

# Adult Social Care Better Lives Policy: Supervision



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# Supervision Policy

## 1. Introduction

This policy provides a framework for the supervision of employees to ensure Buckinghamshire County Council deliver excellent services that produce positive outcomes for service users and carers. Supervision is a mechanism by which we can:

To maintain and develop high standards of professional practice.

To provide quality assurance for effective case management and recording.

To support the delivery of services provided by the Adult Social Care Workforce.

This policy applies to the supervision of all practitioners, qualified and unqualified, including Social Workers, Care Workers and Occupational Therapists (full time, part-time, temporary, and permanent and agency) including seconded staff from partner agencies. During the supervisory process all staff that requires it should have the clinical input needed to ensure continuance of registration status.

This policy sets out how employees can expect to be supervised and provides managers with the key elements needed to carry out supervision effectively.

Please refer to Appendix 4 which clearly sets out the supervision standards required in **Adult Social Care**.

### **Application of this policy will ensure that our staff:**

- 1) Understand what is expected of them
- 2) Have the skills, knowledge, values and training necessary to carry out their roles.
- 3) Are fully supported in their work and are effectively managed.

## 2. Equality and Diversity

The County Council values the diversity of our workforce and the contribution that each employee makes to the achievement of our objectives. We will encourage all individuals to develop the skills necessary for their personal and professional development. As such, access to training and development activities and facilities will be appropriately provided.

Any consideration given to an individual's professional and personal development will be based upon the individual's capabilities, performance and potential, and will be irrespective of age, disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, culture or religion.

All employees must be respectful and anti-oppressive in the ways in which they discuss service users, agencies, colleagues and be conscious of their own power in the supervision process. Anti-discriminatory supervision begins by ensuring that all elements and aspects of supervision are carefully and professionally undertaken.

## 3. Benefits

Effective Supervision:

- Develops and maintains high standards that ensure the Adult Social Care workforce is supported to deliver high quality professional practice and achieve improved outcomes for Adult Carers and their families.
- Ensures that professional and organisational objectives are understood and met.
- Ensures the worker is clear about roles and responsibilities.
- Ensures services to users and carers includes reviewing their best interests, making decisions in accordance with best practice and takes into account the needs and welfare of the individual and family.
- Provides support to safeguard adults from harm.
- Provides the opportunity to monitor cases and caseloads and ensure that practice is accountable, evidence based and meets safeguarding standards.
- Ensures the health, safety and wellbeing of the worker including assisting in identifying and managing stress.
- Considers the resources the worker has available to do their job and provides the opportunity to discuss issues arising where they are inadequate.

- Provides a positive environment where practice decisions, professional development and training can all be discussed, reviewed and supported.
- Promotes anti-discriminatory practice, equality and diversity whilst being thoughtful about the appropriate use of authority and power.
- Ensures that employees are supported through difficult issues and are not in a position where situations may exceed their knowledge, skills or experience.
- Ensures that social work employees operate within Social Work England Codes of Practice.

## 4. Types of Supervision

### Formal Supervision

A worker's immediate line manager is responsible for ensuring that each worker is allocated an appropriate supervisor with the relevant qualification, experience and knowledge to undertake supervision. Social workers who are not managed by a registered social worker need to have additional professional supervision.

Formal supervision is an ongoing process that takes place in many different settings and adapts to the different needs of employees in a variety of settings as employees develop in their professions over time.

Formal supervision supports a learning culture by developing the confidence and competencies of managers and people who work directly with vulnerable adults and their families. Formal supervision is at the core of an individual's and team's professional development.

Formal supervision is a shared commitment by both the supervisor and supervisee and should be viewed as a priority. It should only be cancelled in an emergency and with the agreement of both parties. If it is agreed that a supervision session should be cancelled, it will be the supervisor's responsibility to rearrange a new session.

Emphasis given to the content of meetings will vary according to the needs of the supervisee. There should be an agreed agenda and preparation on behalf of both parties. Formal supervision provides time for employees to reflect on their practice, consider feelings and values, link theory to practice, consider the impact of learning in practice and take a pro-active role in decision making, and problem solving. The supervisee and manager are provided with the opportunity to review caseloads, individual cases and to plan and record strategies. This information must be recorded on the approved supervision template.

### Informal, Unplanned/ “Ad-Hoc” Supervision

It is important for managers to recognise the value of an open door policy for employees to raise and resolve immediate issues that cannot wait for formal supervision meetings. Day-to-day working will involve a level of work related communication and employees should ensure that they inform their line manager of any serious concerns in relation to their work.

Informal supervision may take place at the manager’s discretion due to the urgency of presenting issues or where there is a need to be explicit to avoid any potential ambiguity or misunderstandings. Any decisions as a result of informal discussions made with regard to a service user must be clearly recorded on the service user’s record.

### Group Supervision

Managers may consider the use of group supervision where it is desirable to involve a group of employees; all involved in the same task, meeting with a supervisor to discuss issues about their work or the way they work together as a team. The benefits of group supervision include learning from each other and promoting consistency. Please note this does not replace individual monthly formal supervision.

## 5. Supervising Students on Placement

Anyone supervising a student on placement must hold a practice teacher award or have demonstrated their competencies against National Standards.

## 6. Newly Qualified Social Workers

Regularly planned high quality supervision is an integral part of the inaugural year of a newly qualified social worker. Supervision records must be kept for auditing, to monitor case work management, workload management, access to training and development and to assess progress over the year.

The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) is designed to help newly qualified social workers develop their skills, knowledge and capability, and strengthen their professional confidence. It provides them with access to regular and focused support during their first year of employment in social work. The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) outlines exactly what skills, knowledge and capabilities newly qualified social workers are expected to attain during the ASYE. These programmes and associated resources help to ensure that new social workers receive time and funding for training, regular supervision and programmes of induction, support and development. New social workers will be expected to receive regular and supportive supervision.

## **7. Frequency of Supervision**

Formal supervision should take place at planned monthly meetings. In the first six weeks of employment, supervision is to take place weekly and then reviewed to decide future levels of supervision during an induction period.

It is recommended that supervision for newly qualified social workers is provided two-weekly for the first three months reducing thereafter to the recommended monthly supervision.

Part time staff should receive supervision on a monthly basis, allowing discretion to reduce the time to reflect the workers caseload.

Agency and temporary staff should receive the same frequency of supervision as permanent staff.

Informal supervision should not replace the planned monthly formal supervision session.

Frequency of supervision will be monitored by the Quality, Performance and Standards Service to ensure compliance with this policy.

## **8. Quality Review – Case Management and Recording Standards**

Supervisors should be satisfied that written records meet good standards and sign and date records they have authorised or monitored.

When allocating a case the manager must ensure that the employee is clear what has been allocated, what actions are required and how that action will be reviewed and supervised.

When required by a Senior Manager, or line manager, all supervisors will be required to show copies of supervision records as evidence of practice and to use these as a tool where there are developmental needs on behalf of the team manager. Supervision records will be made available for inspection as and when requested.

All staff will have at least one annual observed practice/work related session.

Heads of Service will audit a random selection of supervision records on a monthly basis.

The senior management team will audit a random selection of supervision records on a quarterly basis.

Throughout the year, the Quality, Standards and Performance Service will review and analyse Audit findings to help identify and address key practice themes and issues.

## **9. Supervision and Safeguarding**

It is important that all managers and employees working with vulnerable adults and families (directly or indirectly) have read and understood the Multi-agency Safeguarding Policy Practice and Procedures.

Supervision should include scrutinising and evaluating all safeguarding work carried out, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the practitioner and providing coaching development. Supervisors should be available to practitioners as an important source of advice and expertise and may be required to endorse judgements at certain key points in Safeguarding processes. Supervisors should also record key decisions within case records.

## **10. The Supervisory Process**

A supervision contract underpins the supervision process and must be signed by both parties and reviewed annually. The supervision contract should be agreed and regular sessions commenced as part of the induction process.

It is the line manager's responsibility to arrange supervision on a regular basis, our target being every calendar month, and meetings should be scheduled in advanced for the period of a year.

A reasonable period of time needs to be allocated, ideally away from the workstation and be uninterrupted. Good practice suggests that supervision sessions of uninterrupted time should range from 1 hour to 1 ½ hours.

More frequent supervisions could be arranged to meet personal development needs, or if disciplinary or grievance procedures are being followed and deemed appropriate, by the Senior Manager.

The supervisor and supervisee develop an agenda, which includes the three strands – Line Management, Case Management and Continuing Professional Development.

Supervision meetings will be conducted using this agenda template and additional agenda items added as required.

Supervision should start with reference to previous supervision sessions and to any actions that were identified in them.

The meeting must be recorded using the **Record of Supervision Document**. Only the approved supervision and case management discussions during the supervision session should be recorded in the supervision template.

The staff member should be given a copy of the record. Where notes are not typed up and agreed at the end of the session, supervision notes should be sent **within 48 hours** for their retention and action on agreed points.

Both supervisor and supervisee must agree and sign the record of each session using the document templates provided together with any other relevant records. All copies of supervision and case management templates will be stored in the employee's DSP (Appraisal) in SAP.

## 11. Confidentiality

Supervision should normally be seen as a confidential process between the supervisor and the supervisee.

Access to supervision records should be controlled and all records should be locked away to ensure that others, who do not have a legitimate right to see the records, are not able to access them. Supervisees should be aware, however, that in addition to themselves and their supervisors, others will, from time to time, access records for quality assurance purposes e.g. Senior Managers, External Inspectors e.g. CQC, and Investigating Officers for disciplinary purposes.

Where a member of staff or supervisor transfers to another section within Adult Social Care their records should be passed onto the new supervisor.

The Caldecott and General Data Protection Regulation principles must be adhered to in order to uphold the legal requirements regarding confidentiality of the service user, carer and other third parties.

## 12. Grievances

Supervisees should always discuss any grievance or dissatisfaction in the first instance with their supervisor and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process. If the grievance cannot be resolved by discussion with the line supervisor the supervisee should raise the issue with their supervisor's line manager.

Supervisees should be clear about whom they should contact if they feel the terms of their supervision agreement are not being met. How supervisees raise a grievance and who to (named manager) should be included in the Individual Supervision Contract.

In cases of serious difficulty staff should have reference to the County Council's confidential reporting (whistle blowing) policy and HR Grievance policies and procedures.

### **13. Practice/Work Related Observation**

All staff within Adult Social Care will have their direct practice observed at least once a year as a part of the supervision process.

Practice/Work related observations should be jointly planned in supervision beforehand, and the member of staff to be observed should complete Part A of the Practice/Work Observation Form.

Where practice/work related observations involve service users/carers, permission needs to be sought by the member of staff being observed to ensure that the role of the observer is clearly explained.

The observer should provide the member of staff being observed with verbal feedback as soon as possible after the observation and complete Part B of the Practice/Work Observation Form. This should be shared with the member of staff (Refer to Appendix 2) within 5 working days of the observation.

A signed copy of the Practice/Work Observation Form should be stored in the DSP (Appraisal) section in SAP.

Where concerns are identified during a practice/work related observation it is the responsibility of the observer to ensure that concerns are addressed and if required set up further practice/work related observations. A Practice Improvement Plan should be put in place to assist in addressing the issues raised (see Appendix 3).

All practice/work related observations will feed into the annual DSP (appraisal).

Throughout the year, the Quality, Standards and Performance Service will review and analyse Practice/Work related Observations to help identify and address key practice themes and issues.

### **14. Management Development**

Supervisors play a key role in maintaining standards of practice by supervision, supporting and developing employees.

Supervision is a two way process that enables the supervisee to participate in reflection and improved decision making.

All Supervisors should receive supervision training to ensure that core skills meet the Standards required for Social Work Practice. Please refer to Appendix 8.

All levels of employees/managers should receive regular supervision to improve skills and service delivery.

# Appendix 1 Supervision Contract



SC1 V1

<b>Between:</b>		<b>And:</b>	
<b>Frequency:</b>		<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Duration of Session:</b>			

All information between supervisor and supervisee will be treated with respect and in a professional manner. Supervision can be individual or as part of a group.

Formal supervision will take place at least once in every calendar month. However, additional supervision sessions may be requested by either party, or as a result of a specific event / incident.

The supervision dates will be fixed in advance at a mutually agreed date, time and place. 90 minutes should normally be allowed for each supervision session.

Supervision is a joint responsibility. Both parties will honour the appointments made in advance. In the event that a scheduled supervision session has to be cancelled by either party, it should be re-scheduled to take place within 5 working days of the date of the original booked session. If the cause of the cancellation is the sickness absence of either party then another supervision session will be booked within 5 working days of the person's return to work. In the event that the supervisor is absent from work for more than two weeks unplanned leave, it is the responsibility of the supervisee to report to the supervisor's line manager for alternative supervision arrangements to be made.

Supervisor and Supervisee will prepare for supervision.

Supervision notes will be prepared by the supervisor on the items discussed and actions agreed, these notes must be signed by both parties. The original copy will be given to the staff member and a copy will be kept by the supervisor.

Formal supervision sessions will not preclude opportunities for informal discussion on matters of importance that arise from day to day.

The purpose of the formal supervision session will be to assist the staff member to fulfil the accountabilities and responsibilities of their job description. Each session must include agenda items listed on the supervision document. Additional agenda items will be jointly agreed.

The contents of supervision will remain confidential, unless there are implications for departmental guidelines or policy. Any items of a personal nature discussed during supervision will be treated as confidential, unless such disclosures directly affect the work/client situation. In some cases this may necessitate a three way meeting with the supervisor's line manager. Supervision records are the property of the County Council and should be available for Line Management examination when requested.

Supervision should be based on anti-oppressive principles and should be sensitive to race, gender, disability, impairment, age, religion and sexuality.

Areas of disagreement between supervisor and supervisees will be recorded on the supervision records. Areas of disagreement that cannot be resolved will be referred to the line manager in the first instance.

Either party has the right to refer to the next tier of management if there is a problem with the supervisory relationship.

Both supervisor and supervisee must agree and sign the record of each session.

<b>Signed</b> <b>(Supervisor)</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Signed</b> <b>(Supervisee)</b>		<b>Date</b>	



# Appendix 2

## Practice/Work Related Observation

POF1 V1

### Part A: To be completed by worker

<b>Name of worker</b>	
<b>Name of observer</b>	
<b>Date of observation</b>	
<b>Type of session</b>	

**Context of the piece of work** (For example who is the service user / carer and why they have been referred to the agency, this is an assessment or visit, team meeting, demonstration)

--

**Objectives of the piece of work** (what am I trying to do?)

--

**Techniques, strategies and methods to be used in the piece of work.** (What theories and methods, including law, will help me in this work?)

--

### Part B: To be completed by observer

**Comment on how the worker has prepared and planned for the session,** (include how the service user/Carer was prepared for the session as appropriate)

--

**Comment on the worker's communication skills**

--

**How did the worker demonstrate values/ codes of practice in their work?**

--

**As an observer during the observation session did you intervene or make any comments/suggestions/advice to the worker and/or service user/carer or any other person involved?**

--

**Any other comments, including overall performance of worker**

--

**Workers response to feedback**

--

<b>Signed</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Name of observer</b>			
<b>Role of observer</b>			
<b>Name of Supervisee</b>			

**Actions/Recommendations Following Observation**

Actions/Recommendations	Responsibility	To be completed by

# Appendix 3 Practice Improvement Plan



IP1 V1

Presenting Issues	Where are we now?	What do we want to achieve? (Outcomes)	What are the steps? (Actions)	By Whom, and who else needs to be involved? (Responsibilities)	Time (Completed by)	Target Achieved (Yes/No/On going)
Workers Signature:				Date:		
Manager's Signature:				Date:		

# Appendix 4

## Supervision Standards



SS1 V1

### Supervision Standards

The four main functions of Supervision and standards required are detailed in the following sections: Management, Development, Support and Negotiation.

The style and model may vary; however, sessions should involve:

#### Management

Accountability, safe working practices, providing advice, clarifying actions and responsibilities, meeting individual and team objectives.

Responsibilities of Supervisor	Responsibilities of Supervisee
Ensure that Supervision meetings are held regularly. Supervision should occur monthly.	To attend on time and be reasonably prepared for the supervision session.  To inform the manager if they are unable to attend.
Regulate the case workload, clarify accountability and responsibility, and ensure effective case workload management is carried out.	Prepare and share relevant information relating to case workload (particularly in the event of safeguarding concerns and child protection cases).  Take responsibility for communicating ideas, and planned actions.  Take responsibility for requesting advice and support when needed.
Monitor and review the workload priorities in relation to strategic objectives and action plans.	Keep supervisor informed about issues arising from operational activity from a practice administrative or management perspective.
Track and monitor the progress work in relation to individual cases. Support the supervisee in reflective practice and decision making.	Track and monitor progress and maintain accurate up to date records according to service requirements.  Reflect on case work and review methods, models and theories.
Provide clear concise feedback to employees on aspects of their work and performance.	Contribute to the supervision process by reflecting on work related strengths and weaknesses.

Create a climate for good practice in which shared problem solving can take place.	Share concerns about work being done and participate actively in problem solving.
Ensure the role and responsibilities of the supervisee are clearly understood, including the boundaries and limits of their role.	Willing to be open and honest in raising practice issues.
Advise and keep employees and management informed about resource issues.	Keep supervisor informed about resources (-/+ ) and communicate the needs of staff to management.

### **Development**

Reflective practice to improve service skills, identifying learning and development needs and identifying opportunities to address those needs and enabling employees to develop their own abilities.

<b>Responsibilities for Supervisor</b>	<b>Responsibilities for Supervisee</b>
Encourage supervisee to identify their preferred learning style and any barriers to learning.	Develop self-awareness of own preferred learning style e.g. Honey and Mumford's learning styles.
Gain an understanding of supervisee's value base in relation to equality and diversity and its impact on practice.	Reflect on own value base in relation to equality and diversity and its potential impact on practice.
Gain an appreciation and assessment of the supervisee's skills, knowledge and individual contribution.	Prepared to increase their capacity for self-appraisal and ongoing professional development.
Support supervisee to obtain learning experiences with a view to how this learning can be applied to practice.	Reflect on learning experiences, and provide evidence of how the learning has been applied to practice.
Support supervisee in identifying learning and development gaps.	Reflect on own development and bring identified learning and development needs to the supervision meeting.
Ensure colleagues are treated equally regardless of disability, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation or religion.	
The supervisee is given the opportunity to reflect on their own professional competence and supported to develop their capacity to set professional goals.	
Supervisee provides constructive feedback to the supervisor.	
The supervision process is used to support the annual performance appraisal and review process and the Personal Development Plan.	

## **Support**

This function recognises that supervisees may experience difficult situations and require additional support in relation to their practice/work performance, emotional state and how best to provide this support.

It is important to remember that the Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments to help disabled job applicants, employees and former employees in certain circumstances. The duty can arise where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage by:

- An employer's provision, criterion or practice (PCP).
- A physical feature of the employer's premises.
- An employer's failure to provide an auxiliary aid.

However, an employer will not be obliged to make reasonable adjustments unless it knows or ought reasonably to know that the individual in question is disabled and likely to be placed at a substantial disadvantage because of their disability.

<b>Responsibilities for Supervisor</b>	<b>Responsibilities for Supervisee</b>
Provide a positive environment where practice and issues impacting on work can be discussed in confidence.	Confidentiality is maintained and supervisee brings a commitment to making a supervision process work.
Provide advice, information and support for all cases which involve vulnerable adults who have an Adult Protection Plan.	Inform manager of any concerns relating to vulnerable adults with an Adult Protection Plan.  To have knowledge of safeguarding recommendations.
Clarify the boundaries between support and counselling, and the limits of confidentiality in supervision.	Ensure personal understanding of the supervision process, of confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulation.
Respond with care to any professional or personal issues that may impact work. Ensure that any adverse effects of stress are identified and managed.	Alert supervisor at the earliest opportunity of any problems that may impact on work performance.  Take responsibility for own emotional wellbeing.
Discuss issues of absence with the view to supporting employee and improving future attendance.	Notify supervisor of any specific health problems impacting attendance or work performance.
Help supervisee to reflect on difficulties in colleague relationships, to assist them in resolving any conflict.	Be prepared to share information around professional relationships and take responsibility for resolving conflict.
Ensure that grievances are dealt with at the earliest stage possible; adhering to corporate procedures.	Be prepared to raise issues and attempt to resolve them.
Provide the opportunity to explore any issues arising from bullying or	Be aware of County Council policies and discuss any issues with your supervisor.

discrimination in a safe setting and act to eliminate any risks	
The duty to make reasonable adjustments arises where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage 'in comparison with persons who are not disabled'.	Be prepared to share with your manager if A person (P) has a disability if P has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Team Managers will review all high risk cases and quality assure a random selection of case files and supervision notes every three months.	

### **Negotiation**

This is to ensure that the relationship between the supervisee, their team, the organisation and other agencies with whom they work are effective.

<b>Responsibilities of Supervisor</b>	<b>Responsibilities of Supervisee</b>
Negotiate and clarify the Supervisee's and team's role and responsibilities in relationship to the business plan and enable the supervisee to contribute as appropriate to team plans.	Understand own role in relation to local team and organisation's goals, aims and objectives.
Report lack of resources and other issues to higher management and keep supervisee informed.	Raise concerns around resource/practice issues with supervisor; Keep supervisor informed about resources (-/+ ) and staff issues.
Help the supervisee to reflect on their position as a team member; mediating or advocating between workers, or other parts of the agency or with outside agencies as appropriate.	Be respectful and anti-oppressive in discussing service users, colleagues and other agencies.  Take responsibilities for creating constructive relationships with colleagues and teams and play a constructive role in resolving conflicts.
Consult with and brief the supervisee on changes and developments that affect their area of work	Take responsibility for keeping up to date and informed on organisation and team developments.
Provide a route for the two way flow of information between front line workers and managers at all levels.	
Initiate, clarify or contribute to policy formulation and practice development.	

## Appendix 5

# Legislative Framework

The Local Government Association (LGA) Standards for employers of social workers includes Standard 5 Effective and Appropriate Supervision. Employers should ensure that social workers have regular and appropriate social work supervision. This Standard is about making high quality, regular supervision an integral part of social work practice.

This should start with students on placement, and continue through ASYE and throughout the individual's social work career. Supervision should be based on a rigorous understanding of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF). Supervision should challenge students and qualified practitioners to reflect critically on their practice and should foster an inquisitive approach to social work.

The BASW Code of ethics for social work states in Principal 13 Using professional Supervision and peer support to reflect on and improve practice. "Social workers should take responsibility for ensuring they have access to professional supervision and discussion which supports them to reflect and make sound professional judgements based on good practice. BASW expects all employers to provide appropriate professional supervision for social workers and promote effective team work and communication".

The BASW supervision policy (2011) states that a section 11 'Any organisations that employ social workers, should have a strategic lead social worker with responsibility for developing a strong supervision culture and making sure that supervision happens. This will be achieved through:

- A clear supervision policy with agreed standards across partnership agencies, with practice that supports the policy.
- Recognition of the importance of the several functions of supervision.
- A strong lead and example by senior managers.
- Performance objectives for supervision practice in place for all managers.
- Supervision agreements or contracts.
- Effective training of supervisors.
- Monitoring and audit of actual practice – frequency quality and outcomes.'

Regulation 18 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014

To meet Regulation 18 provider organisations must ensure that sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, competent, skilled and experienced staff are available to meet the needs of patients/service users at all times as well as to meet the other regulatory

requirements. Provider organisations must ensure that their staff receive the support, training, professional development, supervision and appraisals necessary for them to carry out their duties effectively and so that they continue to meet the professional standards necessary to practise.

Social workers may wish to consider the Knowledge and Skills Statement for Social Workers in Adult Services (DH, 2015) which says:

“8. Supervision, critical reflection and analysis

Social workers must have access to regular, good quality supervision and understand its importance in providing advice and support. They should know how and when to seek advice from a range of sources including named supervisors, senior social workers and other professionals. “

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) regulates the social work profession. The Standards of proficiency state that social workers should:

- 11 be able to reflect on and review practice
- 11.1 understand the value of critical reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately
- 11.2 recognise the value of supervision, case reviews and other methods of reflection and review
- 12 be able to assure the quality of their practice
- 12.1 be able to use supervision to support and enhance the quality of their social work practice

The Professional capabilities framework locates supervision under the domain of ‘professionalism’ and states that workers should ‘Demonstrate an effective and active use of supervision for accountability, professional reflection and development’. The framework can be found on the website of the British Association of Social Workers.

The difference between these ‘standards’ and ‘capabilities’ is that the standards refer to a recognised level of what you should be able to do in relation to a role. They are therefore external and measurable. Capabilities are broader and refer to qualities as well as skills – abilities and knowledge internal to a person that you may wish to make external and measure using standards.

# Appendix 6 Record of Supervision



ROS V1

<b>Supervisee:</b>		<b>Date of Supervision:</b>
<b>Supervisor:</b>		

Agenda items for this supervision	
no.	Topic/issue
1.	Hello, How are you?
2.	Outstanding actions/targets
3.	Current Work/Work load issues
4.	Practice Discussion (including Diversity, Practice)
5.	Evidence of good practice
6.	Outstanding actions
7.	Work life balance/Health and Wellbeing
8.	Learning and Development

Practice discussion	Key Learning Points
(Include development and changes which impact practice.	

CPD/Learning and Development	Planned Outcome

<b>Time out of team – (Leave, Toil , Sickness)</b>	
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# Appendix 8



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

## Post-qualifying Standards for Social Work Practice Supervisors in Adult Social Care

Published December 2018

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## 1. Values and ethics

- 1.1 Practice supervisors will demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to, social work ethical principles and values and promote 'principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities,' which are fundamental British Values and central to the [national and international definition of social work practice](#).
- 1.2 They should be able to apply these principles confidently to their role as a critically reflective practice supervisor and have a reflexive ability to understand themselves and the fundamental values which influence their own practice, and change these where necessary. They should model and promote the application of professional values and ethics to decision-making.
- 1.3 Practice supervisors should adopt, model and promote the values of a reflective, partnership and collaborative approach to their role as a practice supervisor. They should ensure that they recognise and address discrimination, disadvantage and bias in all dimensions of their role as a practice supervisor, including the supervision and assessment process.

## **2. Influencing and governing practice excellence within the organisation and community**

- 2.1 Practice supervisors must be proactive in establishing and maintaining a position of influence within the organisation and across the wider health and social care community, with appropriate support from senior managers and be recognised for their expertise and values-based practice. They should shape and influence an environment which facilitates excellent practice by setting high professional standards and motivating social workers to do the same. They should support social workers to work within the relevant governance frameworks, both internal and external to the organisation.
- 2.2 Practice supervisors should design and implement measures to assure the quality of practice and the effective throughput of work. They will support social workers to be ambitious for people by promoting reflective, curious and inquisitive practice, use of appropriate interviewing techniques and encourage challenging conversations to ensure decisions are defensible and put into action.
- 2.3 Practice supervisors will support social workers to take the lead in upholding human rights, outcomes-focused and personalised approaches to adult safeguarding practice and ensure they are able to make positive interventions that prevent deterioration in health and wellbeing. In situations where a child or young person may be at risk, practice supervisors will support social workers to have the necessary knowledge and skills to identify risk of significant harm and ensure they are supported to take appropriate action.
- 2.4 Practice supervisors should build positive relationships with adults and their carers and other professionals through their professionalism and optimistic attitude, as appropriate and model this approach to others. Practice supervisors will lead by example, encouraging and promoting a holistic approach to practice which is both person-centred and outcomes-focussed and which demonstrates integrity, creativity, resilience and clarity of purpose, to positively influence decision-making. They will provide a safe environment within which social workers can be energised and effective. Practice supervisors will be visible and accessible to staff, adults and their carers and professional partners.
- 2.5 Practice supervisors should ensure the processes they are able to influence are functional and efficient. They should be pro-active in protecting social workers from unnecessary bureaucratic or hierarchical pressures and be able implement strategies to help manage them. They should recognise and articulate the dilemmas and challenges faced by social workers and use this expertise to guide, support and influence the provision of the organisation's services.

- 2.6 Practice supervisors must promote the effective and equitable use of organisational resources and identify and support use of resources that lie within families and communities. They should be open to creative solutions to promote well-being and independence, researching and identifying where new resources and preventative support could be developed in partnership with the community. Practice supervisors should support social workers to develop influential and respectful working relationships with partner agencies.
- 2.7 Practice supervisors should engage with the structures, pressures, priorities and levers within the organisation for influencing and shaping its thinking and actions. They should share their practice expertise to influence wider organisations that make-up the health and social care community, to help the system function positively for people.

### 3. Developing confident and capable social workers

- 3.1 Practice supervisors should recognise, respect and value the expertise of social workers and support the Principal Social Worker in developing and implementing a framework for effective social work practice, underpinned by social work values, theory, research, contemporary social work models and methods and the legislative framework. They should be able to articulate how this framework guides practice and explain and champion the framework to social workers, other professionals, adults and their carers throughout their community of practice. In particular, practice supervisors should encourage practitioners to adopt strengths and asset-based approaches, informed by the principles of the Care Act 2014, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Mental Health Act 2007 and ensure that practice is focussed on achieving the best possible outcomes for individuals.
- 3.2 Practice supervisors should identify, assess and support the development of professional capabilities, articulated in the Professional Capabilities Framework and other professional standards, for example, assessing against the Chief Social Worker's [Knowledge and Skills Statement \(KSS\)](#) for social workers at the end of their Assessed Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). They should engage the social worker in the planning and development of assessment activities and use observation, critical reflection and feedback methods alongside the views of adults, carers and other professionals to develop and assess practice.
- 3.3 Practice supervisors must be able to demonstrate skills of looking, listening and meta-competence (*see glossary for definition*) in the identification and assessment of a social worker's practice dynamics, behaviour and intervention skills; in such observations of practice they must maintain objectivity and reflexivity, demonstrating an awareness of and ability to counter professional bias.
- 3.4 Practice supervisors must assess professional capability holistically. They should ensure that decisions are the outcomes of informed, evidence based judgements and that these are communicated clearly and timely to those being assessed. When assessing professional capability, they should ensure that evidence presented is relevant, valid, reliable, sufficient and authentic.
- 3.5 Practice supervisors should promote continuous professional development through critical reflection in the supervision process. They should support social workers to meet their learning needs through identifying and addressing barriers for learning and by regularly reviewing and co-constructing a professional development plan, which outlines relevant learning opportunities and resources. Practice supervisors should understand and apply learning theory to recognise when their role is to teach, when to mentor and when to coach.

- 3.6 They should develop a culture and community of learning and improvement, drawing on the expertise held within a practice team. Practice supervisors must invest available resources into staff and service development, drawing on the expertise of adults and their carers. They should contribute to the review of the service and the improvement of its provision, policies and procedures.

## **4. Assuring good social work practice and development**

- 4.1 Practice supervisors should confidently and consistently model professionalism and high standards of social work practice. They should critically reflect on and evaluate their own continuing professional development and ensure that their knowledge of social work practice, theoretical perspectives and research is current and maintained. They should develop systems for disseminating their knowledge and skills and for evaluating its impact on practice.
- 4.2 Practice supervisors should ensure that social workers apply a person-centred and holistic approach in their practice which is respectful and empowering for individuals and their carers. They should ensure that evidence based methods and tools are used by social workers in their assessments and interventions. They should ensure that a social worker's actions are proportionate to the identified risk and need and satisfy the procedural requirements of the organisation. Practice supervisors should model and ensure a personalised approach to safeguarding, maximising an individual's opportunity to determine and realise their desired outcomes.
- 4.3 Practice supervisors should use supervision to challenge the balance of authoritative intervention and collaborative engagement and to clarify how practice is achieving the best outcomes for adults and their carers. They should use an explorative questioning style to uncover assumptions and analyse judgments, to clarify the focus of the practitioner's work and to identify what changes the social worker needs to make in their approach e.g. more reflective or more active. They should ensure that individual and carer perspectives are sought, listened to and understood and that they are engaged in shaping plans and supported to carry these out to achieve positive changes to their Well-being and independence; progress should be regularly reviewed and plans adjusted to achieve the desired outcomes.
- 4.4 Practice supervisors must implement effective strategies for ensuring the throughput of work and ensure no individual is unnoticed in the system. They should regularly review the requirement for continued involvement in the lives of people who use services and close cases in a timely manner, having considered the need for any ongoing support.

## 5. Promoting and supporting critical analysis and decision making

- 5.1 Practice supervisors should create a culture of focused and critical thinking which consistently explores and takes into account a wide range of contexts including individual, carer and professional stories, the chronology of critical events, social and economic circumstances and their own practice experiences.
- 5.2 Practice supervisors should support social workers to recognise multiple and sometimes conflicting hypotheses, interpretations or perspectives in reaching a professional judgement to take account of the complexity of people's lives, accepting that people are experts in their own lives.
- 5.3 Practice supervisors should understand and be able to apply different methods of critical reflection to promote the development of critically reflective practice in others. They should support and challenge social workers to apply reasoned discernment, making decisions based on observations and analyses, to explore differences between opinion and fact, address common bias in situations of uncertainty and to make clear conclusions and defensible judgements.
- 5.4 Practice supervisors should ensure that social workers are ambitious for people and are focussed on enhancing and promoting their wellbeing so that decisions are person-centred and outcome-focussed in accordance with the legislative framework. They should ensure, particularly in relation to safeguarding and mental capacity practice that the immediate and long-term impact of decisions is fully considered at each stage of planning and review and that social workers are able to clearly articulate and justify their plans, decisions and actions. Practice supervisors should promote and enable social workers to adopt a positive approach to managing risk which is underpinned, where necessary, by relevant legislation. They should ensure that social workers are responsive to meeting the assessed needs of people and their carers, and where expectations cannot be met, that disappointment is managed sensitively and appropriately.
- 5.5 Practice supervisors should establish recording processes which provide the full analysis underpinning decisions, making sure the rationale for why and how decisions have been made is comprehensive and well expressed.

## 6. Relationship-based practice supervision

**(Practice supervisors who have PEPS Stage 2 or PDE through externally moderated or quality assured programmes meet the requirements for this statement)**

- 6.1 Practice supervisors should be able to critically reflect on and apply a range of relevant supervisory models which recognise and address the power dynamics in the supervision relationship. They should develop a collaborative, supervisory partnership in which the relationships with adults in need of care and support have a central position. Practice supervisors should make specific use of practice observations and feedback from individuals, carers and other professionals to reflect on and improve the social worker's practice.
- 6.2 Practice supervisors should work in partnership with social workers to develop and regularly review a supervision agreement to support the supervision process.
- 6.3 Practice supervisors should be able to identify emotional or personal barriers affecting practice and recognise when to step in and proactively support individuals. They should promote reflective thinking to drive more effective discussions so that reasoned and timely decision-making can take place. Practice supervisors should demonstrate a high level of resilience within pressured environments, seeking professional support for themselves when necessary. They should be attuned to the effect of high emotion and stress and respond in empathic, compassionate, calm, measured and pragmatic ways.
- 6.4 Practice supervisors should recognise should recognise the impact the relationships with whom they are working may have on social workers, including people and their carers as well as other professionals, which can impact on the effectiveness of practice. They must provide high quality individual supervision that is responsive and restorative. Practice supervisors should promote approaches such as peer supervision and group case consultation to foster professional curiosity, to help identify common bias, to shift thinking and to generate the best outcomes for adults and their carers.
- 6.5 Practice supervisors should reflect on the confidence of their social workers and adapt their management and leadership style according to people's needs and to foster organisational improvement.

## **7. Effective use of power and authority as a practice supervisor**

- 7.1 Practice supervisors must apply a proportionate and ethical approach to the exercise of their authority and ensure that the approach of social workers enhances the involvement, choice and control of adults and their carers to improve their quality of life and well-being.
- 7.2 Practice supervisors should secure, maintain and model a current and working knowledge of the legislative framework, particularly the Care Act 2014, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and mental health legislation and its related case law. They should ensure that practice is lawful and seek legal advice when required. They should demonstrate a critical understanding of organisational policy and procedures.
- 7.3 Practice supervisors should provide expertise and support to social workers to exercise statutory or other formal authority where their assessment and analysis indicates that an adult appears to be at risk of abuse or neglect. They should be able to work with and contain the emotions of social workers so that they are able to identify person-centred solutions to risk and harm, including practice situations where the person using services is assessed as having mental capacity and decides to make what might be an unwise decision. They should support social workers to communicate clearly the purpose and content of the care and support plan.
- 7.4 Practice supervisors should recognise the dynamics of relationships between professionals, identifying where these are likely to compromise the well-being of adults and take immediate and corrective action.
- 7.5 Practice supervisors will create a culture where challenge and debate is invited and encouraged to support transparency and accountability; they should be accessible and approachable to social workers, adults and their carers.

## 8. Performance management and improvement<sup>1</sup>

- 8.1 Practice supervisors should ensure practitioners understand the legal, regulatory, procedural and performance framework within which they operate and within which they are held accountable.
- 8.2 Practice supervisors must promote, build and model a culture that recognises excellent practice and professional leadership, enhancing social workers' confidence in their practice. They must challenge complacency with a commitment to continued improvement and confidently hold poor practice to account.
- 8.3 Practice supervisors should establish available capacity so that work is allocated appropriately across the staff group and ensure best use is made of resource, ability, interests and developmental aspirations.
- 8.4 Practice supervisors should strike a balance between employing a managerial, task-focussed approach and a reflective, enabling, leadership style to achieve efficient day-to-day functioning. They should draw on and share best practice within local and national contexts. Practice supervisors should implement communication channels with adults, their carers and other professionals inviting feedback and ideas for improvement. They must respond thoughtfully and proactively to complaints and mistakes, recognising that they can provide creative learning opportunities for development at all levels.
- 8.5 Practice supervisors should utilise data to understand historical patterns, current demands and likely future trends. They should implement systems which demonstrate effective practice and, when needed, which trigger quick corrective action. They should scrutinise system performance and devise and implement effective and timely improvement plans.

<sup>1</sup> DHSC published guidance on [Social Work in Integrated Settings](#) in 2017 which stated that: "professional leadership and supervision in social work (including reflective practice) is critical alongside line management, (while) coaching and mentoring can support professional development."

## Glossary

### Supervision

Professional supervision in social work is a regular and ongoing process involving a practice supervisor who has responsibility for overseeing the social worker's professional practice. It should take place regularly, usually as a one to one meeting, in an environment in which confidential discussions can take place.

The practice supervisor may also be the nominated line manager within the organisation; if the line manager is not a registered social worker, professional supervision will need to be provided separately. Supervision includes attending to managerial and performance functions, promoting professional development (including supporting the development of professional development plans) and supporting workers personally and emotionally and in developing resilience.

### Values

Values are beliefs about what is regarded as good or desirable in social work. They can range from those which are relatively superficial, to those which represent more fundamental beliefs. In social work they would include values about how we believe the world (and society) should be; what constitutes a good person; and how people should behave towards one another. These will normally be congruent with broader values in the society or culture, or the laws of the land. Professional ethics derive from values, and are normally more specific interpretations of how professionals should act in given situations. They are usually codified.

When we refer to values-based practice we are referring to social work practice which is conscious of the more fundamental value decisions which might be inherent in particular practice situations, and which strives to honour the values which are important to social work (e.g. care for human dignity; integrity; empathy; compassion; social justice). A practitioner who is working from a value base should be aware of the fundamental value decisions which are involved in the many different practice situations, and make an informed choice on the basis of these values. They will be aware that not all decisions can be made purely on the basis of evidence, or indeed that the evidence might sometimes contravene the value base. In some cases, it might seem impossible to make decisions which honour the desired values. Value-based social work practice would be aware of the contradictions and challenges, and strive to work with these, rather than deny the values involved.

### Critical reflection

Reflection, in simple terms, is learning from experience. It refers to the process of reviewing an experience and making new meaning and interpretations of it in the light of: other perspectives; new evidence; changes or new experiences or contexts; or new information. In its fullest sense it also involves devising new guidelines for action on the basis of this review. How it is done will

Vary, depending on the theoretical framework used, or the model subscribed to (of which there are many). Some models are more structured and systematic than others. Using a reflective practice approach begins with searching for hidden assumptions. This act stimulates further examination of whether these assumptions are appropriate or desirable, providing the basis for changing them, or changing the actions associated with them. (Schön, D. (1983) 'The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.' London: Temple Smith).

Many theoretical frameworks can be used to identify assumptions and to decide which are fundamental. Most prominent is the concept of reflexivity (discussed elsewhere in the glossary); post structural thinking (the role of language); critical theory (role of power) and spirituality (making of meaning).

Reflection becomes critical when it involves two aspects:

- When it is fundamental enough (goes deep enough) to effect transformative change
- When it is based on an analysis of power dynamics and strives to equalize power imbalances and maximize democratic relations

There is more complex understanding of a critical approach as embodied in critical social science. These understandings can make critical reflection transformative in function, allowing people who critically reflect to envisage and enact drastically new ways of thinking and practising.

## Reflexive

This is a term commonly used in conjunction with being reflective. Although the outcomes of both may be similar, reflexivity is a concept which derives primarily from social science research (whereas reflectivity as a concept derives more from professional practice and humanities traditions). Reflexivity is about being able to recognize the influence of oneself on a situation. This influence may involve the influence of: your own body (e.g. age, illness, physical, racial characteristics); other material considerations (e.g. your economic class); (psychological elements e.g. emotional and cognitive aspects of yourself); social aspects (e.g. gender, ethnicity); historical and cultural contexts; and structural factors (e.g. social class). In this comprehensive sense then being reflexive involves being able to locate and understand yourself from those above perspectives, which then enables you to be aware of whatever thinking, biases or blind spots might be influencing the way you interpret people and situations, and therefore the way you practice.

Clearly being able to be reflective, by being aware of your own assumptions, is related to being reflexive. Being reflexive should enable the practitioner to be aware of and appreciate different perspectives. This in turn should enable the practitioner to work in more flexible and responsive ways, in changing and sometimes unpredictable situations.

## Person-centred practice

This term is used in this document in conjunction with outcomes focused practice (also outlined in this glossary). In person-centred practice, the person who is being worked with is always at the centre of the work. This does not mean necessarily that whatever the person wants is what happens. What it does mean though is that the relationship with the person is first and foremost, so that when there might be differences of opinion about what should happen, or when there are limitations as to what can be done (e.g. because of the rights of other people, policy or legal restrictions), there can always be dialogue about these. When this cannot happen, practice should still be person-centred in that the person's particular situation and capabilities must be taken into account.

Person-centred practice is also differentiated from practice which is more routinized, and seeks primarily to implement policies and regulations. In person-centred practice the person as a unique individual, with a unique history, in unique circumstances, is always factored into the way policies and regulations are implemented appropriate to the person and their situation.

## Outcomes focused practice

In this document, outcomes focused practice refers to practice which always aims towards appropriate outcomes, within the primary relationship focus of practice. An outcome focus ensures that practitioners are always mindful of different outcome options for people, and that outcome options will be devised in terms of people's desires and capabilities, with the policy and legislative context.

## Strengths and asset-based practice

Strengths-based approaches in social work practice focus on the assets of people, as opposed to their deficits. This also involves working in partnership; working "with" as opposed to "doing to or for." It is also associated with the concept of resilience, seen as a capacity for people to develop and grow in the face of challenges. Some would argue that this is a type of "self-righting" capacity, but which does require a protective and nurturing environment. Particularly important about the concept of resilience, is that it instils a sense of hope.

## Holistic assessment

Holistic assessment is best suited to assessing the complex interplay of technical, reflective and developmental progress that is required in the social work role. Holistic assessment brings together the views of several key stakeholders, e.g. supervisor, adults, carers and other professionals. Holistic assessment will chart and evidence progress over a period of time. Progression between levels is demonstrated by complexity, risk, ambiguity and increasingly autonomous decision making.

## Meta competence

Meta competence refers to the higher order overarching skills that are required by social workers as they develop their professional practice within the complex social work role.

Meta competence includes how the social worker understands and conceptualizes their practice and the theoretical approaches, knowledge, values and skills that underpin it. The demonstration of meta competences would also include critical thinking and reflective abilities; use of self; understanding of relevant factors, emotions and factors that impacted on their understanding and ability to articulate their judgments and decision making.

Meta competence can be separated out from procedural competence which refers to the skills and underpinning knowledge demonstrated in relation to relevant policy and procedure; and establishing and maintaining a purposeful and focused intervention through the use of communication and interpersonal skills.

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## Appendix

### Frameworks underpinning the KSS for adult social work practice supervisors

It is important that the underlying principles of the KSS ('the eight statements') are identified clearly to provide a guiding framework.

As stated earlier, the approach to supervision is both reflective and relationship based. These approaches and the values which are integral to them are seen as central to good social work.

### Developing integral core skills

However, there is also a need to articulate a framework for identifying the actual knowledge and skills (as well as values) which are important to good competent social work practice (and supervision); the different levels of practice which can be identified (from beginner to expert); and of course, the means for developing through the different levels. Such a framework can provide a guide for supervisors in assessing individual social workers, but can also be used to identify the skills needed to provide successful supervision. These levels are already identified in the PCF.

Perhaps less clear are the more generic professional skills which form an integral core of skills for most professionals, regardless of setting. In addition, how these skills are developed and how practitioners are enabled to progress from one level to another is also less clearly defined.

In brief, professional social workers need to progress with regard to several different dimensions of practice, including:

- Substantive knowledge ('knowing that')
- Procedural knowledge ('knowing how')
- Skills and values

The degree to which practitioners are also able to demonstrate the following skills are also important elements towards developing an expert level of practice:

- Flexibility
- Able to use and adapt theory
- Able to be reflexive
- Able to analyse and act contextually

Professionals typically progress by learning how to create their own theory which is contextually appropriate (as opposed to applying abstract rules); and to recognise their own ability to act within a situation.

## Critical reflection

The ability to critically reflect is crucial in developing expertise in these different dimensions. It allows the practitioner to learn from their own experience and thus adapt their knowledge and theory responsively in changing contexts. In this sense they are effectively creating their own theory, which they use in conjunction with other pre-given theories or knowledge, to be more responsive to particular situations.

A critically reflective ability can also ensure that the practitioner is aware of fundamental values and beliefs, and is able to review whether and how these are being acted upon. If the reflection is deep enough, transformational change can occur. This means that practitioners may be enabled to challenge deeply held, often taken for granted thinking, which may have constantly given rise to problematic actions or common dilemmas in the past. Such changes have the capacity to improve organisational cultures and processes.

## Reflective supervision, assessment and observation

Reflective supervision involves helping, through supervision processes, to create an environment which enables such learning and reviewing to take place. This means first and foremost that a reflective supervisor needs to model a critically reflective ability in their own approach to relationships in the organisation. A reflective supervisor needs to be able to create an open, challenging but supportive environment where practitioners are encouraged to learn how to learn from their own personal and professional experience (a mixture of thinking, acting and feeling) to be able to take risks in exposing their limitations or dilemmas, and to remake new knowledge accordingly. They become open to learning from “mistakes” and participating in a learning environment more broadly. In this way the reflective supervisor helps practitioners to improve their practice by also becoming self-directed learners in partnership with their supervisors.

Reflective supervisors should also develop the relevant skills to assess practitioners’ practice and performance in a reflective way and to assess the critical reflective ability of practitioners. Accordingly, other core supervision skills should also be developed to be practised in a reflective way, such as observational and feedback skills. In general, a reflective way of relating as a supervisor does not necessarily mean that the supervisor might not give concrete or critical or negative feedback on performance when needed. It does mean however that such feedback is given within a spirit of collegiality, democracy, and reflexive awareness on the part of the supervisor.

There will be obvious commonalities between a reflective approach and a relationship-based approach. Both approaches emphasise the importance of partnership and collegiality, as much as possible and relevant. Discussions should be held as dialogue, with maximum openness to



## Post-qualifying standards for social work practice supervisors in adult social care

Differing perspectives. Prime importance is placed on the quality of the relationship between supervisors and practitioners, using this as the main tool to effect change, and to arrive at mutual understandings. In both approaches it is assumed that supervisors and practitioners bring unique backgrounds and expertise, which should be recognised, respected, and taken into account when working together. This assumes that a reflexive self-awareness and understanding should inform interactions between supervisors and practitioners. In both approaches the supervisor assumes, as much as possible, an enabling role, using the trust and respect built up in the relationship to create the learning conditions to help practitioners to see different and new perspectives, and to improve.

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