

CATHOLIC INSTITUTE FOR DEAF PEOPLE

Supervision Policy

for

Residential Services

CATHOLIC INSTITUTE FOR DEAF PEOPLE – RESIDENTIAL SERVICES SUPERVISION POLICY

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1. Policy Statement

The Catholic Institute for Deaf People (CIDP) recognises that supervision is a key process in delivering support to staff to ensure that they realise their full potential and provide their service users with the best possible service.

All employees are entitled to good quality, effective and purposeful supervision based on a mutually agreed written contract.

The policy incorporates the responsibilities of both employers and employees.

The key objective of the policy is to ensure that staff have the necessary skills and support to deliver a quality service. The identification of training and employee development needs is an ongoing process, and will link into Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The policy recognises the opportunity supervision provides to build on the good practice already established within the service so that we can all gain from the experience and expertise of our staff in the CIDP services.

2. Aim

This policy outlines the expectation of how supervision will be delivered to staff.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff who are engaged in residential services with the CIDP.

4. Supervision Contract

When a new employee takes up post the Supervision Policy and Standards will be discussed, and within four weeks the Supervisor has the responsibility of ensuring that an annual supervision contract is drawn up.

The contract should set out a framework within which supervision occurs. The result of the supervision contract should be based on discussion and negotiation between the supervisor and supervisee. Both require to discuss and agree on the following:

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- the frequency and duration of supervision;
- expectations of supervision, and expectations of each other's roles in supervision;
- ensuring learning and development opportunities are available for staff to demonstrate continuing professional development (CPD);
- an agreement on standing items, eg workload management, feedback on performance, learning and continuous development, recording training needs (guidance from the four functions of supervision, as stated in the supervision process);
- the process for resolving difficulties.

A signed copy of this contract should be kept in the supervision file and reviewed regularly.

5. The Supervision Process

Supervision is the formal process where employees demonstrate accountability for their work, and whereby each individual member of staff receives the support that they require to carry out their work to the best of their abilities. Supervision is a partnership and requires all parties to work together to communicate openly and develop a shared approach to the planning, implementation and evaluation of supervision. It is a means of maintaining and promoting high standards of professional practice and ensuring adherence to service procedures. Supervision requires to be protected time, free of interruptions, and a priority for both supervisee and supervisor. Supervision requires to be recorded. Agreement is required regarding who records the session and when the record is distributed. The supervision contract will assist in defining the objectives for supervision and agenda setting. Both supervisee and supervisor require to sign the record of supervision.

The purpose of supervision is to ensure the worker:

- is clear about roles and responsibilities;
- meets the CIDP's stated objectives;
- has the necessary support to undertake the task;
- is developing 'best practice';
- is providing quality service to service users.

A model for supervision would include four discrete functions: management, developmental, supportive and mediation. There are overlaps within these functions and acknowledgement that certain functions would take priority on certain occasions.

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A broad definition of each function is given; these definitions are not exclusive but are guides to the areas which require addressing and discussing in supervision.

Management (Administrative)

- assessing the overall quality of the worker's performance;
- caseload management;
- supervisors will proactively discuss recording in supervision and countersign files at least every six months;
- supervisors will countersign child protection cases quarterly;
- the key worker will record discussions and decisions reached in supervision;
- setting aims and objectives;
- clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- agreeing overall balance between competing demands.

Developmental (Educative)

- providing a learning environment, where mistakes can be acknowledged and rectified;
- increasing effectiveness through upgrading knowledge and skills;
- mirroring good practice;
- monitoring standards of performance;
- assessing development and providing feedback.

Supportive (Enabling)

- increasing morale which enhances performance;
- offering insight and encouragement;
- reinforcing positives;
- motivation and empowerment;
- acknowledging the wider support, often informal, from colleagues and peers;
- support with work related stress and being aware of the emotional needs of workers, and the impact work may have on them;
- ensuring the working environment conforms with Health and Safety legislation.

Mediation (Advocacy)

- agreeing process for resolving difficulties;
- involving workers in decision making;
- dealing sensitively and clearly with complaints;
- contributing to policy formation and service planning.

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6. The Responsibilities of the Supervisor and Supervisee

Supervisor and supervisee require to discuss, agree and record in the supervision contract, their expectation of each other's roles in supervision. The supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that decisions are recorded and actioned, and that the record is kept securely.

Acknowledgement requires to be given, and if appropriate recorded, to informal support from peers and other colleagues, and the role of group support and supervision. It may be appropriate to progress learning and developmental issues within a group or team meeting setting. This particular form of developmental learning is especially beneficial within a residential setting and requires to be acknowledged and validated within the supervision record. It is useful to discuss the learning style of the supervisee and the management style of the supervisor. The following issues should be discussed and recorded, although the list is not exclusive:

- confidentiality;
- punctuality;
- agenda setting;
- format for supervision;
- recording of supervision;
- resolution of difficulties;
- arrangements if supervision is cancelled, etc.

7. Frequency of Supervision

It is recommended that residential staff have at least six formal supervision sessions per year.

While informal supervision and consultation is considered essential and valid, it cannot replace the requirement to provide regular formal supervision.

8. Disputes

Disagreements should be initially dealt with by discussion between supervisor and employee, or by reference to the supervisor's line manager if necessary. Any further dispute not dealt with in this way should be dealt with within the usual Disciplinary or Employee Complaints Process.