

**Guidance on the support  
of Mental Health Social  
Workers and Approved  
Mental Health  
Professionals (AMHPs)  
working in NHS,  
independent or  
integrated services**



Guidance  
on the support of Mental  
Health Social Workers and  
Approved Mental Health  
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# An overview for team leaders



- Why the Guidance is refreshed and updated
- Purpose of the Guidance
- Overview of unique role of mental health social work
- Outline of responsibilities of commissioners developing new services or redesigning systems

# Guidance refreshed and updated

- In 2019-20 developed in partnership with Skills for Care and through wide consultation with organisations, professionals and system leaders across health and social care services
- Because of the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic HEE decided to refresh, update and relaunch it to key audiences in 2022-23
- Designed to support the NHS, the independent sector and other health and social care agencies who employ social workers
- Recognition that social work has been well established in local authorities for many years so not the focus of this Guidance.

## **Authors**

**Karen Linde**

*Co-chair New Roles in Mental Health Social Work, Health Education England*

**Jason Brandon**

*Mental Health Social Work Lead, Office of the Chief Social Worker, DHSC*

**Advisory input Sarah Blackmore** *Executive Director, Social Work England*

# Purpose of the guidance



The guidance complements the LGA Employers' Standards for Social Work and Adult Social Work Health Check Survey 2018,

- **Support and enhance** the role of social work in health and social care organisations.
- **Advise NHS trusts** and other organisations how to successfully employ and support social workers in a variety of partnerships.
- **Highlight the role of the AMHP**, and its added value to an NHS organisation
- **Help the NHS and other agencies** to embed social workers as a key staff group, and to support registered social workers already employed in generic teams

# Purpose of the guidance



- **Develop and transform** the social work role across mental health services
- **Offer timely support** for organisations to recruit, retain and support mental health social workers including AMHPs and ensure they can contribute their vital skills to holistic care for patients and service users
- **Help expand, develop and support** the role of social work in the NHS
- **Help achieve** NHS Long Term Plan ambitions and alleviate workforce pressure.

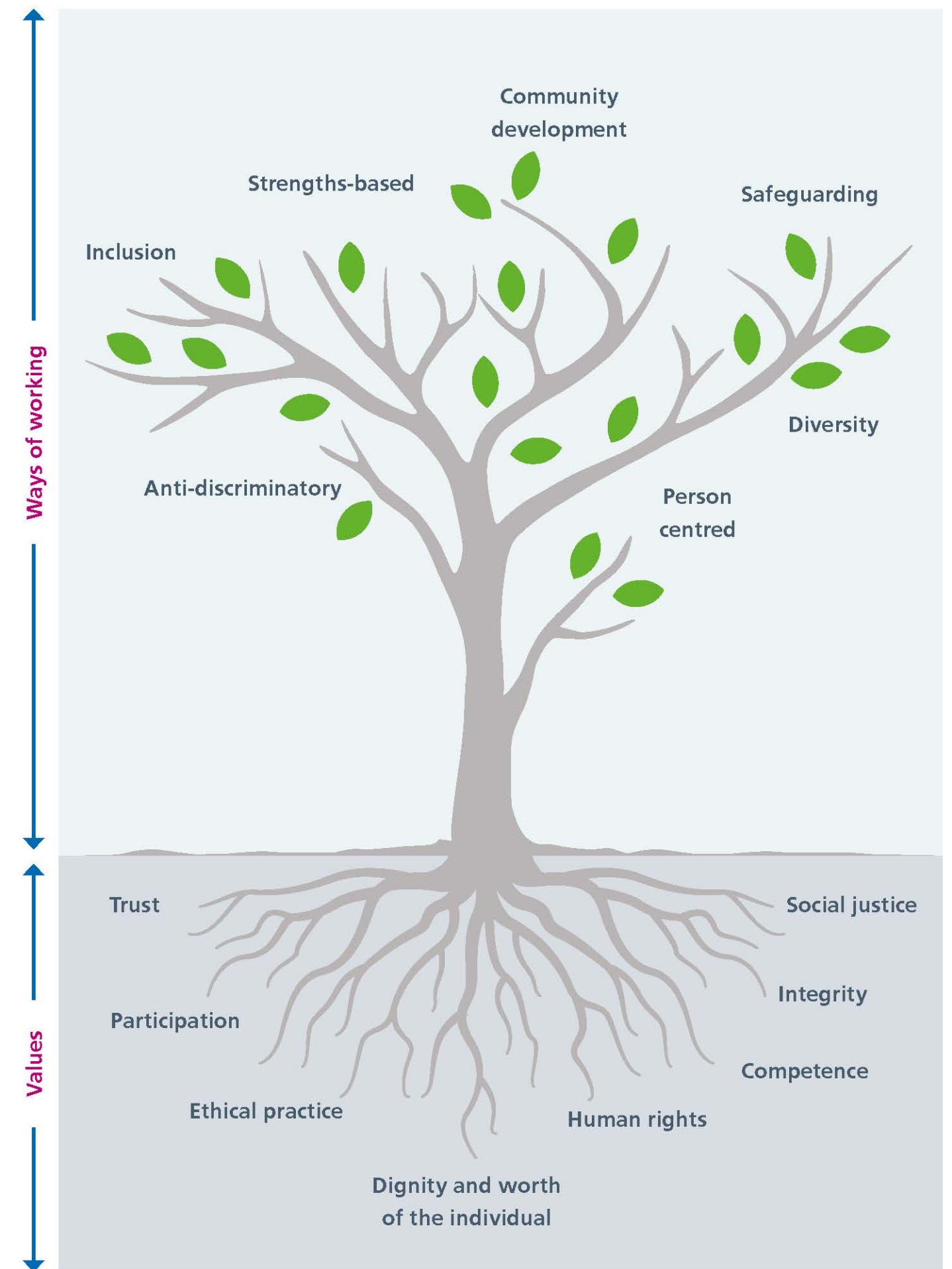
# Purpose of the guidance



- **Support** the NHS and other parts of the health and care system in recruiting, retaining and developing mental health social workers
- **identify** how to strengthen social work's role in mental healthcare
- **outline** eight organisational considerations for effective support of the social work profession in mental health services wherever they may work
- **demonstrate** how the social worker/ AMHP role makes a difference in the NHS.

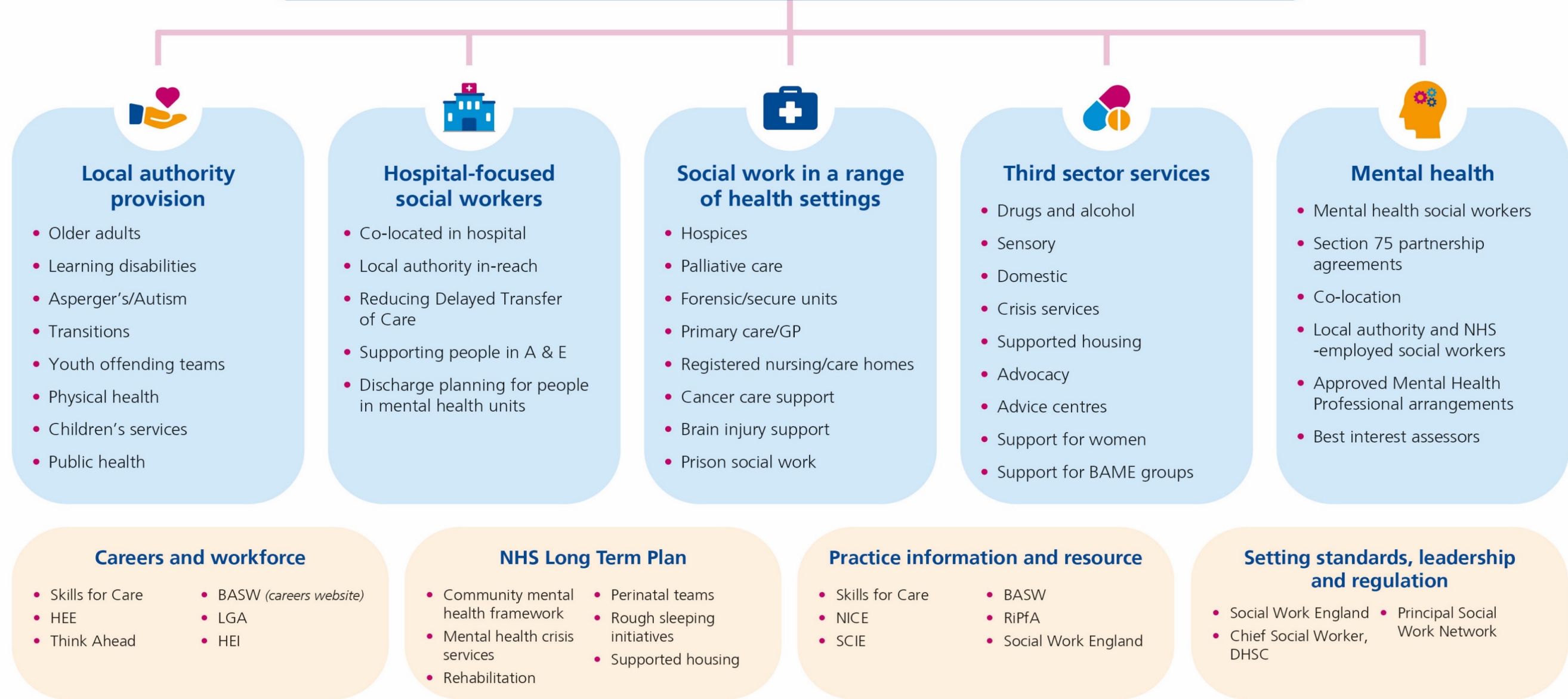
# Social workers are an essential part of health and social care for both adults and children.

- transformative, relational and rights-based principles
- anti-discriminatory focus
- promoting diversity and inclusion
- working with communities, families and individuals



## The social work contribution to health settings

- Strength-based practice
- A human rights-based approach
- A community and family-led approach
- Understanding the social determinants of health
- Personalised care planning
- Legal knowledge



**Acronyms** • BASW: British Association of Social Workers • DHSC: Department of Health and Social Care • HEE: Health Education England  
 • HEI: Higher Education Institutes • LGA: Local Government Association • NICE: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence  
 • PSW: Principal Social Worker • RiPFA: Research in Practice for Adults • SCIE: Social Care Institute for Excellence

Health Education England:  
New roles in mental health



Skills for Care: Mental health social work leadership





# Team manager responsibilities



- gain direct knowledge from professional leaders about social work and its specific offer and accountabilities
- promote insights into team members individuality, diversity and strengths
- have an informed vision for how distinct professional skills contribute to team outcomes and what good looks like
- encourage social work practice leadership, for instance in
  - advocacy and enablement
  - diversity practice
  - social inequality
  - safeguarding

# Team manager responsibilities



- ensure that skills are deployed in a way that is congruent with the role
- establish meaningful team-based case management measures
- develop recruitment and retention strategies that support an effective skill mix
- ensure regular reflection about roles within the team
- advocate the value and parity of esteem for social and community interventions

# Team manager responsibilities



- undertake audits of team skills, role and skill utilisation
- promote effective career progression for social work
- recognise the health risks of social work in management and professional supervision, including in the AMHP role, and minimise

## Further resources

Full playlist of short films made with and about mental health social workers

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrVQaAxyJE3fn52TDaw3hXueDiWWXSHdP>