

Supervision Policy

Appendix 1

Control schedule

Approved by
Rose Howley

Approval date

Senior Responsible Officer **Rose Howley**
Chief Social Work Officer

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0.1		Margaret-Ann Love; Gillian Hunt	
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Committee decisions affecting this policy

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Supervision Policy

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to articulate the importance placed on effective supervision within a trauma informed workforce.
- 1.2 Supervision has a vital role to play in supporting staff in what are challenging times for professionals. Supervision is a two-way process involving rights and responsibilities for both supervisors and for those they supervise.
- 1.3 Supervision involves talking through the impact the work has on you personally, as well as exploring decision-making. It is vital for practitioners' well-being, professional development, and management oversight. Supervision helps us to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people, adults / families.
- 1.4 Supervision is a dedicated regular time and a safe space to reflect on practice, gain support and guidance for current work, and to explore areas for learning and development.
- 1.5 A trauma informed and responsive approach underpins the supervisory relationship and relates to how we deliver our services and how we support our staff, to enable a safe, effective, professional service.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all colleagues within Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership and Children and Justice services and all who are eligible to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC). This includes Community Care Assistants, Social Work Assistants, or similar; and Adult Day service colleagues, who are not currently eligible for SSSC registration. NHS AHP should refer to AHP supervision guidance.
- 2.2 Supervision does not replace or supersede management action required by any other Council policy or procedure.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Supervision that models the trauma informed principles of safety, in a physical and emotional/psychological context, encourages trust, choice, collaboration and
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empowerment. All are important in establishing the context of the supervisory relationship. As a supervisor it's important that managers are consistent in modelling these principles, and the behaviours of respect, integrity, and flexibility.

3.2 Supervision can be:

- a) Normative, which addresses workload, case management and accountability
- b) Formative which supports learning and development
- c) Restorative which offers support and space to reflect and process current experiences. Psychological safety is an important consideration here.

3.3 When supervisees feel safe enough to share trauma related reactions and be honest and transparent about any vulnerabilities risk of vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress decreases and the quality of service improves.

3.4 Supervision should cover:

- Quality of decision-making and interventions
- Reflecting on what work has been done, for example, what has worked well and why, plans for future interventions and/ or development in practice.
- Line management and organisational accountability including identifying operational difficulties that might impede the delivery of safe care.
- Caseload and workload management. Providing opportunities to consider the appropriate level of experience, ability, capacity, and balance in the type of work being undertaking.
- Personal learning, career and development opportunities.
- Evaluating learning already undertaken and making links between learning and practice.
- Support in managing the demands of the role including the impact of the work on the worker, including levels of stress and a recognition of the potential of secondary and vicarious trauma.
- A supportive supervisory relationship which creates an environment where colleagues can share without fear of judgement any potential sensitivities/vulnerabilities/old trauma and be met with a compassionate response.
- Health and safety awareness including Stress Management and a referral to occupational health or counselling when appropriate.

3.5 A Supervision conversation will usually include the following:

- A discussion around which children, young people or adults need to be focused on in supervision.
- Timescales for completion of work for individual children, young people or adults.

- A supportive curious questioning, that ensures accountability and development but without judgement.
- Conversations that both challenges and validates allowing, for discussion and reflecting on practice. This approach can explore the reasoning that informed decisions make, creating space for different perspectives. This helps hold the purpose and meaning of the child, young person or adult front and center and builds confidence to enhance decision making and professional practice.
- Relevant information from the supervision session that relates to the child, young person or adult should be noted on their record and shouldn't be held elsewhere, however if recorded in supervision documents outside of records, initials could be used to comply with data protection.
- Identification of further personal learning, career and development opportunities
- Wellbeing support and personal reflection space is an essential component of restorative, supportive supervision. Psychologically safe environments are important to support staff to feel comfortable to share work related challenges and stress, without fear of shame and blame for perceived failings or mistakes.
- Opportunity to support relationships between colleagues and the wider organisation, helping people to understand their role and responsibilities and how their function links to team plans and departmental service plans and wider business objectives.
- A conversation around Continuous Professional Development / Learning (CPL) requirements of the relevant regulatory body; and the learning activities undertaken by the supervisee

3.6 The Purpose of supervision is to:

- Develop a relationship that helps staff feel valued, supported, and motivated.
- Support two-way conversations and information sharing to foster a partnership, collaborative approach. It is important that supervision is rooted in a mutual relationship of respect integrity and flexibility where the knowledge, skill and wisdom of both parties are recognised.
- Supervision is a means of improving decision-making, accountability, and supporting professional development.
- Deepen and broaden workers' knowledge to support them to develop their critical reflective skills.
- Enable confident, competent, creative and independent decision-making.
- Help workers build clear plans that seek to enable positive change for children and families and adults.
- Provide space to acknowledge and address the emotional impact of working with people who require our involvement.
- Support the development of workers' emotional resilience and self-awareness.

- Promote the development of a learning culture within organisations which recognise that mistakes are an opportunity that can support learning and development.
- Ensure accountability for the standard of practice across the department.
- Supervision is a means of assuring that the supervisee CPL activities meet the relevant regulatory body's CPL requirements and learning frameworks.

3.8 Types of supervision

- Formal 1:1 supervision – This takes the form of planned meetings between supervisor and supervisee. These meetings should have an agreed agenda and be recorded.
- Informal Supervision – Recognition is given to informal supervision which occurs on a day-to-day basis. Any decision made during informal supervision should be recorded on a child/adult record which provides manager oversight.
- Group supervision – This involves a group of colleagues with a similar role and remit. Group supervision encourages open curious and professional attitudes to learning; it offers a range of perspectives and skills which supports collective learning, and reflection.
- Peer Supervision- this is not a supervisory relationship and involves conversations had between colleagues that provides support that can only come from a peer. It offers empathy between colleagues, where support and guidance can be provided.

4. Policy Content

The Supervision policy incorporates the responsibilities of both the Council and workforce, as set out in the SSSC Codes of Practice. It is a collective responsibility to support colleagues to meet these standards and deliver the identified service delivery objectives and professional development.

4.1 Supervision Governance

Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) is every professional's responsibility. Although CPL records are owned by the individual, supervision should directly and/or indirectly support the process in identifying development opportunities, where records will form an important source of evidence for registration.

Registration involves the supervisee keeping a record of development activity, including reflection on how the learning has improved practice and benefited others. Colleagues must be registered with either of the below regulatory bodies The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

CPL must meet the relevant regulatory body's learning and development requirements

and frameworks

4.2 Newly-Qualified Social Workers

During the first Supported Year of Employment the supervision for newly qualified social workers will be tailored to their needs, but there will be increased supervision alongside protected time dedicated to learning and development. Newly Qualified Social Workers will also have a reduced case load.

4.3 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The five key values and principles of trauma informed supervision include safety, trust, collaboration, choice and empowerment and supports the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. If there are identified issues that arise between the supervisor and supervisee based on protected characteristics including age, disability, gender-reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. Consultation and mediation should be sought from an independent person to be supported as required. A recognition of any potential for power imbalance should be explored and the dynamic operating in supervision acknowledged. Also recognising the potential to be mirrored in relationships between frontline practitioners, children, young people, adults, and families.

We acknowledge people have different strengths, perspectives, and approaches. we value an environment that embraces difference.

4.4 Location

Face-to-face supervision is encouraged; however, it is acknowledged that this is not always possible. Whether supervision is carried out in person or online, it is essential that it is a safe space to facilitate private conversation. Efforts to reduce the risk of interruption, disruption, noise, distractions and IT/network issues should be made as part of preparation for supervision.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Supervision is a collective responsibility between Heads of Service, Service Manager/ Team Managers, Team Leaders (Senior Social workers in HSCP) and front-line colleagues.

In keeping with our behaviour framework of respect, integrity, and flexibility, a mutually respectful environment is important, and a safe space for each voice to be heard. We are working towards a culture that embraces honest and mutually respectful conversations. We acknowledge different opinions and perspectives and welcome professional curiosity. We are committed to creating a workplace where colleagues feel safe, valued and respected.

6. Related documents

6.1 Legislative Context

[Regulation of Care Scotland Act 2001](#)

6.2 Associated Documents

[Supervision Procedure \(Joint\) \(replace with New one\)](#)

[Form 1351 - Agreed Supervision Sessions Old link not working](#)

[Form 1352 - Social Work and Social Care Supervision Record](#) ('online' version)

[Form 1352 - Social Work and Social Care Supervision Record](#) ('hard copy' version)

[Form 1352a - Social Work and Social Care Group Supervision Record](#)

[Form 1353 Social Work and Social Care Supervision Contract](#)

[Form 1353a - Social Work and Social Care Group Supervision Contract](#)

[SSSC Codes of Practice](#)

[HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics](#)

[HCPC Standards for Continuing Professional Development](#)

[HCPC Standards of Proficiency](#)

[Support and Supervision Guidance for Lothian AHPs](#)

[AHP Supervision Position Statement](#)

[https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/media/5lvh0lsu/trauma-training-plan-final.pdf- supervision on page 23](https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/media/5lvh0lsu/trauma-training-plan-final.pdf)

7. Equalities and impact assessment

7.1 For details of the completed [Record of Equality and Rights Impact Assessment \(ERIA\)](#) form, please access the relevant committee report at Appendix 2.

8. Strategic environmental assessment

8.1 The policy has no adverse impact on the environment.

9. Risk assessment

9.1 There is a risk that if this policy is not complied with, Council employees included in its scope will not receive the proper support and supervision to which they are entitled. This policy helps the Council to comply with SSSC regulations as an employer of social work and social care staff.

10. Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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Approved by Rose Howley

Approval date 13/03/2025

Senior Responsible Officer

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Chief Social Work Officer

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