

# Chapter Three

**Standards in the Profession: Skill Standards,  
Credentialing, Program Accreditation,  
and Ethical Standards**

# Learning Objectives (slide 1 of 2)

- LO 1: Understand the importance that Skill Standards have in producing positive client outcomes
- LO 2: Understand the different types of credentialing, identify the importance of credentials, and specify credentials in the human service and related fields
- LO 3: Understand the process of program accreditation and appreciate why accreditation can lead to more effective human service professionals
- LO 4: Explore the development of ethical codes and understand their importance when working with the public

## Learning Objectives (slide 2 of 2)

- LO 5: Become familiar with different ethical decision-making models in order to be effective in this sometimes complex decision-making process
- LO 6: Embrace the notion of lifelong learning and being competent as noted in the NOHS ethical code
- LO 7: Understand the importance of actively supporting standards such as program Skill Standards, credentialing, accreditation, and ethical standards

# Skill Standards

## **12 competency areas (see Activity 3.1)**

1. Participant empowerment
2. Communication
3. Assessment
4. Community and service networking
5. Facilitation of services
6. Community and living skills and supports
7. Education, training, and self-development
8. Advocacy
9. Vocational education and career support
10. Crisis intervention
11. Organizational participation
12. Documentation

# Credentialing (slide 1 of 7)

**Credentialing has many benefits for both the consumer *and* helper**

- ✧ Credentialing delimits the field
- ✧ Credentialing identifies competence
- ✧ Credentialing increases professionalism
- ✧ Credentialing leads to parity
- ✧ Credentialing offers protection of the public

**The two most common types of credentials are certification and licensure**

# Credentialing (slide 2 of 7)

## Certification

- ✧ Formal recognition that an individual has met predetermined standards of professionalism
- ✧ Attests to competence, but does not define the scope or practice of a professional
- ✧ Often requires a fee to maintain
- ✧ May require continuing education to maintain

# Credentialing (slide 3 of 7)

## Licensure

- ✧ Generally regulated by the states
- ✧ In mental health, may involve becoming an LPC, an LCSW, a doctorate in psychology (licensed psychologist) or a medical degree (licensed physician and/or board-certified psychiatrist)
- ✧ Can define the scope of professional responsibilities
- ✧ Makes it easier to obtain third-party (insurance) reimbursement
- ✧ Requirements for licensure may vary from state to state

# Credentialing (slide 4 of 7)

## Credentialing in the Human Services

- ✧ 2008 – Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE), with NOHS and CSHSE, developed the Human Service – Board Certified Practitioner (HS-BCP) credential
- ✧ Certification can be earned by anyone with an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree
  - ✧ The post-educational requirements differ based on the degree (See Table 3.1)
- ✧ After passing the exam, those with the HS-BCP must earn 60 hours of continuing education every 5 years



# Credentialing (slide 5 of 7)

## Selected Credentials in Related Helping Professions

- ✧ Substance abuse counselor and other state credentials
  - ✧ Master Addiction Counselor (MAC)
  - ✧ Administered by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)
  
- ✧ Credentialing for a master's degree in counseling
  - ✧ Certified or licensed school counselor
  - ✧ Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC)
  - ✧ Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
  - ✧ National Certified Counselor (NCC)
  - ✧ Certified Family Therapist (CFT)
  - ✧ Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)

## Credentialing (slide 6 of 7)

### **Selected Credentials in Related Helping Professions**

- ✧ Credentialing for a master's degree in social work
  - ✧ Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW)
  - ✧ Qualified Clinical Social Worker (QCSW)
  - ✧ Diplomate in Clinical Social Work (DCSW)
  - ✧ Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
  
- ✧ Credentialing as a school psychologist and as a counseling or clinical psychologist
  - ✧ Different state requirements to become a licensed psychologist
  - ✧ Some states authorize prescription privileges for people with this license

# Credentialing (slide 7 of 7)

## Selected Credentials in Related Helping Professions

- ✧ Credentialing as a psychiatrist
  - ✧ Earns a medical degree (MD) and is a licensed physician
  - ✧ Can become board certified in psychiatry
  
- ✧ Credentialing as a psychiatric-mental health nurse
  - ✧ Psychiatric mental health nurse
    - ✧ Basic
    - ✧ Advanced
  - ✧ Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)

# Program Accreditation

- ❖ Accreditation is a rigorous process that involves a self-study, a visit from an accreditation team, and recommendations to the board of directors of the accrediting body
- ❖ Benefits to students and programs (see pp. 56-57)
- ❖ Accreditation in HS began in 1979 and there are currently about 45 programs with full accreditation
- ❖ Movements are being made to get more accredited programs through CSHSE

# Ethical Standards (slide 1 of 2)

## The Development of Ethical Codes

- ❖ First began in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century with the APA code of ethics (1953)
- ❖ Purposes of the ethical code:
  1. Protect consumers and further professional standing of the organization
  2. Making a statement about maturity and identity of the profession
  3. Guiding professionals toward behaviors and actions that reflect underlying professional values
  4. Offering a framework for the sometimes difficult ethical decision-making process
  5. Serving as a measure of defense if the professional is sued for malpractice

# Ethical Standards (slide 2 of 2)

## The Development of Ethical Codes

### ❖ Drawbacks of the ethical code:

1. Does not address some issues and offers no clear way of responding to other issues
2. Periodically has conflicts within the same code, between two related codes, between the code and the law, or between the code and a helper's value system
3. Sometimes difficult to enforce code violations
4. Does not include the public in code construction and does not always take public's interest into account
5. Has a difficult time keeping up with and addressing "cutting edge" issues

# Ethical Decision Making (slide 1 of 3)

## **Problem-Solving Model (Corey, et al. (2015))**

1. Identify problem or dilemma
2. Identify potential issues involved
3. Review relevant ethical guidelines
4. Know applicable laws and regulations
5. Obtain consultation
6. Consider possible and probably courses of action
7. Enumerate consequences of various decisions
8. Decide on the best course of action

# Ethical Decision Making (slide 2 of 3)

## Principle and Virtue Ethics Model (Kitchener)

1. *Autonomy* protects independence, self-determination, and freedom of choice for clients
2. *Nonmaleficence* is the concept of “do no harm”
3. *Beneficence* relates to the promoting the good of society
4. *Justice* involves equal and fair treatment to all clients
5. *Fidelity* is related to maintaining trust and being committed to clients
6. *Veracity* being truthful and genuine with the client within the counseling relationship



# Ethical Decision Making (slide 3 of 3)

## Developmental Models (Kohlberg; Perry; Kagen)

- ❖ Lower-level helpers
  - ❖ Dualism – black and white thinking; concreteness; rigidity; oversimplification; stereotyping; self-protectiveness; authoritarianism
  
- ❖ Higher-level helpers
  - ❖ Relativism (commitment in relativism) – more complex thinking; open to differing opinions; flexible; empathetic; sensitive to the context of an ethical dilemma; nondogmatic

# Ethical, Professional, and Legal Issues: Competence and Qualifications as a Professional

- ✧ A human service professional must maintain competence and have a thirst for ongoing knowledge
- ✧ Lifelong learning is essential
  - ✧ Be a member of professional associations
  - ✧ Subscribe to and read professional journals
  - ✧ Attend workshops and participate in continuing education
  - ✧ Obtain appropriate credentials

# The Effective Human Service Professional: Professionally Committed, Ethically Assured

- ✧ Commitment to growth and competence must be real, not just lip service
- ✧ Just know ethical guidelines and commit self to ethical behaviors
- ✧ Supports standards of accreditation, credentialing, and Skill Standards