

# AlignCare®

## Veterinary Social Work Coordinator (VSWC)

### Scope of Practice

#### Purpose:

To provide information about the scope of services that AlignCare® Veterinary Social Work Coordinators (VSWC) offer to AlignCare® clients, social service agencies, and participating veterinary service providers.

#### Policy:

AlignCare® Veterinary Social Work Coordinators (VSWC) provide ancillary support services for families who are enrolled in the AlignCare® Healthcare system. These services are designed to help provide human support during an animal's treatment and care at a participating veterinary service provider.

VSWC's also provide consultation and support for participating social service agencies and veterinary care providers in their care of families enrolled in AlignCare®. VSWC consultation and support may include:

- helping with AlignCare® enrollment
- helping use the Healthie App
- explaining how the AlignCare® Healthcare system works
- helping the family with treatment decisions
- end of life care preparation, decision making, and support.

The VSWC is not a primary social service provider for enrolled AlignCare® families. The VSWC supports the social service agency in its stated treatment goals and services for the family. The VSWC does not advise on veterinary medical decisions. The VSWC supports the veterinary team in communicating medical options in ways that the family can understand and use for the decision-making process.

Below is a list of activities that the AlignCare® VSWC may perform:

- Educate social service agencies about AlignCare® services and enrollment process
- Contact the family to process their application for AlignCare® services
- Help the family complete enrollment forms
- Contact the referring social service provider when needed
- Refer the family to the AlignCare® veterinary service provider(s).
- Be available to provide liaison support between the enrolled AlignCare® family, the veterinary team, and the social service agency regarding patient health and animal-related human support needs.

- Be available to provide consultation and support for veterinary teams regarding AlignCare® families
- Provide non-medical support to family during patient treatment or end-of-life decision making
- Provide support and psycho-education to the AlignCare® family about anticipatory grief
- Provide support for coping with common life adjustments associated with animal illness and/or death
- Provide consultation with primary social service provider regarding animal loss.

The following is a list of activities that are **outside of the role** of the AlignCare® VSWC:

- Psychological concerns that are a) not animal-related, and/or b) require intensive and/or long term treatment. When these issues arise the VSWC will refer the AlignCare® family to the social service agency of record for additional support and/or referral. Examples of such cases include, but are not limited to:
  - 24/7 Crisis Intervention Support
  - Active addiction to alcohol or drugs and/or need for medical detoxification
  - Problems around eating and nutrition that may require medical support and an interdisciplinary team approach.
  - Evidence/risk of progressive deterioration in mental or emotional functioning that requires intensive intervention
  - Acute risk of harm to self or others requiring emergency intervention in a controlled environment (i.e., hospitalization).
  - History of long-term treatment and continued need for that level of care
  - Client requests for multiple contacts in a week.

**If you are in crisis or are having thoughts or plans to harm herself**, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline right away. They provide free, confidential support for people in distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They also provide suicide prevention and crisis resources for you or loved ones.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE  
1-800-273-8255**

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_