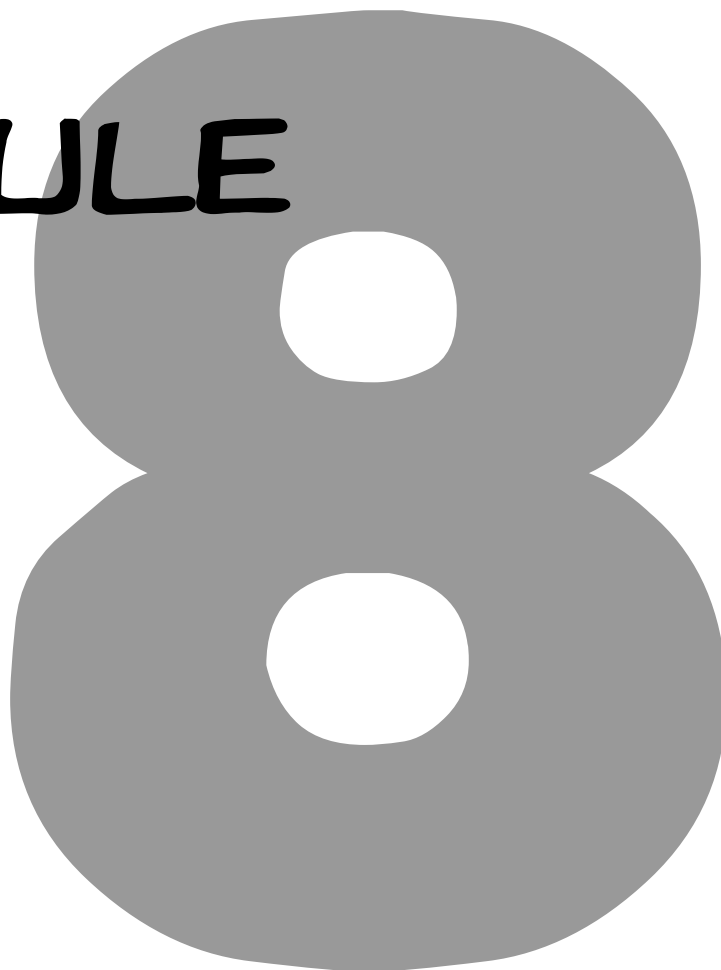




MODULE



• **ADVOCACY**



CONTENTS

Objectives	214
Note to trainers about Module 8	215
ACTIVITY 8.1 - THE ADVOCACY ROLE	216
Handout 8.1 - The Advocacy Role: Questions for discussion	217
Responses from CSISW participants to Activity 8.1	218
Response from a CSISW trainer to Activity 8.1	219
ACTIVITY 8.2 - SOCIAL ACTIVISM: TWO READINGS	220
Handout 8.2 - Reading 1: Therapy and status quo	221
Reading 2: Social work and social change	222
Handout 8.2.1 - Settlement and Social Activism: Questions for discussion	223
ACTIVITY 8.3 - ADVOCACY CASE STUDIES	224
Handout 8.3 - Advocacy case studies	225
Handout 8.3.1 - Advocacy case studies: Questions for discussion	227
Handout 8.3.2 - Advocacy strategies: What settlement counsellors need to know	228
ACTIVITY 8.4 - PERSONAL RESOURCES FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY	232
Handout 8.4 - Personal Resources For Effective Advocacy	233
Responses from CSISW participants to Activity 8.4	234
A Note on Cultural Interpreting	235

ADVOCACY

OBJECTIVES OF THIS MODULE

The activities in this module are designed to:

1. Deepen participants' understanding of the meaning of advocacy, and the relationship between counselling, advocacy and action for social change.
2. Help participants clarify their own views of the responsibilities of settlement counsellors as advocates and agents of social change.
3. Improve participants' ability to assess whether a client's problem is caused or aggravated by social, political or economic conditions or structures in the environment.
4. Expand participants' knowledge of individual and collective advocacy strategies that are useful in settlement work.
5. Increase participants' understanding of the personal resources they need to be effective advocates.

NOTE TO TRAINERS ABOUT MODULE 8

In discussing the advocacy role of settlement counsellors, differences in viewpoints amongst counsellors and in the mandates of the agencies they work for can lead to disagreements and a feeling of uneasiness about the subject. A trainer should anticipate and prepare the group for this beforehand. The importance of confidentiality should be stressed in this module, as in the others, so that the participants feel comfortable sharing their ideas on a sensitive subject.

ACTIVITY 8.1

THE ADVOCACY ROLE

PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY

This activity gives participants the opportunity to begin defining terms related to advocacy, and to exchange views on the settlement counsellor's role as advocate and agent of social change. A diversity of opinion on the latter is to be expected, given differences in participants' philosophies and political viewpoints, and in the mandate of the agencies they work for.



TIME REQUIRED: 1 hour.



SUPPLIES NEEDED: Handout 8.1 - The Advocacy Role: Questions for Discussion



SUGGESTED PROCESS:

1. Participants break into groups of four or five people to discuss the questions on Handout 8.1.
2. A reporter from each small group summarizes the discussion for the larger group.
3. The trainer helps the group look at differences in viewpoints, and reasons for these differences.

ACTIVITY 8.1, HANDOUT 8.1

THE ADVOCACY ROLE: QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Discuss the following questions in your small group.

1. What is advocacy?
2. What is the connection between the role of a counsellor, an advocate and an agent of social change?
3. Which of these roles should a settlement counsellor assume?

RESPONSES FROM CSISW PARTICIPANTS TO ACTIVITY 8.1

Below are some of the opinions expressed by participants in response to the three questions in this activity.

1. What is advocacy?
 - facilitation
 - intervention
 - being a legal counsellor
 - mediation
 - interceding on behalf of a client
 - raising awareness
 - getting community participation
 - action to change - e.g. the opinion of the community
 - working from an individual problem to a general problem
 - communicating an issue
 - making an issue public
 - taking action on the issue
 - the foundation stone for social change

2. What is the connection between the role of a counsellor, an advocate and an agent of social change?
 - they overlap/are all related
 - being an advocate is going one step further than being a counsellor
 - an agent of social change brings awareness to the client and society
 - it is a chain reaction - counsellor → advocate → agent of social change, determined by the circumstances
 - counsellor and advocate are linked together, are inseparable

3. Which of these roles should a settlement counsellor assume?
 - it depends on the circumstances
 - should assume all the roles but take into account the mandate of the agency
 - it is a personal decision - how far you wish to go
 - resources pose limits
 - the problem with being an agent of social change is - no power
 - you have more power as an agent of change if it is done in conjunction with others
 - social change needs skills and expertise

RESPONSE FROM A CSISW TRAINER TO ACTIVITY 8.1

Some counsellors point out that for settlement counsellors and their agencies, getting involved in a process of collective advocacy is time-consuming. However, it is worth noting that recent successful advocacy drives have systematized the way individual cases are dealt with by organizations. This in turn has meant that for settlement counsellors, individual work with clients in some areas requires less time and effort.

Some examples of successful results of recent advocacy initiatives are:

- a. changing the legislation regarding service entitlement for certain groups (e.g. refugee claimants are now eligible for general welfare and working permits)
- b. improving the funding for ethnospecific agencies (e.g. United Way now funds these agencies)
- c. making services more culturally appropriate (e.g. multicultural organizational change programs are now underway in organizations such as the City of Toronto, the Children's Aid Society)

ACTIVITY 8.2

SOCIAL ACTIVISM: TWO READINGS

PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY

These two readings are based on a critical analysis of conventional psychiatric and social work practices. The authors take the position that providing therapy or social work services is never a neutral act; it is a political act that has traditionally worked to help clients adjust to prevailing social conditions and accept the existing power structure. Both readings argue that counsellors help their clients very little, and may even hurt them if they ignore oppressive social conditions that are damaging to the client, and do not get involved in trying to change those conditions. The audiences for these articles are therapists and social workers; however, they are also useful for settlement counsellors - particularly those who are interested in exploring the relationship between long-term advocacy and settlement work.



TIME REQUIRED: 1 1/2 hours.



SUPPLIES NEEDED: Handout 8.2 – Two selected readings
Handout 8.2.1 - Settlement And Social Activism:
Questions For Discussion*



SUGGESTED PROCESS:

1. Participants prepare for this session by reading the two selections beforehand.
2. The trainer begins the session by asking for general reactions to the readings from the large group.
3. Participants then break into groups of three to five people and discuss the questions related to the readings on Handout 8.2.
4. A reporter from each group summarizes the discussion for the large group.
5. The trainer wraps up by noting common ideas and viewpoints in these reports.

RELATED READINGS AND RESOURCES

The social worker as advocate: champion of social victims, Chapter 10, Reading 10-3 in Social work processes, by B. R. Compton & B. Galaway (1979), Illinois: The Dorsey Press.

- This reading emphasizes the obligations of social workers to be advocates, based on the Code of Ethics of the profession, and explores some of the dilemmas workers face in fulfilling this role.

ACTIVITY 8.2, HANDOUT 8.2 - READING

READING 1: THERAPY AND STATUS QUO

Therapy is the handmaiden of the status quo, by S. L. Halleck (1971, April), in *Psychology Today*, 30-34 and 98-100. Excerpted from a chapter in *Politics of therapy*, by S. Halleck (1971), New York: Science House.

SUMMARY OF THE READING*:

In this article, Halleck, a psychiatrist, says that psychiatrists have a choice - to encourage their patients to accept existing distributions of power in the society or to encourage patients to change them, and to get involved in these efforts to make changes. Many of the people psychiatrists are asked to help, he indicates, are living in highly oppressive environments. However, often the psychiatrist focuses on the patient's internal problems, assuming that the person's environment is adequate and not contributing to his misery.

According to Halleck the psychiatrist's job has traditionally been to identify and neutralize those whose ideas are different from the norm and thus to be a guardian of the status quo. He goes on to state that psychiatrists often hesitate to criticize institutions that have given them affluence and power. As well, some dream of a better world, but are afraid to act on these desires for change in case this violates some medical or social ethic.

Halleck's position is that the only ethical choice for those wishing to be true helpers is to acknowledge and give up the illusion that it is possible to be politically neutral, and to become reformers and activists. In fact, he says, psychiatrists ought to be more active than the average person in seeking remedies for forces of oppression such as sexism and racism that isolate and deny privileges to certain groups. His suggestions for change begin with his own profession; he includes eighteen recommendations for reform within the field of psychiatry.

* Summarized by Janis Galway

ACTIVITY 8.2, HANDOUT 8.2 - READING

READING 2: SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Social work and social change: Fighting back, by B. Carniol (1987), in Case critical, Toronto: between the lines.

SUMMARY OF THE READING*:

Carniol begins by stating that the historical emphasis in social work on the individual client and the individual worker has made it easy for workers to ignore the larger issues of overall social change. He argues that if social work is to be really effective, it must make links between individual casework and individual advocacy and larger problems. It must encourage clients to look at the real roots of their problems in their environment and to respond to these forces by taking action.

This is a new direction for social work, which he sees will require workers to find new ways of working with individuals, through self-help groups, alternative services, unions, coalitions and social movements. It also requires the existence of a critical analysis that looks at socio-political forces and tries to determine why things happen the way they do. Working in this way, social workers will become involved in helping their clients put pressure upward on the system, instead of putting the pressure downward on their clients to accept their fate.

Carniol analyzes how social workers can make links with alternative services, unions and coalitions and looks at the advantages and pitfalls of these liaisons.

* Summarized by Janis Galway

ACTIVITY 8.2, HANDOUT 8.2.1

SETTLEMENT AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM: QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION*

INSTRUCTIONS:

Discuss the following questions in your small group.

1. Can you as a settlement counsellor relate to the ideas in these two articles, which were written for therapists and social workers?
2. Do you think that settlement counsellors are “handmaidens of the status quo?”
3. In what ways do you think settlement counsellors can get involved in action for social change?

* This activity was developed by Janis Galway

ACTIVITY 8.3

ADVOCACY CASE STUDIES

PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY

In this activity, participants analyze case studies and identify the sources of the client problems, advocacy strategies that could be employed, and potential conflict areas for the counsellor in handling the case.



TIME REQUIRED: 1 1/2 hours.



SUPPLIES NEEDED: Handout 8.3 - Advocacy Case Studies 1 and 2;
Handout 8.3.1- Advocacy Case Studies: Questions for Discussion;
Handout 8.3.2 - Advocacy Strategies: What Settlement counsellors Need to Know



SUGGESTED PROCESS:

1. Participants divide into groups of four to five people. Each group is given one of the two case studies in Handout 8.3 and the questions for discussion in Handout 8.3.1.
2. The large group reconvenes and the reporters give each group's assessment and advocacy strategies for the cases. The reports for Case 1 can be given, and then discussed by the large group and then the reports from Case 2.
3. As a follow-up discussion, the trainer distributes Handouts 8.3.2, which contain ideas for short and long-term advocacy strategies.

ACTIVITY 8.3, HANDOUT 8.3

ADVOCACY CASE STUDIES

ADVOCACY CASE STUDY 1

Nelson, a skilled carpenter, worked for a company for eight years. He had always managed very well and had recently purchased a house.

A few months after buying the house, Nelson had a serious car accident. Because he lacks language skills, he was limited as to his choice of lawyer and hired one that, instead of helping him, messed up his insurance claim. As a result of the mess-up, Nelson received very little money in compensation for the accident he suffered.

Since the car accident, Nelson has been unable to work. He drew Unemployment Insurance benefits for the maximum number of weeks allowed. When his benefits ran out, he was still disabled. Nelson has no other income. His wife has a job, but it pays very little.

Nelson comes to see you and wants your opinion about faking a separation from his wife, so that he will be able to get Welfare assistance. He feels very guilty about it because of his strong Christian beliefs but, on the other hand, if he does not get more money, he is going to lose his home.

by a CSISW trainer

ADVOCACY CASE STUDY 2

John comes to your centre because he needs help obtaining welfare payments. You find out the following information from him about his situation.

John has been in Canada for two years. He has worked in several different places, but is now unemployed. He is not entitled to unemployment insurance for six weeks because he quit his job.

John says that he decided to quit because he wanted to have time to look for something better. He was not aware of the restriction regarding unemployment insurance. He says that he is willing to look for work similar to his last job. He was quite satisfied with the pay. You tell John that this comment seems to contradict what he said before regarding why he quit his job. John now says that in fact he quit his job because it was very far away from his house and it was very difficult for him to get up early to arrive in time. He says that he was late a few times and he felt quite embarrassed when the foreman called it to his attention in front of the other counsellors.

You are able to arrange for welfare payments. After a few days you call John to inform him about two different positions that are advertised at your centre. John's first questions regarding these positions is if there are immigrant or visible minorities working at those companies and if you know anything else about the working environment. You are surprised that John did not ask about the location or pay. You call him in for a visit.

John visits you one month later. You find out that John quit his work because his foreman and some of his co-workers continually harassed him. He was the only visible minority or immigrant worker. Although he was hired for a particular job, most of the time he was doing menial tasks or helping other workers to reach their production levels. He was unable to establish a friendly relationship with his co-workers,, who frequently cracked jokes about people from the Caribbean. While everyone else took an hour for lunch, he was told that new workers have only half an hour. After he left the lunch table, the foreman would join the other workers and share racist jokes with them, loud enough for John to hear.

One day John confronted his coworkers and foreman, but was told that if he wants to succeed in Canada he has to have a better sense of humour. After that day his foreman became abusive to him. John decided to quit when he was not allowed one day to call his daughter who was home sick from school.

John explains that he did not tell the counsellor the whole story at the beginning because "Maybe, in fact, I do not have a good sense of humour."

by Paulina Maciulis

ACTIVITY 8.3, HANDOUT 8.3.1

ADVOCACY CASE STUDIES: QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION*

INSTRUCTIONS:

Discuss the following questions in your small group.

1. Are the sources of the problem faced by the client in:
 - the economic/political system in the society?
 - the individual client?
 - the mainstream culture?
 - the client's culture?
 - other? (specify)
2. As a counsellor/advocate what kinds of conflict might you experience in this case?
 - ethical
 - religious
 - other (specify)
3. As a counsellor/advocate how would you deal with this problem on the individual or collective level?

Individual

Collective

* This activity was developed by Paulina Maciulis

ACTIVITY 8.3, HANDOUT 8.3.2

ADVOCACY CASE STUDIES: WHAT SETTLEMENT COUNSELLORS NEED TO KNOW

This outline, compiled by Janis Galway from notes by Paulina Maciulis and Consuelo Rubio, is meant to raise some of the issues and identify strategies and resources related to individual and collective advocacy. It is a starting point for discussion, and is not assumed to be all-inclusive.

A. INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

Individual advocacy refers here to the steps taken by settlement counsellors to speak on behalf of their clients or otherwise support their clients' efforts to access services to which they are entitled.

1. WHICH ORGANIZATIONS do settlement counsellors and their clients need to contact most frequently regarding services?

- a. Organizations providing social/health services:
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
 - Ontario Health Insurance Plan
 - Counsellors' Compensation Board
 - Social Assistance agencies
 - Child welfare agencies
 - Daycare system (private and public)
 - Housing agencies
 - Revenue Canada
 - Employment Standards Branch, Ministry of Labour

Educational institutions (primary, secondary, university)

Police

Unions and professional associations

Employment placement organizations (public and private)

- b. Other immigrant service agencies with specialized expertise

- c. Organizations that can take on cases and provide advocacy:

Human Rights Commissions

Office of the Ombudsman

legal clinics

coalitions

2. WHAT does a settlement counsellor need to find out about these organizations?

- a. The services they offer
- b. Their policies (written) and practices (unwritten)
- c. Their organizational chart (who is in charge of what)
- d. Whether the services offered by the organizations are linguistically and culturally appropriate; whether staff receives any kind of multicultural/race relations training
- e. Formal and informal appeal procedures for each program

3. HOW does the settlement counsellor get this information about organizations?

- a. Obtaining copies of policies and pamphlets
- b. Making personal visits to institutions
- c. Inviting representatives from the institutions to make presentations at community agencies
- d. Doing informal networking with counsellors in the institutions
- e. Consulting with counsellors in other community agencies

4. WHEN should a counsellor advocate for a client?

- a. When the service is available but there is an access problem, e.g.:
 - the client does not speak the language in which the service is provided (usually English)
 - the service is culturally inappropriate
 - there is too much red tape
 - the client lacks self-confidence
 - the client cannot take time e.g. from work to deal with the problem
 - when the service is unavailable

(N.B. Collective advocacy will eventually be needed to make the service available - see section B.)

5. WHAT STRATEGIES should counsellors use when advocating with these organizations?

- a. Effective communication strategies (on the telephone and in person):
 - asking institutional workers to identify themselves and their positions
 - identifying oneself by name and agency; explaining your agency's function and your position with your agency
 - having a list of points ready that the client and the settlement counsellor want to raise; having all necessary documents ready
 - indicating if the situation is urgent
 - obtaining commitment for action with a timeframe
 - indicating one's intentions to follow up on a particular date and time
 - if not satisfied, talking to the worker's supervisor
 - making a list of documents the client may have to submit, and things they are expected to do

- b. Clarifying one's role - as an advocate for the client:
 - not allowing institutional workers to try to develop complicity between the settlement counsellor and themselves against the client
 - confronting racism
- c. Educating decision-makers in other organizations re: the client's context
 - explaining cultural contexts, circumstances relevant to immigrant and refugee experiences, which pertain to the client's case and may change the perceptions of the decision-makers
- d. Linking with other organizations:
 - finding out what services other organizations provide that can be used to help advocate for a client (eg cultural interpreter services)
- e. Keeping accurate records of the steps taken in an individual client's case (which feeds into collective advocacy strategies). Detailed records are important for:
 - asserting the client's case, when different institutional workers are involved and a period of time elapses until the case is resolved
 - back-up evidence if the case merits an appeal or legal action
 - proving that a constant need exists for individual advocacy (to support further collective advocacy efforts to change regulations or practices, implement new services, or increase funding for settlement agencies)

B. COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

Collective advocacy refers here to the steps taken by settlement counsellors and their agencies to:

- improve the way services/programs are provided
 - bring about necessary new services/programs
 - modify the social circumstances that are the root cause of inequality
1. WHO are the powerholders that need to be influenced/provided with information?
 - a. Politicians
 - b. The media
 - c. The business community
 - d. Government bureaucrats
 - e. School boards
 - f. Religious organizations
 - g. The police
 - h. Professional associations
 - i. Influential individuals

2. WHERE should counsellors/agencies seek support and allies?

(Note: Allies may not share opinions on all issues, but they are able to reach consensus on the particular focus of the advocacy campaign)

- a. Multicultural groups
- b. Interagency networks
- c. Umbrella community groups
- d. Refugee coalitions
- e. Unions
- f. Women's groups
- g. Client groups
- h. Race relations committees
- i. Religious groups/churches
- j. Social planning councils

3. WHAT STRATEGIES should counsellors/agencies use?

- a. Assessing the environment of the advocacy initiative:
 - the cultural background of the community who will be involved in the campaign
 - the process of community development within that group - ie involving the community as partners in the process; advocating with, not for the community
 - an inventory of financial and human resources available for the advocacy effort
- b. Deciding on an action plan - steps should include:
 - collecting and presenting organized evidence of the problem - documenting cases, keeping statistics, maintaining up-to-date information re: client problems

Note confidentiality issues: e.g. when can client information be used as part of an advocacy effort?

- identifying whom to influence
e.g. path might be: settlement counsellor → agency management → agency board of directors → networks and coalitions → powerholders → recommendations
re: legislation, policy and programs
- deciding what level of campaign to conduct
 - low profile - e.g. meetings, quiet negotiations, information-sharing
 - medium profile - e.g. public briefs and meetings, letter-writing, alliances with other groups
 - high profile - demonstrations, ad campaigns, press coverage

ACTIVITY 8.4

PERSONAL RESOURCES FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY

Having looked in previous activities at the role of the settlement counsellor as advocate, and the long- and short-term strategies that advocates can use, participants now consider what resources they personally will need to be effective in advocacy work.



TIME REQUIRED: 1 hour.



SUPPLIES NEEDED: Handout 8.4 - Personal Resources for Effective Advocacy; Flipchart and markers.



SUGGESTED PROCESS:

1. Participants divide into groups of three to four people and discuss what knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to be effective advocates, using Handout 8.4.

Note: This can also be done as a brainstorming activity in the whole group if preferred, or if time is limited.

2. The large group reconvenes and the trainer records on flipchart the responses from the small groups in each of the three categories.
3. The trainer summarizes by asking the group which of these resources they feel they have now, and which they would like to acquire, or improve.

ACTIVITY 8.4, HANDOUT 8.4

**PERSONAL RESOURCES FOR
EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY**

INSTRUCTIONS:

In your small group, discuss what personal resources you feel you need under the following categories to be an effective advocate.

KNOWLEDGE:

ATTITUDES:

SKILLS:

RESPONSES FROM CSISW PARTICIPANTS TO ACTIVITY 8.4

Following are some examples of the personal resources participants felt they needed to be effective in advocacy work.

KNOWLEDGE

- knowledge of who are the opinion-makers/moral authorities in the community
- understanding of the community's values
- knowledge of the mainstream service delivery system
- knowledge of the power system
- knowledge of the law regarding individual rights to services

ATTITUDES

- a positive outlook
- assertiveness
- an action orientation
- honesty - e.g. being sure community understands the risks
- patience - may take more time, meetings, than you think

SKILLS

- being able to “take the temperature” of the community (e.g. assessing the level of commitment to an issue)
- using one's power as an advocate wisely
- knowing how to connect people with similar issues/problems
- being well prepared for any action
- knowing how to tailor advocacy initiatives to the group - having creativity and flexibility
- being able to make contacts and influence people in the power system

A NOTE ON CULTURAL INTERPRETING*

Settlement counsellors play an essential role as a bridge between their clients and workers in mainstream institutions. Some of the many agencies and individuals they interact with are:

- the immigration department
- unemployment insurance offices
- social assistance offices
- children's aid organizations
- schools
- daycare centres
- housing agencies
- landlords
- hospitals
- medical doctors
- health insurance plan offices
- the police
- legal aid
- the courts

Many settlement counsellors are providers of interpreting services. Others, such as English-speaking counsellors in multicultural centres, are users of interpreters. To fulfil either of these roles effectively, settlement counsellors need knowledge and skill in the area of cultural interpreting.**

Cultural Interpreters are mediators of language and culture between a service provider and client. A Cultural Interpreter is trained to be sensitive and attuned to the cultural implications of certain factors and the ensuing consequences, and to be able to clarify such situations for others. Using a Cultural Interpreter can help to communicate a client's rights, privileges and responsibilities; facilitate a process; or advocate for a client.

Cultural interpreters need to understand the cultural values and beliefs affecting the behaviour of their clients and of the institutional workers they come in contact with. They have to be able to communicate these meanings to each side. Settlement counsellors need to be aware of how the dynamic of cultural interpreting, a three-way process, is different from the two-way dynamic of counselling.

One theory suggests how **three-way communicating in two languages works**:

When we have three people together in a confined space, using two different languages in a structured task such as problem-solving or counselling on a particular issue, three distinct interactions are occurring. What develops is a triangle with three sets of pairs, each one operative at a given point in time. Although only one of these pairs is operating at any given moment, non-verbal interaction is taking place at all times within each pair.

There is a shifting power balance within the triangle. There is a qualitative change from the nature of two-way communication when a third party is included in an interaction. If the balance of power between two people was more or less even, the introduction of a third will shift it in favour of the person with whom the third

** See Part I, Section 1, Endnote 6.

identifies, feels loyal, or is professionally committed to. If there was previously an imbalance, the addition of a third presence could make the established pattern more pronounced, or it could even it out, depending on the “bias” of the third person.

A common tendency is for the service provider to have greater power, and the client to be relatively passive. This would be accentuated in a situation where the client spoke little of the mainstream (institution and usually provider's) language.

In the CSISW course, the final session was devoted to an introduction to cultural interpreting. The objectives of the session were:

1. To explain the need for and definition of cultural interpreting.
2. To identify basic skills needed by cultural interpreters.
3. To identify major role conflicts for the settlement counsellor which complicate the cultural interpretation process.

* For more information on Cultural Interpreting theory and practice visit the web site of K-W Multicultural Centre at www.kwmc.on.ca/services/cis