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Tri-borough Adult Social Care

# Supervision Policy

April 2014



## Supervision Policy

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# Support Planning Policy

## Supervision policy

### Key points

Regular and effective supervision is an essential element in staff management and development

The functions of supervision include casework discussion, line management, learning and development, caseload management and performance management

Supervision is a tool for monitoring the quantity and quality of work being done

### You Must

Ensure the minimum number of supervision sessions, consistent with the practitioner's experience and qualifications

Discuss cases involving risk to positively reinforce positive risk taking, alongside risk management

Ensure that professional supervision occurs where a line manager is of a different discipline to the practitioner

Record decisions relating to specific cases in the customer's case notes

Use supervision sessions to check a practitioner's knowledge and understanding of individual policies

See supervision sessions as part of performance management

Base supervision within anti-discriminatory principles of equality and diversity

Allow for reflection on cases to promote learning

### You Should

Follow a Checklist to guide your discussion

Use a template to record your discussions and actions

# The Policy

## 1. Introduction

Tri-borough Adult Social Care sees regular and effective supervision as an essential element in staff management and development, and ultimately in ensuring a high quality service is delivered to Tri-borough residents.

The Tri-borough vision is to:

Deliver great local services through quality, innovation and leadership.  
This vision is delivered for its residents through the following values:

Being

- Responsive
- Innovative
- Collaborative
- Enterprising

The core value is serving the public. Staff are expected to demonstrate these values through their day to day work and are committed to embedding them into everything they do. Managers are also expected to demonstrate that they are managing their service well and providing leadership to their staff. The performance appraisal process enables all staff to demonstrate this commitment. The behaviours outlined in the statement of Values and Behaviours are examples of what Tri-borough expects to see. All staff, at all levels, will be assessed using this framework.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to the supervision of all practitioners, qualified and unqualified, including social workers and Occupational Therapists.

Given the evidence that supervision is associated with job satisfaction and protects against stress, practitioners should insist that good supervision is provided by their employers. The emotionally charged nature of the work places particular kinds of demands on people working in the field which need to be contained by the organisation. This means moving beyond a focus on task and prescription, and providing opportunities for reflective supervision.<sup>2</sup>

Supervision provides a form of accountability between the employer and employee on behalf of the public. It is a tool for monitoring the quantity and quality of work being done.<sup>3</sup> This includes the duty of employees to keep the line manager informed of all matters of a complex or contentious nature.

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<sup>1</sup> Tri-borough Performance Appraisal Guidance for all Staff and Managers, Version 1, March, 2013

<sup>2</sup> SCIE Research Briefing 43 Effective Supervision in Social Work and Social Care, 2012

<sup>3</sup> Social Work Reform Board, Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework, 2012

### **3. Types of Supervision**

This policy focuses on one to one supervision. These are planned meetings, comprising the supervisor and supervisee. They will include discussion about practice issues, professional development and performance.

Other forms of supervision do take place and should be considered in individual teams.

#### **A. Peer supervision**

This is where colleagues supervise each other and is usually a discussion on specific cases. Any decisions made should be recorded on the case record as informal supervision.

#### **B. Group supervision**

This can occur, for example, in a home care team, where a supervisor will supervise a number of staff in a group and this will cover discussion of specific cases and how the group work together as a team. Group supervision complements, rather than replaces, one to one supervision. It can provide a valuable means of sharing practices, prompting debate and promoting learning.

#### **C. Informal/Ad Hoc supervision**

This occurs in between planned supervision meetings when guidance/advice is required. Any decisions reached must be recorded on the individual's case records.

#### **D. Professional supervision/Case supervision**

This occurs on a one to one basis, to enable and support quality practice. A key aspect is the review and reflection on practice issues. It includes looking at the outcomes of the work and maximising the opportunities for wider learning. Attendance at other forums which are social work practice related could also be considered eg safeguarding forums, hoarding forum, domestic violence briefing.

### **4. Appraisal**

Appraisal is an annual event which takes a longer term view of an employee and their performance and professional development. Supervision sessions can inform the appraisal discussion. The appraisal identifies objectives to be worked towards during the following year, and how these are going to be met. The Personal Development Plan (PDP) will come out of the appraisal process. The appraisal identifies objectives for the following year and the support required in meeting them.

### **5. Functions of Supervision**

#### **A. Casework discussion and caseload management**

- Critically reflective practice – an opportunity to reflect on a piece of work and discuss what happened, how the practice relates to knowledge, skills and values, what could

have been done differently, and what has been learned for future practice. These reflections can be taken from direct work with customers, meetings or managing complaints and/or adult safeguarding cases.

- Discussion and feedback from observations
- Looking at the impact of the work on the supervisee
- Professional boundaries
- Quality of the decision making
- Acknowledgement of good practice
- Content and quality of recording<sup>4</sup>
- Review of case numbers and types of cases
- Decision making and case planning
- Feedback on specific cases, actions, changes in needs/support required, Direct Payments management concerns
- All safeguarding cases must be discussed and the supervisor updated on progress
- Risk Management and the promotion of positive risk taking.<sup>5</sup> Managers should be challenging practitioners on risk decisions which have not supported positive risk taking.

## **B. Line Management**

- Demonstration of adherence to policies/procedures/local protocols It is essential that managers use supervision sessions, alongside team meetings and other group forums, to test practitioners' understanding and adherence to policies. This can be done by asking specific questions, for example, in determining Mr X's eligibility banding/s - what was your evidence? Quizzes can also be used, with questions being specifically designed to test aspects within a particular policy. This links into performance management.
- Performance – clear feedback from supervisor of any issues, how they will be addressed and in what timescale
- Conduct issues – to include issue/s to be addressed, how and in what timescale
- Information sharing
- Sickness leave
- Annual leave/Flexi time/TOIL

## **C. Learning and Development**

- Evaluating recent learning and development activities and how the learning has been transferred to practice
- Progressing towards objectives set in appraisal
- Reviewing Continuing Professional Development – have learning journals or CPD folders been kept up to date?
- Identifying and exploring any learning and development needs to find the best kinds of opportunities for the supervisee
- Working towards practice and career development
- Maintaining professional registration
- Review of PDP

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<sup>4</sup> Tri-borough Recording policy – due August 2014

<sup>5</sup> Tri-borough Positive Risk Taking policy – April 2014

- Identification of any learning and development needs and how these might be addressed
- How recent learning has been absorbed into practice
- Progress towards the objectives set in the appraisal should be regularly reviewed in supervision

#### **D. Performance Management**

Performance issues, as indicated in Line Management above - should be identified during supervision. These include praising work well done, encouraging innovative ideas, promoting good practice and identifying talent and also addressing performance concerns leading to performance management.

### **6. Social Work Standards**

The Social Work Reform Board introduced in 2012, as part of its programme of reform, a set of standards for employers of social workers in all settings. The standards will enable social workers to practice effectively and confidently. The standards include a supervision one, as follows:

#### **Standard - Ensure that social workers have regular and appropriate social work supervision**

Reflective practice is key to effective social work and high quality regular supervision should be an integral part of social work practice. All organisations employing social workers should make a positive, unambiguous commitment to a strong culture of supervision, reflective practice and adaptive learning. Supervision should be based on a rigorous understanding of the key elements of effective social work supervision, as well as the research and evidence which underpins good social work practice. Supervision should challenge practitioners to reflect critically on their cases and should foster an inquisitive approach to social work.

All employers should:

- Ensure that social work supervision is not treated as an isolated activity by incorporating it into the organisation's social work accountability framework
- Promote continuous learning and knowledge sharing through which social workers are encouraged to draw out learning points by reflecting on their own cases in light of the experiences of peers
- Provide regular supervision training for social work supervisors
- Assign explicit responsibility for the oversight of appropriate supervision and for issues that arise during supervision
- Provide additional professional supervision by a registered social worker for practitioners whose line manager is not a social worker
- Ensure that supervision takes place at least weekly for the first six weeks of employment of a newly qualified social worker, at least fortnightly for the duration of the first six months, and a minimum of monthly supervision thereafter
- Ensure that supervision sessions last at least an hour and a half of uninterrupted time

- Monitor actual frequency and quality of supervision against clear statements about what is expected <sup>6</sup>

## 7. College of Occupational Therapy Standards

The College of Occupational Therapy standards describe a level of practice that the British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT) expects its members to abide by, and believe all occupational therapists should follow.

These standards are:

- To ensure a high quality occupational therapy service to the service users
- To encourage and enable the supervisee to learn and develop new, improved working practice
- To help the supervisee gain an overview of his/her work and so acquire fresh insights into his/her practices
- To provide an opportunity for the supervisee to share work experiences
- To demonstrate to the supervisee, his/her value to the service and his/her contribution to overall management policies
- To develop rapport and understanding between staff
- To provide a forum for support, encouragement, praise & constructive criticism
- To assist with time management and organisation of workload
- To tackle issues associated with pressures and stress in the workplace
- To enable professional development, continuing education and training
- To provide for staff, personal needs and growth <sup>7</sup>

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

**A. Managers/Supervisors** are expected to provide regular supervision meetings:

- Based on a signed supervision agreement for each of their supervisees
- Booked well in advance and only changed in exceptional circumstances
- Well-structured, with both parties bringing agenda items and with supervisees being notified in advance of anything specific they need to prepare or bring along. The sessions allow both parties to contribute to the agenda.
- Provided in an appropriate setting and free of interruptions
- Inclusive of the roles and functions outlined in the job profile
- Focused on organisational priorities and target setting for performance reviews
- Incorporating professional development discussions based on the **professional capabilities framework** and/or professional standards
- Reflective of the emotional impact of work to ensure safe practice and the wellbeing of the supervisee
- Focused on the evidence base for assessment, support planning and decision making
- Targeted to identify and address training and development needs to support effective practice
- Appraisal objectives are regularly reviewed

<sup>6</sup> The Social Work Reform Board Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework, 2012

<sup>7</sup> The College of Occupational Therapy Standards, 2011

- Opportunities are made to support critical reflection
- Supervision should allow for the acknowledgement of good practice and the challenging of poor practice and performance
- Inclusions to individual case records should be made at or immediately following the sessions
- A minimum of one observed practice per year is undertaken and feedback provided - this can form part or all of one supervision session
- Accurately and appropriately recorded, agreed by both parties and copied to the individual without delay

**B. Supervisees are expected to:**

- Sign and adhere to the supervision agreement
- Prepare for each supervision meeting by reviewing notes from the previous meeting and thinking about the items they want to raise and discuss
- Notify the supervisor, in good time, of any agenda items which require preparation in advance of the session
- Adopt a reflective approach and be prepared to critically analyse their own practice, and the impact on customers and the organisation
- Openly share thoughts and ideas, and accept the influence of others to find solutions to issues and reach sound professional judgments
- Be ready to identify professional development needs, plan and undertake training and other development activities, as agreed with their supervisor
- Be aware of professional standards, organisational priorities, policies and procedures and how these relate to the supervisee's own performance
- Check and agree the supervision notes and follow through and complete any agreed actions against timescales

## 9. Supervision Records

All supervision and supervisees should sign a Supervision Agreement – template attached in Appendix A, at the start of their supervision contract. This should be reviewed on a six monthly basis. Supervisors should refer to a Checklist – an example is attached in Appendix B to - assist the agenda and to ensure all relevant topics are covered. All recording should be made on a Supervision template – example attached in Appendix C.

## 10. Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)

The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) is the overarching professional standards framework for social workers. The PCF is divided into nine domains. There are nine levels, from entry through to the strategic social work level. The framework defines the expectations for practice, including the management of issues such as complexity, risk and decision making. The PCF is similar to other professions that have their own set of standards and is owned by The College of Social Work.

Tri-borough Adult Social Care is currently undertaking work to embed the PCF across the organisation. This will involve aligning PCF to systems, including recruitment, appraisal, and

the training and development for social workers. Using the PCF to set standards for social work is expected to improve individual practice and organisational performance.

Work is being undertaken over the next year to fully embed the PCF across Tri-borough.

## **11. Standards of Frequency**

Registered social workers should be supervised by registered social workers and have a minimum of monthly one to one supervision meetings with a yearly minimum of 10 sessions.

All newly qualified staff should have supervision every week for the first six weeks of their employment, at least fortnightly for the duration of the first six months and a minimum of monthly supervision thereafter.

For newly appointed staff completing their probationary period, supervision should take place fortnightly to assess their suitability for permanent employment.

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

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

Where a member of staff or the supervisor is on leave or sick or on training for any length of time, it may not be possible to maintain monthly frequency. In this case, both parties must agree to meet at the next earliest opportunity and must ensure that the yearly minimum is maintained.

## **12. Who supervises?**

A worker's immediate line manager is responsible for providing supervision. Social workers who are not managed by a registered social worker need to have additional professional supervision.

## **13. Location**

The location should be in a quiet room, away from any disruptions and where confidentiality can be maintained.

## **14. Preparation**

Both parties need to come to the session with feedback on agreed actions from the last session and a written agenda items for the session.

## **15. Recording**

Decisions and actions need to be recorded by the supervisor and agreed promptly. Recording should be clear and factual and any decisions made/actions required clearly documented. Individual outcomes relating to specific cases must be recorded, in the case

notes, under the heading (in bold) of Supervision Notes. Both parties need to have a record of the supervision session.

Where notes are not typed up and agreed at the end of the session, the agreement sent via a returned email with the supervision notes is acceptable.

## **16. Monitoring**

An annual audit should take place to monitor actual frequency and quality of supervision against clear statements about what is expected.

## References

1. - Tri-borough Performance Appraisal Guidance for all Staff and Managers, Version 1, March, 2013
2. - SCIE Research Briefing 43 Effective Supervision in Social Work and Social Care, 2012  
<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing43/> (accessed on 30/04/2014)
3. - Social Work Reform Board – Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework, 2012  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20131027134119/http://www.education.gov.uk/swrb/employers/a0074263/standards-for-employers-and-supervision-framework> (accessed on 22/04/2014)
- 4 and 5. - Tri-borough policies available on Tribnet
6. - Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework, Social Work Reform Board, 2012  
<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing43/> (accessed on 22/04/2014)
7. - College of Occupational Therapy Standards  
<http://www.cot.co.uk/standards-ethics/professional-standards-occupational-therapy-practice>  
(website, not standards, as not publicly available, accessed on 22/04/2014)
8. - The Professional Capabilities Framework Change Brief for Adult Leadership Team, December, 2013 internal Tri-borough document

## Appendix A

### Supervision Agreement

This Agreement is signed by both parties, retained by the manager/supervisor and reviewed on a six monthly basis.

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**Name:**

**Supervisor's Name:**

**Date of Agreement:**

**Date of Review:**

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#### Arrangements for Supervision:

##### 1. Frequency:

Line manager to complete. ....

##### 2. Length of Meeting:

On average 1-1.5 hours maximum.

##### 3. Statement about Interruption:

Interruptions should be limited to emergencies only.

##### 4. Statement about Attendance:

Both parties will be punctual, limit interruptions and avoid cancelling sessions, except in exceptional circumstances. If a session has to be cancelled, another should be arranged as soon as possible. Both parties will come prepared with items they wish to discuss and agree what they will cover at the start of each meeting.

##### 5. Statement about Confidentiality:

The discussion in each supervision session will usually be confidential between the two participants. If the supervisor needs to share supervision records or matters raised in supervision with someone else, they will inform the member of staff. If the member of staff wishes any information they share to remain confidential they should say so, and the supervisor will discuss whether this is possible.

## **6. The Supervision policy:**

Both parties need to have read the policy and agree to abide by its contents.

**Signed:**  
**Member of Staff.**

**Signed:**  
**Supervisor.**

## Appendix B

### Supervision Checklist

**Name**.....

**Date**.....

#### **Casework**

1. New work
2. All cases need to be discussed at least once
3. All longstanding cases need to be discussed to ensure an action plan is in place.
4. Mental capacity assessments/Deprivation of Liberty
5. Safeguarding alerts/in progress – evidence based reflective practice
6. Developing Best Practice – Learning Needs Analysis
7. Crisis interventions
8. Promoting Positive Risk Taking – decisions taken and reasons/cases being referred to the Risk Enablement Panel
9. Analysis of evidence used in casework to substantiate FACS bandings and all decisions taken
10. Policy check in relation to cases discussed
11. Panel outcomes and funding
12. Matters arising from recent reviews
13. Outstanding actions from last supervision

#### **Performance**

1. Assessments in progress – check with FWi
2. Review visits undertaken since last supervision/Review reports due
3. Carer assessments in progress/Carers' Personal Budgets
4. Customers who have not opted for Direct Payments – reasons why

5. Customers referred to Self directed support team for brokerage
6. Update on projects/performance targets
7. Other eg Grant requests

## **Supervision Checklist – Other Issues**

### **Development**

1. Workshops, discussions, courses planned/attended, group supervision
2. Information to share/needed
3. Personal (Flexi/leave, study, appointments, issues)

## Appendix C

### Supervision Template (to be used alongside Checklist)

Member of Staff:

Supervisor:

Date of Meeting:

Agenda

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

AGENDA No.	ACTION PLAN	ACTION BY

Next supervision: .....

Signed: Staff Member.....

Signed: Supervisor.....Date.....