



## **Supervision Policy**

## Standard Operating Procedure

### SOP Title:

Standard Operating Procedure for Supervision

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to develop a standardised Supervision Policy for employees of StepIn Supportive Living Network.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

A definition of supervision that has stood the test of time is that :

" Supervision is a process in which one worker is given the responsibility to work with another worker(s) in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives. These objectives are competent, accountable performance, continuing professional development and personal support" (Harries, 1987).

Richards and Payne (1990) state that supervision is "primarily concerned with overall performance of the worker and ensuring that is in line with the agency's expectations and standards".

### 3. POLICY PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that the StepIn employees are clear about role and responsibilities
- To ensure that the employees meets StepIn's objectives
- To ensure quality of service to network members
- To develop a suitable climate for practice
- To assist professional development of StepIn employees
- To facilitate effective communication between Supervisee, StepIn Board of Directors and the employee
- To provide personal and professional support
- To ensure that the employee has access to the resources to do their job.
- To help alleviate stress
- To develop a suitable climate for reflective practice (See appendix one, Kolb's Experimental Learning)
- To improve employees' satisfaction and retention and to reduce employee burn out and attrition
- To support employees in the supervision of supportive living volunteers and students on placement.

#### 4.0 FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION

Supervision provides a regular, structured opportunity to discuss work at StepIn, review practice and progress and plan for future development of StepIn networks. The four functions of supervision are:

- StepIn to hold employees accountable for practice to ensure safe quality care.
- Support for the employee in what is potentially a demanding and stressful work environment. This may involve debriefing which addresses the emotional impact of such work.
- Learning and development of employees to identify their knowledge-base, attitude, learning style and skills; to identify learning needs and the strengths and weaknesses of the worker; and to plan and set targets for ongoing development.
- Mediation to ensure healthy engagement with, and communication between, the employee and StepIn network as a whole.

#### 5. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all paid employees working with network members in StepIn Supportive Living Network. As supervision is a vital means of promoting staff and organisational development, it cannot be seen as an optional extra and is therefore mandatory for all employees working with network members in this organisation.

#### 6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

A number of responsibilities have been identified that relate to the organisation, the supervisor and the supervisee in order to ensure that supervision succeeds (Morrison, 2001):

### StepIn Responsibilities:

StepIn is responsible for the creation and promotion of a climate in which supervision can be introduced, developed, monitored and evaluated. StepIn may achieve this by:

- Making supervision a core function of StepIn by ensuring that the process of supervision is supported and resourced. Staff and relevant Board of Directors (BOD hereafter) members should be facilities to participate in the activity of supervision and/or in supervision training.
- Ensuring that all employees of StepIn, (not excluding supervisors from BOD) , have access to supervision.
- Identifying, acknowledging and providing for the cost to the organisation in terms of time out for supervision activities and training.
- Identifying, acknowledging and providing for external supervision where appropriate and if necessary.
- Ensuring that the process of implementation, evaluation and review of the policy is facilitated and that this includes mechanisms for consultation with all parties involved.

### Supervisor Responsibilities:

- The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that, in conjunction with the supervisee, the supervisee's needs are identified and met; while at the same time having regard to organisational objectives. The supervisor may delegate to, or collaborate with, others in addressing the supervisee's needs but may not abdicate their responsibilities in this regard. In such situations there must be communication between the primary supervisor and the person to which the supervision task has been delegated.

- The supervisor should ensure that there is equal emphases on each of the four functions of supervision; bearing in mind that the emphasis on each may change from session to session.
- The supervisor should seek to ensure that supervision is considered a priority and that appropriate arrangements are put in place to facilitate the process of supervision.

#### Supervisee Responsibility:

- Supervisees should be proactive in getting the support they need to do their work
- Supervisees should seek clarification regarding their role and ways of working
- Supervisees must take responsibility for their personal and professional development
- The supervisee must prepare for supervision, listen, give and accept constructive feedback
- Supervisees should implement agreements and plans
- The supervisee should take responsibility for their own performance

## 7.0 PROCESS OF SUPERVISION

### 7.1 Agreement and Contract

The supervision contract should be addressed during the first meeting. The contracting of supervision between the supervisor and supervisee is fundamental to establishing their working relationship and to identifying the roles and responsibilities of each.

However, it may require one or two sessions before the contract is completed as the supervisor will first have to take a supervision history. The original is kept by the supervisor together with the record of supervision

meetings and a copy is held by the supervisee. The contract should be agreed upon by the supervisor and supervisee and signed by both parties. It should address issues that have been agreed upon and reviewed at least annually (See appendix two – Supervision Contract).

## 7.2 Frequency and Duration

The frequency and duration of a supervision session may vary according to the needs of the individual supervisee. For example, newer employees will require more frequent supervision. However, ideally, supervision should take place every four weeks. The duration of a supervision session should be no less than one hour and, under normal circumstances, should not exceed two hours. The supervisor has responsibility to ensure that time is kept free from interruptions. Cancellation of supervision should only be in exceptional circumstances as it should be seen as a priority for both parties. If a cancellation is made the supervisor and supervisee should immediately set a new date and time for supervision.

## 7.3 Content

Supervision is provided to facilitate effective professional practice. Therefore, the content of supervision must include attention to detail of the work and the individual member of staff.

A supervision session should have elements that include:

- Monitoring and ensuring the quality of work
- Exploring and recording decision making processes and their impact on network members
- Seeking and receiving information
- Expressing and exploring issues brought up by work with network members and their families

- Being challenged in a supportive manner
- Support and feedback

It is essential that supervision is not seen as counselling, either by the supervisor or the supervisee. If, during supervision, personal issues are identified which may impact on the work of the supervisee, it may be necessary for the supervisor to suggest/refer the employee onward in agreement with the supervisee.

#### 7.4 Confidentiality

Supervision should take place as a private meeting; however, confidentiality cannot be absolute. There may be circumstances in which matters discussed in supervision may appropriately be brought to others. For example, the supervisor may feel the necessity to bring issues raised in supervision to the attention of their StepIn supervisor colleague or Board of Directors etc. In such circumstances, it is incumbent upon the supervisor to first advise the supervisee of their intention to take such action.

#### 7.5 Records

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that an accurate record is maintained of all supervision meetings. The record should be held by the supervisor in a locked drawer or cabinet. Common practice is that supervision records are held on the staff file, but as a separate, removable, section. Supervision records are the property of StepIn and, as such, may be subject to the same disclosure as any other StepIn records; and may also be accessed as part of an inspection or monitoring process.

A copy of all supervision records must be made available to the supervisee. All supervision records should be signed and dated by both supervisor and supervisee. See Appendix No three – Supervision Record. See Appendix No four – Caseload Supervision Record.

This record should reflect a summary of the main points discussed in supervision and any decisions made. There should be a clear indication of who is responsible for actions to be undertaken with specified time-scales as appropriate.

The final part of the meeting should be used to summarise the main points discussed, any decisions taken, tasks to be carried out and a date made for the next supervision session.

When one or more party of a supervision relationship moves, the supervision records should be sealed and maintained within the supervisee's file. It would generally be inappropriate for a new supervisor to access these records. The transition from one supervisor to another should be managed by way of a three-way meeting between them and the supervisee where possible. This will protect the integrity of the supervision relationship while ensuring that outstanding issues are carried forward.

#### 7.6 Resolving Dispute

If difficulties arise in the supervisory relationship, within the context of supervision, these must be acknowledged and addressed by both parties. If issues remain unresolved, either party can inform an agreed and/or allocated BOD member and a separate meeting can be arranged to address the issues under dispute. The BOD member will either facilitate this meeting or appoint an independent person to act as mediator.

Unresolved differences may need to be addressed through a separate procedure (e.g. Grievance and Disciplinary procedures). Clearly, differences may also arise that are unrelated to the supervision process and these too, if unresolved, should be addressed through procedures such as Grievance and Disciplinary procedures.

## 7.7 Training

Training should be provided to all those involved in the provision of supervision. This should address the principles of supervision as well as skills and techniques, having regard to the experience and expertise of the supervisor. Supervisees must also be provided with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the purpose and function of supervision.

## 7.8 Evaluation

The supervisor and supervisee should undertake a planned evaluation of the process and content of supervision at least once per year. This is to ensure that supervision remains focused and in keeping with its stated objectives. The original supervision contract should be reviewed at this time and amended as required.

## 8. PROCEDURE

The purpose of this policy is to develop a standard supervision policy for StepIn staff and provide consistency across StepIn employees and supervisors.

This policy has been drafted following discussions at StepIn board of directors meetings over an 18-month period; following a literature review; and having regard to national and international best practice and ethical guidance in this practice area.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The development of an implementation plan is the responsibility of the StepIn staff and BOD.

## 10. EVALUATION AND AUDIT

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated one year after its implementation date.

## **References and Bibliography**

Harries, M. (1987) Discussion Paper on Social Work Supervision: Western Australia Branch of the Association of Social Workers in Morrison, T. (1993) Staff Supervision in Social Care Brighton: Pavillion

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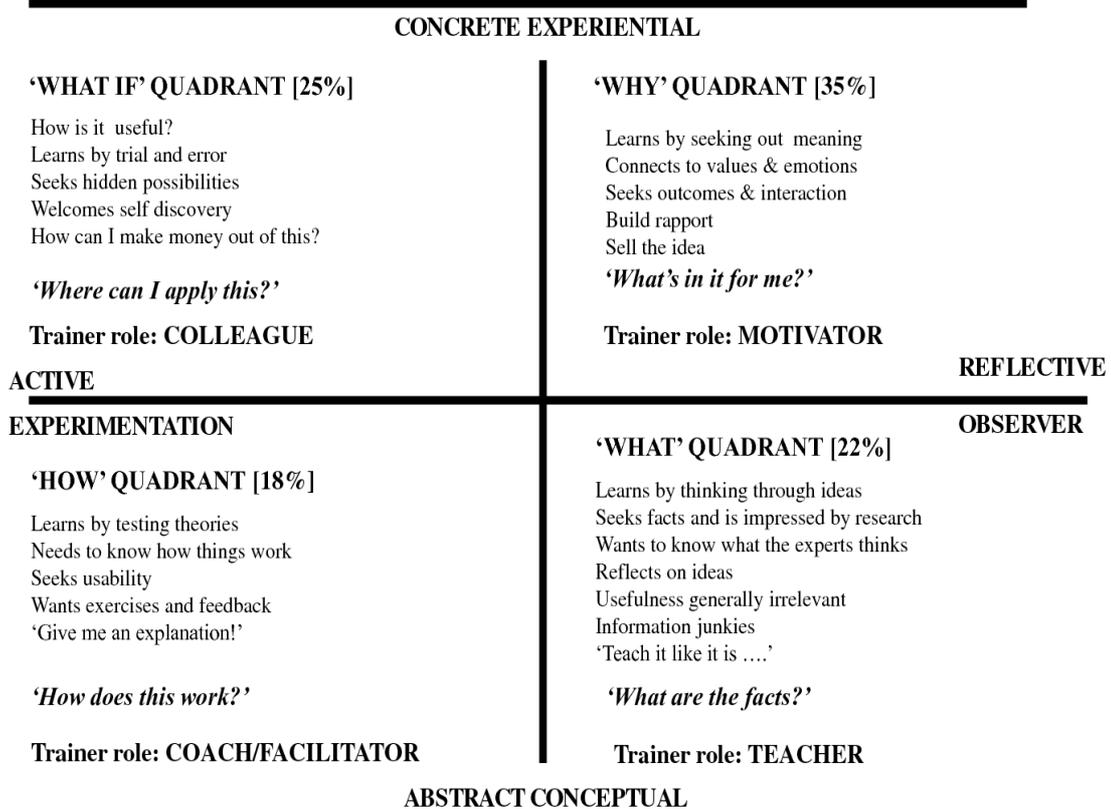
Morrison T. (1998) Making the most of supervision in health and social care: A self-development model for supervisees. Pavilion, Brighton.

Richards, M. and Payne, C. (1990) Staff Supervision in Child Protection Work. London: National Institute of Social Work

## **Appendices**

1. Kolb's Experimental Learning
2. Supervision Contract
3. Supervision Record
4. Caseload Supervision Record

# David Kolb: Learning Styles Inventory/4 -Mat





## Supervision Contract

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of supervisor:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisee:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date for review \_\_\_\_\_

The structure we have agreed on is as follows:

- a) Frequency of session:

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b) Length of each session:

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C) Location of session:

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d) Recording of session will be by:

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e) Storage of supervision record will be held by:

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f) How we will agree the agenda:

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Following the preparatory discussion we have had about supervision these are the ways we have agreed to work together in order to get the most out of supervision:

a) What I want from you as my supervisor:

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b) What I am willing to contribute as a supervisee:

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c) What I want from you as the supervisee:

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d) What I am willing to contribute as the supervisor:

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e) The things I have responsibility as the supervisor for:

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f) The things I have responsibility as the supervisee for:

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g) What we will do if we have difficulties working together:

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## Supervision Record

Name of supervisee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Session: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed agenda items to be discussed:

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Summary of Actions / Notes</b>	<b>By Whom and When</b>

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Agreed by Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Agreed by Supervisee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Next Supervision: \_\_\_\_\_



CaseLoad Supervision Record:

StepIn Network Members List

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Date joined network</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Date joined network</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Date joined network</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Date joined network</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

Members awaiting network placement:

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Comment</b>	

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Comment</b>	

Members awaiting network placement:

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Comment</b>	

<b>Client number</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	
<b>Referrer name/ service</b>	
<b>Referrer address</b>	
<b>Date referred</b>	
<b>Comment</b>	

## StepIn Supervision Policy signed and dated

StepIn SupervisionPolicy approval: This Supervision Policy is signed, dated and approved by the StepIn Chairperson (below)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

StepIn Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_