

# **The Ethics of Professional Practice in Rural Settings**

## **Program Description**

Close, overlapping, and interdependent relationships are all hallmarks of rural areas. The social structures of these communities are flexible and not highly differentiated, resulting in intersecting social and professional interactions that can test long-held ethical and clinical concepts, such as confidentiality, objectivity, competence, and client-practitioner boundaries. This workshop examines the features of rural social work practice as they relate to these ethical concepts, and provides guidelines for appropriately addressing challenging situations.

## **Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. Explain five unique features of practice in rural areas
2. Describe four concepts on ethical practice
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how to employ the concept of “thick and thin” boundaries;
4. Apply critical thinking to at least four commonly occurring ethical dilemmas experienced in rural practice.

## **Target Audience**

Clinicians, case managers, social workers, counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, educators, advocates, health and human service practitioners.

## **Contact Hours**

2-4 hours. Longer sessions allow for greater depth and discussion.

**(Check with presenter on participant limit)**

## **Program Agenda**

Available upon request.

## **Faculty**

Dr. Kim Strom is the Smith P. Theimann, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Professional Practice at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work. Dr. Strom teaches in the areas of direct practice, education, and human resource management. Her scholarly interests involve ethics, moral courage, and social work education. She is the former chair of the National Association of Social Workers’ National Committee on Inquiry and is active in training, consultation and research on ethics and social work practice. She has written over 60 articles, monographs and chapters on ethics and practice. She is the author of *Straight Talk about Professional Ethics* and *The Ethics of Practice with Minors: High Stakes and Hard Choices* and the forthcoming text *Cultivating Courage*. Dr. Strom-Gottfried is also the co-author of the texts *Best of Boards, Direct Social Work Practice* and *Teaching Social Work Values and Ethics: A Curriculum Resource*. Dr. Strom also held an appointment as the UNC Institute for the Arts and Humanities Associate Director for the Academic Leadership Program, which helps prepare and

support the next generation of academic leaders. Currently, she serves as Principal Investigator of the UNC School of Social Work behavioral healthcare contract, and has been recently appointed by the chancellor to serve as Director of the UNC - Chapel Hill Office of Ethics Education and Policy Management.