



Derbyshire County Council Adult Social Care & Health

Supervision Policy

Version 9

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If you would like to make any comments, amendments, additions etc., please email
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Introduction and Purpose of Supervision

Supervision is a two-way process for the mutual benefit of the organisation and the individual colleague. Regular support and development is essential to ensure the skills of every colleague are developed, used and monitored effectively in meeting the organisation's objectives.

Colleagues throughout the organisation will have varying needs, but the supervision procedure and process will always follow the guidelines below.

Where colleagues are seconded to partner agencies, arrangements for supervision will follow this policy. This will be undertaken by the responsible line manager. The equivalent policy of the partner agency may be followed only if it sets out a comparable set of standards, and this is agreed between agencies. It is important to ensure that continuous professional development relating to registration is supported e.g., for social work or occupational therapy qualified staff.

Functions of Supervision

The purpose of supervision is to ensure that services are delivered competently and effectively by colleagues who are well-motivated, well-equipped, and effectively supported to do the job, in the context of identified aims and objectives. This applies to colleagues in all sections and functions of the organisation.

Supervision is a line management responsibility, and its main functions are:

- to provide support in relation to work
- to manage performance and the standard of work achieved
- to identify learning and development needs

Principles of Supervision

Whilst supervision remains a joint management/employee responsibility, line managers remain responsible for establishing the framework and regularity/timings of supervision. All colleagues must receive supervision on a regular basis within an agreed framework and timescale, appropriate to the job, and the individual needs of the colleagues. All colleagues must be offered 1 to 1 supervision sessions, but group supervision may also be appropriate, depending on the needs of the staff and the organisation. Sufficient time should be given to sessions so that all issues are covered thoroughly according to need.

The focus of the discussions should be the job-related duties of the member of staff. From time-to-time issues which are occurring in the private life of an individual may impact on the employee's ability to achieve and develop. Where it appears this is the case or where the employee raises these issues, support should always be sought from the Occupational Health Service or Human Resources as appropriate, and the colleague should be provided with information about the employee assistance programme.

To ensure that the work for which the employee is held accountable is carried out to a satisfactory level, managers and employees should identify tasks, performance standards and targets for a defined period, and ways of measuring the results.

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Where colleagues have statutory duties to perform, and these fall outside the manager's professional role competence, the manager must ensure that the employee has access to appropriate support and development opportunities. This is essential for continued professional competence.

The meetings should be supportive and proactive, not merely reactive.

Learning & Development and the Link with Performance Development Review (PDR)

Previously, Derbyshire County Council has utilised The My Plan approach to agreeing work priorities, receiving useful feedback on past performance, and identifying the support and development which is needed. However, in May 2023, Derbyshire County Council introduced the Performance Development Review (PDR) process, which has taken over from the previous My Plan structure.

The process of supervision should ensure that the principles of the PDR framework are integral to day-to-day working in such areas as:

- acquiring knowledge as appropriate e.g., new legislation, practice and procedures to support objectives.
- identifying skills needed for the job in relation to competencies so that objectives can be met.
- identifying the existing skill set of the employee and determining what skills and development are required in relation to personal performance and professional development
- identifying how necessary skills can be acquired and taking action to provide the necessary resources

PDR documentation needs to be completed in addition to supervision documentation in accordance with the [PDR Guide](#).

Support in Relation to Work

Part of the supervision process is to ensure that colleagues receive the necessary support to carry out their duties effectively and achieve optimum performance. This may be met by:

- identifying the most appropriate way to provide support to the staff member, either on a regular basis or over a specific case/issue
- ensuring that necessary support is provided promptly when specifically needed. If other workers provide the support, the manager retains responsibility for ensuring that support frequency and timescales
- the frequency of supervision will be determined by the framework as a minimum standard
- the needs of the individual employee and their role within the organisation.

More frequent supervision may be necessary during their first six months of employment, and this should be in addition to the standard induction support. Where appropriate, managers must consult the relevant national minimum standards applicable to their service to ensure that support and supervision is being offered in line with statutory guidance.

Standards required by the Care Quality Commission and other regulatory bodies must be

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followed where they apply, e.g. Standard 5 - Supervision Local Government Association.

All staff working within frontline social work and occupational therapy teams should have a monthly supervision meeting and newly qualified social workers will require supervision in accordance with the requirements of the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment provisions.

Induction of new colleagues should clearly identify the supervision arrangements.

Supervision and file reviews are key components in evidencing and assuring on the quality of professional practice. It is expected that all business continuity plans include a section on sustaining and maintaining professional practice and statutory duties, delivery of supervision and completion of case file audits.

Meetings must be planned and be regarded as a high priority by both parties. If dates must be changed an early alternative date must be set. The reason for any interruption to or cancellation of the supervision session must be recorded, e.g., sickness, annual leave, urgent work or personal matter.

As part of this supervision process, every frontline social care colleague working within Adult Social Care will have two of their allocated “cases” reviewed every year by their senior practitioner. These Practice Standards Reviews (PSR) will be spread throughout the year. The PSR will be recorded on the relevant Microsoft Forms Survey. Please consult the [Practice Standards Review guidance](#) for more information.

It is expected that this PSR is completed collaboratively with the worker and their senior practitioner within an existing supervision session to enable reflection and agreed actions. If appropriate, areas of strength and opportunities for practice improvements should be shared with the wider team, so they can assist with embedding the learning and support with practice development. Both individually and more widely across the team/service. service managers should also have sight of the completed PSR.

Contents and Priorities

The agenda for discussion should include as a minimum:

- matters arising
- performance against agreed objectives
- workload and any performance management
- continuing professional development (CPD)
- wellbeing
- outcome of any file reviews completed
- issues raised by the employee
- date and time of next meeting

Good supervision should:

- identify issues for referral elsewhere
- identify (and sometimes meet directly) employee development training needs

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- encourage reflection and continuous self-development
- encourage two-way channels of communication
- monitor progress towards targets set and overall performance
- cover registration issues of regulated colleagues (e.g., social workers and occupational therapists)

For colleagues working directly with clients, in whatever setting, records must be used as a basis for discussions. File reviews are a useful tool here. This will help to monitor the work done, to facilitate and endorse decisions and to ensure that the manager accepts appropriate responsibilities for the work done, and where required, signs off work and agrees next actions. Where other recording guidelines are in place, these will be followed as part of the process.

Records of Supervision

A record of the matters covered in supervision must be kept on the standard format (Appendix 1) for the following reasons:

- it provides a record for both parties.
- it provides the basis for identifying personal performance and development.
- it will be used as a basis to review actions following supervision and to monitor change, and to record achievements and any areas of difficulty and individual development

The record should be made either during the supervision session or as soon as possible after it. The record should cover areas discussed, outcomes of discussion and any action planned by whom and when.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that an effective supervision record is kept, and that where casework decisions are made following a file review, these are recorded both on the supervision record and on the file review stored on the person’s Mosaic record.

Where line management responsibilities change, supervision records should be passed to the new line manager who should access those records still relevant to current issues. Supervision notes should be retained for the length of the employee’s employment.

A copy of supervision should be provided to the person being supervised, and an electronic copy stored securely within HR files. Line managers should ensure that they have access to the necessary HR files. Further guidance on accessing HR files and uploading documents can be found [here](#).

Process for Resolving Disagreements

From time-to-time disagreement may occur within the supervisory process. It is the responsibility of both parties to resolve this informally where possible. Where informal resolution cannot be achieved, advice should be sought from Human Resources, line manager or employee representative, as appropriate, before taking any further action.

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Annual Observations

As part of the support and supervision process, colleagues working within Adult Social Care Direct Care service must have their annual observations completed using the templates:

[Homecare Individual Observation Record](#)

[Residential Individual Observation Records](#)

Group Supervision

Managers in some service areas are directly responsible for large staff groups. It is therefore not always practicable to provide individual supervision to all staff on a frequent basis. Group supervision may be the only realistic way to ensure that staff are frequently given the opportunity to constructively examine their work and consider improvements in standards and their own development.

Group supervision may also be a preferred way to ensure a consistent service within an establishment, team or unit. Staff have the opportunity to learn from each other so that the highest standards can become standard practice across the group. A record of any group supervision sessions should be completed and stored on HR files for each participant to ensure that a clear record of all supervision activity is documented.

Even when group supervision is the main mode of supervision, colleagues should be offered an opportunity for 1 to 1 supervision sessions, as appropriate, to address issues pertinent to individual employees.

Confidentiality & Access

There is clearly a need for mutual trust and respect between manager and employee, and it is therefore imperative that discussions and records of the session remain confidential between the two parties. However, on occasion, supervision records may be reviewed by senior officers as part of quality assurance checks to confirm colleagues are receiving regular supervision and that this is to an appropriate standard. There may be occasions when anonymised records are shared with more senior management, but only with the express approval of the member of staff to which the record relates. It is to be noted, as the record remains the property of the council, in exceptional cases, such as disciplinary, capability or safeguarding proceedings, it may be necessary to share the information with more senior management without prior consent. In such cases the employee concerned will be notified as soon as practicable.

Documentation

Individual supervision sessions must be recorded using the attached pro-forma. The PDR documentation and guidance can be found [here](#). Any changes required to the Performance Development Review documentation following supervision must be made.

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Appendix 1

Supervision Template

Supervision conducted by:	Staff member:
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Date of review:	Specific file reviewed where undertaken - must include PIN:
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Matters discussed and agreed actions

Topics for discussion: Matters arising, performance against agreed objectives, workload, CPD, Wellbeing, Outcome of any file reviews completed, date and time of next meeting

Agree date for next work review meeting:

Signed – person being supervised	Signed – supervisor
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Author History

Approval and Authorisation History

Authored by Nicky Deep	HR Consultant	February 2009
Approved by Mel Teasdale	HR Service Partner	April 2015
Authorised by Mel Teasdale	HR Service Partner	February 2018

Change History

Version 1	October 1996		Final approved version
Version 2	February 2009		Review and complete revision
Version 3	July 2009		Union amendments
Version 4	April 2010		Further union amendments
Version 5	October 2012	Nicky Keep	Review required
Version 6	April 2015	Nicky Keep	Review required
Version 7	February 2018	Nicky Keep	Review required
Version 7.1	December 2020	Sandra Taylor	Review required
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