
Staff Supervision

POLICY & PROCEDURE - Service Delivery

PPAPSD4007



ODYSSEY HOUSE
VICTORIA

Purpose:

Odyssey is committed to best practice by ensuring that staff have access to regular organisational and clinical supervision in accordance with professional standards and codes of practice.

Supervision provides the opportunity to monitor staff workloads and performance in line with their position descriptions to ensure the program objectives are achieved and staff are provided with the opportunity to reflect on and improve the quality of their work.

Relevant to:

All Staff

Responsible Staff:

Management Representative

Last Modified/Reviewed:

7/06/2010

Review Date:

7/11/2011

Related Forms:

Relevant Documents:

Code of General Conduct for Staff
Supervision Contract
POLSD 15 Critical Incident Debriefing
POLGM16 Staff Development

Relevant Legislation:

Policy

Professional supervision is an aspect of the agency's duty of care to both clients and workers.

All staff will participate in regular formal organisational supervision.

All staff working in direct client practice inclusive of clinical supervisors will also participate in clinical supervision.

Clinical and Organisational supervision are not seen to be mutually exclusive processes as they sometimes encompass overlapping functions.

1. Organisational supervision

The direct line manager will provide individual organisational supervision, which aims to ensure supervisees:

- Work practice is consistent with program objectives, standards and position description
- Roles and responsibilities are clear, both individually and collectively
- The promotion of conditions for best practice.

2. Clinical Supervision

Clinical Supervision aims to ensure clients receive a high quality service that meets their needs in accordance with best practice principles through ensuring that:

- Clinical practice is within the area of the staff member's competency
- Treatment methodologies are appropriate and effective
- Clinical practice conforms to ethical standards
- Workers meet organisational requirements
- Workers' practice knowledge and skills are enhanced.

Odyssey House Victoria provides clinical supervision through a number of means based on the service area, available resources and requirements such as:

- The direct line manager, and/or;
- An arrangement with an Odyssey staff member, endorsed by the direct line manager, and/or;
- An external clinical supervisor, which will be undertaken and financed by the agency.

Principles of Supervision

- Supervision is to be carried out in an environment of trust, confidentiality and respect.
- The specific content of supervision sessions is confidential, except where information is disclosed to an Executive Manager when there is mutual agreement and/or if the information has serious implications¹ for the agency, service, the individual staff member concerned, other staff, the client or members of the community.
- The frequency and duration of supervision will vary according to the nature and complexity of work, experience of the worker and hours worked.
- Where the agency funds or contributes to an external supervisor, a supervision contract, which sets out the frequency, confidentiality and expectations will be signed off. The agency and the relevant supervisor will each retain a copy of the supervision contract, the latter being placed in an agency file of contracts, with a copy in the staff member's personnel file.
- Supervision is seen as a priority and should not be interrupted or cancelled unless unavoidable.
- Supervision is a shared responsibility between the employee and the supervisor. Both take responsibility to set the agenda and ensure that it occurs.
- A range of supervision strategies may be available to employees. Dependent on resources, these can include individual supervision, group supervision with a facilitator, peer supervision, cross agency supervision and external specialist supervision.
- Informal peer discussion/debriefing can occur alongside formal supervision, but does not replace it.
- Critical Incident Debriefing will be available to workers if required. See *POLSD 15 Critical Incident Debriefing Policy*.

Procedure

Guidelines for Organisational supervisors

Line managers generally provide organisational supervision to their team. They have the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that the operational objectives of the organisation are achieved and have accountability for Odyssey's services.

1. Co-coordinating work amongst the team by:
 - Balancing individual workloads
 - Ensuring that tasks/cases are allocated appropriately in recognition of each individual's competency, expertise, interest, time and current workload
 - Monitoring other organisational activities
2. Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating individual work performance by:
 - Monitoring individual workload/client caseload responsibility. Identifying time management issues
 - Identifying any ethical or legal issues and ensuring practice conforms to ethical standards

¹ Such as a serious breach of Code of Staff Conduct

- Ensuring that individuals meet organisational requirements, i.e. targets
- 3. Identifying and supporting professional development requirements
- 4. Providing, organising or ensuring that appropriate professional development or clinical consultation is being accessed by staff
- 5. Documenting date and attendance of supervision sessions
- 6. Providing support to individuals in recognition of the stressful nature of the work.

Guidelines for Clinical supervisors

The three main foci of clinical supervision are:

1. Education

- Increasing staff clinical competencies
- Linking theory and practice

2. Personal Support & Professional Development

- Debriefing regarding work related stress
- Values clarification and impact of values and beliefs on clinical practice
- Identifying transference issues which may impact on clinical work, and providing advice on how to manage these issues
- Career development advice

3. Evaluation

- Evaluating supervisee's practice
- Reflecting on/evaluating professional practices and ethical issues
- Developing a process of self review
- Identifying risk factors, duty of care issues, and legal responsibilities for supervisee and client
- Assisting the supervisee to assess strengths and limitations

Specialist Supervision in relation to Dual Diagnosis

- Odyssey has organised specialist mental health consultants to provide group supervision to clinical staff in relation to Dual Diagnosis clients.
- This clinical supervision provides the opportunity for case presentations and expert feedback on practice

Expectations

Supervisees are expected to:

- Commit to prioritising regular supervision sessions. Interruptions/cancellations may only occur in circumstances such as:
 - a. Illness – supervisor or supervisee
 - b. Client crisis presentations
 - c. Conflicting organisational meeting times that cannot be rescheduled (cancellations)
- Take responsibility for making effective use of supervision time, including punctuality and following up any matters they have agreed to address
- Prepare for supervision sessions (e.g. documentation of current case load, bringing matters/cases for discussion).

Supervisors are required to ensure confidentiality regarding content of sessions, except in the following circumstances:

- Unsafe, unethical or illegal practices are divulged that the supervisee indicated they are unwilling to address using appropriate procedures

- Significant duty of care issues are reported in relation to a high risk client, and the organisation may be implicated
- Supervisees repeatedly fail to attend sessions

Records:

Records are maintained by the Supervisor usually include:

- Frequency, length, location and time of session of each session, including missed appointments
- Brief notes of matters discussed including information about any unsafe, unethical or illegal practices and the actions taken to address these.

Session records will be made and held by the Supervisor. Supervisee may read these records. The Supervisee may also take notes for their own professional development.