

Adult Social Care Supervision Policy

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1.1 Introduction

Adult Social Care operates a comprehensive supervision policy for all colleagues.

The importance of supervision in adult social care is stressed in various policies including Vulnerable Adult Policies as well as in the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Code of Practice and in the National Care Standards which provide requirements for supervision.

Supervision is an ongoing process in which Social Care colleagues receive guidance, support and challenge in a formal setting. It provides an opportunity for colleagues to think, explore and confront issues that are pertinent to their ability to perform their role to the expected standard. It is also a mutually beneficial exchange and allows all parties to explore what, why and how work is undertaken and managed within the overarching framework of Council priorities.

The purpose of supervision is to ensure our service meets its statutory requirements, focusing on developing and motivating staff for the benefit of the individual, the organisation as a whole and the citizens we work with. Moreover it balances staff care with how the Directorate performs to its local and national performance indicators.

This policy also covers the Quality Assurance Strategy which is integral to supporting the effective management of colleagues working to a high standard within Adult social care.

1.2 What is Supervision?

- Formal supervision is a mandatory process. It is a meeting between senior colleagues and employees on a regular basis that is planned and recorded. Supervision is essential to ensure that the quality of

work undertaken is of a high standard, which meets the needs of the citizens we work with.

- Colleague observations and Team meetings can also be used in addition to supervision to enable collective work planning and problem solving;
- Senior colleagues should formally supervise all colleagues for whom they are responsible. This includes any temporary, casual or agency staff;
- There is an expectation that in addition to formal supervision, senior colleagues will provide day to day support and supervision and any key decision arising from this process should be recorded;
- A supervision contract should be drawn up jointly at the beginning of every new supervisory relationship. This should be reviewed as required.

1.3 What is the purpose of Supervision?

- The purpose of supervision is to ensure each colleague understands their role and responsibilities and how their role fits with other team members, the aims of the directorate and the Council's overall strategic aims and objectives;
- It is a means of ensuring that practice and standards are consistent and that colleagues are supported in achieving and maintaining these goals and are working according to the requirements of statutes, policies and service standards;
- Supervision is an important way of developing the skills and experience of colleagues, linking in with the Corporate Learning and Development Process through the completion of Performance Development Appraisals and Reviews annually;
- Supervision is an effective mechanism for early identification of any problems in delivering services and their successful resolution. It assists in improving outcomes for citizens and carers by ensuring that colleagues adhere to professional codes of conduct and local policies and procedures;
- Supervision provides the supervisor with the opportunity to formally oversee, manage and plan direction for the practice of the colleagues they supervise to provide good quality services to citizens and their carers. Supervision is a forum for ensuring that colleagues have an appropriate and manageable workload.
- Supervision supports the colleague in managing both task and emotional demands of work as well as providing a supportive and positive climate for practice and performance.
- Supervision provides a forum for reflective practice and an opportunity for colleagues to have case discussions; both of which assist in determining the best outcomes for citizens and support in developing the colleague's professional practice.

1.4 How often should Supervision take Place?

- The frequency and duration of supervision should be specified in a supervision contract (see **Appendix A: Supervision Contract**);

- For all colleagues, the minimum standards will be as follows: monthly to six weekly supervision with a suggested minimum duration of 45 minutes and a suggested maximum duration of 2 hours per session.
- Beyond these minimum standards the frequency and duration will vary according to the type of job performed. Some colleagues work closely with their supervisors and receive ongoing supervision and support. Others work in relative isolation and/or are dealing with issues requiring more frequent supervision;
- New colleagues will require more frequent supervision for approximately the first six months of their employment;
- Supervision can be more frequent if either supervisor or supervisee agree that this is necessary to achieve performance objectives or targets;
- Newly qualified social work colleagues will require more frequent supervision in line with the ASYE guidance ([ASYE guidance link](#));
- Both supervisor and supervisee should plan supervision and treat it as a priority. Supervisors are responsible for rescheduling any cancelled sessions at the earliest opportunity.

1.5 What should Supervision Cover?

Supervision should cover all of the following:

1. Workload management including performance reports and audit discussions
2. Training and Professional Development
3. Welfare/Support Issues

Workload Management- Refer to the separate policies entitled:

Workload Management Discussion points between Colleagues and Supervisors

And/Or

Workload Management Discussion points between Senior Colleagues and SLT

1.6 Training and Professional Development

Professional development is central to supervision. Areas for professional development are identified through the Performance Appraisal process. Supervision should support this process through:

- Identifying contributions/achievements;
- Identifying strengths and areas for further development;
- Identifying training and development needs and opportunities;
- Identifying other issues and problems and to assist supervisees in finding strategies to ensure they remain effective in their jobs;
- Reviewing training and development progress against the post-registration requirements set out by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) within the two-year registration period (For registered Social Workers and Occupational Therapists.)

For those colleagues who receive supervision from a professional of another discipline (e.g. AMHPs supervised by non-AMHPs etc.) or for those who receive supervision from another organisation (e.g. NHS), there is an

expectation that they will have supervision with a Senior Colleague from the same discipline/organisation as them either individually or within a group of colleagues. The frequency will be agreed between supervisor and supervisee but should be no less than three monthly.

1.7 Welfare/Support Issues

Colleagues will be given support via the supervision process, which provides an opportunity to find out how a member of staff is experiencing their work, their role within a team and their performance. It is an opportunity to value colleagues, to provide them with constructive feedback on their performance and acknowledge good practice.

Designated supervisors will provide support around these issues during the supervision process but overall responsibility regarding colleague's welfare and support issues lies with the team manager that the colleague is line managed by. Issues that require team manager input should be escalated.

Support will involve:

- Constructive feedback on performance;
- Discussions around:
 - personal issues in so far as they have an impact on the supervisee's work performance
 - Stress and work related issues
 - Reasonable adjustments.

If the supervisee's performance at work is affected by these issues or vice versa, the supervisee should be offered the services of Human Resources Team and/or referred to Occupational Health;

- Discussion on any stress-related issues;
- Completion of Health and Safety checklists, e.g. for maternity, lone working and work station risk assessments;
- The sharing of concerns and identifying back-up and support in difficult situations;
- Guidance on the use of appropriate staff care processes and mechanisms. Although the Supervisor may advise employees, the supervisor should not engage in personal counselling of employees, but refer them to appropriate services, e.g. PAM Assist 0800 882 4102;
- Supporting, maintaining and valuing competent performance and confirming when standards have been met;
- Opportunity for supervisees to seek assistance if they do not feel able or do not feel adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of their work or if they are unsure of how to proceed in any work matter;
- Equal Opportunities – discussion about any issues of oppression that the supervisee wishes to raise, from personal experience to institutional and structural matters.

1.8 Confidentiality

Although private, supervision is a management process. Issues raised within supervision may need to be shared with other managers and colleagues when they concern issues around poor performance, discipline, adult or child

protection and risk management. Other issues may be shared with the agreement of both the supervisor and supervisee. Supervisor and supervisee should be aware of their responsibilities in relation to the protection and use of client information as recommended in the Caldicott principles. If there is any uncertainty about what should/should not be shared the supervisor's line manager should be consulted for advice.

There will be a shared folder for Team Managers and Senior Practitioners in which to share supervision records.

There has to be a legitimate need to look at information stored in the electronic supervision files.

Where more sensitive issues are recorded they should be password protected by relevant managers, but even these matters may need to be shared in certain circumstances. Supervisees should make their supervisor aware of any matter they feel is more sensitive.

Supervisees may want to discuss how much information they agree to be shared with their colleagues around issues pertaining to sickness and disability and personal issues such as bereavement, if relevant, so as to understand the colleague's needs and requirements for reasonable adjustments.

1.9 Recording Supervision

The supervisor should make a supervision record with a copy provided to the supervisee on the standard forms provided (**Appendix B**). Copies should be signed by both supervisor and supervisee to demonstrate agreement that notes are correct.

Any decisions made about individual citizens and carers during supervision and/or any advice given should also be recorded in the citizen's or carer's observations on care first. For complex case discussions colleagues are encouraged to use the Case Discussion Record (see **Appendix C: Case Discussion**). When using the case discussion record colleagues will be responsible for filling as much of it in as possible prior to meeting with their supervisor. The case discussion should then be saved to castle.

The supervision form should be handwritten and signed by both the Supervisor and the Supervisee and then scanned and saved to the appropriate file.

For supervision records that are typed; at the subsequent supervision both the Supervisor and Supervisee should sign and the document should then be scanned and saved into the appropriate section.

- All supervision sessions must be recorded in writing on the standard forms.
- Supervisees should be provided with a copy of the supervision record in the format which best suits them, in a timely manner prior to the next supervision session.
- Both supervisor and supervisee must sign the Supervision Record to confirm it is an accurate reflection of what has been discussed and agreed. If the supervisee does not agree with the supervision record both parties should discuss and attempt to resolve any issues before escalating this.

- Supervision records must be kept in the dedicated and restricted electronic files and/or a locked filing cabinet if the colleague has not yet transferred to electronic records.

Informal discussions that are held outside of supervision sessions should be recorded in the relevant way and both parties should agree who will hold the responsibility for recording this information, i.e. who will be responsible for entering observations in care first following advice and guidance on an informal basis.

Additional standards for Senior Practitioners and Managers supervising Social Workers/OTs/Community Care Officers/Care Support Advisors

- The supervisor will read, review and authorise as appropriate Workers' panel requests/assessments;
- The supervisor will record any advice, consultations they give or decisions they make on the supervision case file.
- If a complaint is received about the worker's management of a case, their Line Manager will read and review the case file and will respond in accordance with the Departments complaints procedures.
- Senior CCOs to consult with Senior Social Work Practitioners when they require additional support around the supervision and advice they provide to colleagues.

Additional standards for Social Workers/OTs/Community Care Officers/Care Support Advisors:

- The Social Worker/OT/CCO/CSA will inform the manager of ongoing case issues and seek guidance when necessary.

2.0 Procedure

For Adult Social Care staff a **supervision contract** (see **Appendix A Supervision Contract**) will be drawn up by their supervisor at the start of any new supervisory relationship. The contract should be signed and dated by both parties.

The supervision contract must cover:

- Format of supervision;
- Frequency of supervision;
- Agreed key tasks of the supervisee that will provide the focus for supervision;
- The process for dealing with any disagreements or if the supervisee does not feel that their supervision is meeting the policy requirements.

All workers will have an **individual supervision file**. This will contain:

- The current job description and person specification;
- Supervision Contract (see **Appendix A: Supervision Contract**);
- Supervision Records (**Appendix B Supervision Record**);
- Performance Appraisal documentation (link to appraisal info);
- Sickness record;
- Case discussion documents, if applicable (see **Appendix C: Case Discussion**);
- Performance Reports

- Case Audit Tool (**Appendix D**);
- Training Record;
- Copy of HCPC Registration Certificate
- Copy of DBS check
- Copy of Driving Licence check
- Copy of Emergency contact details

The supervisor should provide the supervisee with a copy of the **Supervision Policy** and the relevant **Workload Management Discussion Points** document as part of their induction.

2.1 Disagreements

If issues of conflict arise during the course of supervision both parties should discuss this and attempt to resolve between themselves in the first instance. If still not resolved the Team Manager or Head of Service will need to be notified. An informal meeting can then be arranged between some or all of the parties as a possible next step, with the option of also having a union representative or colleague present if appropriate. If there is no resolution, the Department's Disciplinary or Grievance Procedure could be invoked.

3.0 Supervision File Retention

The Supervision record will be stored for the duration of the employee's period of employment. Upon the employee leaving Nottingham City Council their supervision records will be retained electronically for a period of five years, following which, they will be removed and deleted from all systems.