgent need for trained workers in the welfare field, it is recommended that the course be established, if possible, not later than January, 1967.

The Edmonton Welfare Council and the planning committee of the Youth Services Division would be pleased to provide further assistance in making this proposal a reality.

The committee's statement of objectives and philosophy of the course is appended.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND PHILOSOPHY

A training opportunity for those who are interested in working as technicians in the social welfare field.

The course will prepare candidates for a career as technicians in the field of welfare with opportunities for employment in institutional settings for children and adults, welfare departments, hospitals, group homes, community development, geriatrics, etc.

DURATION OF THE COURSE

The duration of the course will be two years. Special consideration should be extended to those who are employed in the field, who have adequate in-service training, and/or experience in allied fields.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

It is recommended that preference will be given to those who have high school diploma or equivalent.

SUGGESTED COURSE CONTENT

In general the course should include such topics as:

1. Background of the social service programs.
2. Human growth and development.
3. The basic universal needs of people.
4. Philosophy - outlines and interrelationships of welfare service programs.

In order to determine the staff requirements and needs in this category of workers, we have prepared a questionnaire which we would ask you to complete. If it is determined that sufficient need exists, and approximately 15 graduates per course can be employed by Alberta welfare agencies, there is every reason to anticipate the co-operation of the Provincial Government of Alberta in establishing such a course at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton.

We solicit any suggestions or comments you may have regarding the course. We do realize that the forecast of your requirements for three years is most difficult; we ask only that you make a considered estimate.

AHZ/bc
enc.

A.H. Ziai, AGSW,
Director,
Youth Services Division

EDMONTON WELFARE COUNCIL
YOUTH SERVICES DIVISION

WELFARE SERVICES COURSE
QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill out this questionnaire and mail to the Edmonton Welfare Council, #301, 10182 - 103 Street.

- (1) Are you in favour of technician training for welfare workers as outlined in the covering letter?

YES

☐

NO

☐

- (2) Assuming such a course will be available, please indicate below your possible requirements:

1968

1969

1970

- (3) Comments:

NAME OF ORGANIZATION _____

DATE _____

STAFF PERSON IN CHARGE _____

WELFARE SERVICES COURSE
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chairman

Mr. Merrill McDonald - Department of National
Health and Welfare

Mrs. Betty Cottnam	Edmonton Children's Centre
Mr. John Farry	Director of Social Services, Royal Alexandra Hospital
Mr. John Koch	Director of Social Services, Our Lady of Charity School for Girls
Mr. W.D. McFarland	Child Welfare Branch, Department of Public Welfare
Mr. Gordon McLelland	Director, Kiwanis Children's Home
Mr. Gordon Stangier	In-service Training, Department of Public Welfare
Mr. Keith Wass	City Welfare Department
Mr. A.H. Ziai	Staff, Edmonton Welfare Council

Consultant

Mr. J.O. Starritt Northern Alberta Institute of
Technology

The committee has also consulted

Dr. D.E. Smith, Dean, Faculty of Arts
University of Alberta