

Walsall Council

Mental Health Service

AMHP Professional Supervision Policy

**Version: 1.3
05/06/2013**



**Walsall
Council**

Terms of Reference.

This Supervision policy applies to AMHPs approved by and practicing for Walsall Council only. AMHPs authorised by Walsall Council but approved by another LSSA and still in that other LSSA's employ should be receiving regular Supervision from their parent LSSA according to their own policies and procedures. For Authorised AMHPs, their parent LSSA Supervision arrangements will be supplemented by an open invitation to attend Walsall's monthly Social Care forum where AMHP matters are routinely discussed, and a twice yearly meeting with Walsall's AMHP Lead.

AMHPs who were approved by Walsall but who no longer work for Walsall and are seeking Authorisation from an alternative LSSA should approach that LSSA and make arrangements for Supervision with them.

Introduction

In order to maintain both a continuous learning environment and to promote safe practice, we all have a collective responsibility to share our Practice experience and provide and receive Supervision.

Such Supervision is a key element of the Re-approval process for AMHPs and should focus upon ensuring that all AMHPs have a sound basis of Professional knowledge and skills to enable them to perform the important and demanding role tasked to them.

This document will explain and detail the model to be adopted for the Professional Supervision of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) within the Borough of Walsall. It will also apply to all Approved Mental Health Professionals whose Approval is held by Walsall Council.

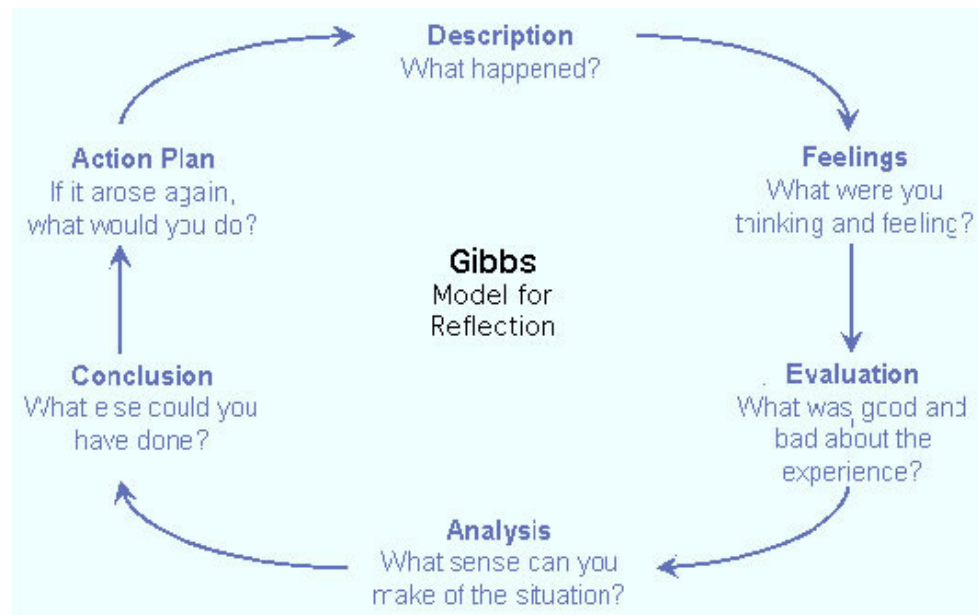
It should be emphasised that this model of Supervision is a specialist Professional model. Professional Supervision does not replace Line Management Supervision; rather it sits alongside these other processes.

A summary of Professional progress will be tied back into the Yearly Appraisal carried out by the Line Manager (who may very likely be a Manager from a non-Social work background) and will contribute towards any objective setting arising from that Yearly Appraisal.

Towards Reflective Practice.

A key element of the Supervision process will be a focus upon Reflective Practice. This Policy adopts the Reflective Cycle Model first outlined by Professor Graham Gibbs in 1988. It remains one of the most popular models for reflection as it is one of the few models to allow for emotions to be taken into account.

The Gibbs Reflective Cycle model is a six step model as follows:



The key steps of the model have been used to provide the format and context for the Professional Reflective Practice Log ([appendix: 2](#)).

This template is designed to be completed by the Practitioner and brought along to Supervision as an example of their Reflective Practice. For full details of how this Supervision will be structured and arranged, please see below.

Who Can Supervise?

The following can be nominated to act in the Supervisory role:

- Service Manager, Mental Health.
- AMHP Lead
- Social Care Lead
- Team Manager with at least 2 years qualified AMHP experience.
- Senior Practitioner with at least 2 years qualified AMHP experience.
- Practicing AMHPs with at least 2 years qualified AMHP experience.

Linking the AMHP to a Supervisor.

Approval as an accredited AMHP is via Approval Panel. Approval is ordinarily for a five year period.

Following the Panel when Approval is granted, the AMHP Lead and/or Service Manager, Mental health, will allocate to whom in their opinion is the most suitable Professional to act as that Practitioner's Supervisor. Notification will be made to both Practitioner and Supervisor as to who has been selected to fulfil this role.

Every effort will be made to allocate to Supervisors equitably. It is recognised that practicing AMHPs also have a responsibility in terms of providing the Supervisory role to AMHP students and the allocation of students will be one of the factors considered when nominating Supervisors.

The identified Supervisor and Practitioner will be expected to meet for an initial session within one month of the date of Approval in order to sign the Supervision Agreement (appendix: 1).

Newly Qualified AMHP Practitioners.

Newly qualified AMHP Practitioners upon initial Approval will be allocated for Professional Supervision to either the Service Manager, Mental Health; AMHP Lead or Social Care Lead (AMHP Approved).

The initial commitment at this stage is for 3 sessions of Supervision to be carried out on a bi-monthly basis. At the end of the initial 3 sessions, a six-monthly appraisal will be carried out.

Any Practice issues arising from the Appraisal will be addressed by the collaborative formulation of an Action Plan designed to ensure that the AMHP is able to continue practicing safely.

Upon successful conclusion of the initial post-qualifying Supervision period, AMHPs will then be allocated to another Supervisor who will then be that Practitioner's permanent Supervisor.

Ad-hoc or De-brief Sessions

As previously stated, Ad-hoc sessions can also be arranged to provide de-brief and support to the Social Worker or AMHP where the Social Worker or AMHP has undertaken a particularly difficult or traumatic Assessment or where general advice and guidance upon AMHP or other professional Social Work matters is sought.

These sessions should be recorded in the same way as planned Supervision and where the discussion particularly surrounds a specific case, it is good practice for the Practitioner to complete the Reflective Practice exercise on this case following the de-brief session for inclusion into his/her Portfolio and for use as the next piece of Reflective Practice to be presented at the next scheduled Supervision session.

The Preparation for Supervision.

Prior to each planned quarterly Supervision Session, the Practitioner should prepare one piece of Reflective Practice for discussion. The correct format for this presentation is detailed in (Appendix: 2).

The Reflective Practice Log is available in word format. It should be completed and e-mailed over to the Supervisor at least one week prior to the Session taking place.

In addition to the Reflective Practice presentation, the AMHP Practitioner is also expected to up-date his/her training record and e-mail this to the Supervisor at least one week prior to the Session taking place. This document is also available in word format for ease of use (Appendix: 3). As a working document, this can be kept electronically and simply up-dated by the inclusion of any training/learning since last Supervision session.

The Supervision Session.

A process map has been included with this document to assist in the planning and running of these Supervision Sessions (Appendix: 4).

The core activity of professional AMHP Supervision will be a focus upon Reflective Practice. Reflective Practice is seen as a key learning tool and so each section of the Reflective Practice form should be completed as fully as possible. Except where a section may not be relevant, one word or one sentence answers are not seen as helpful or conducive to critical reflection and this should be avoided when completing the exercise.

In addition to the discussions surrounding Reflective practice, the Supervision session will also provide a forum to discuss the individual AMHP's annual training needs. The updated Training Log should be reviewed and discussed at each session to ensure that the AMHP is on course to complete the required 18 hours of training per year. Sufficient sessions of training will be provided to allow the AMHP to meet this target.

Where it is identified that the AMHP is falling short of the mandatory 18 hours training per year, an action plan should be drawn up by the Supervisor and Supervisee detailing how this target will be met. This Action plan should be reviewed at each Supervision Session to ensure that the mandatory target is met.

Provision has been made for the inclusion into the Portfolio of any other training which is seen as relevant to the AMHP role and this can contribute towards the target of 18 hours relevant training. This may be academic work from a University course etc.

In consideration of this, the key word here is relevance. Any such additional training/learning being put forward by the individual AMHP towards the annual

target of 18 hours must include a rationale as to how it directly links into and informs that AMHP's practice and relates to AMHP competencies. The rationale must be accepted by the Training Officer before it can be accredited towards that AMHP's annual target of 18 hours training.

AMHPs should be aware that the completion of 18 hours relevant training per year is a set minimum standard and that failure to be able to demonstrate that sufficient training has taken place may result in suspension of Approval.

A form for recording this is included as a part of the Learning Log ([Appendix: 3a](#)).

In discussions on training in supervision, it may be that an AMHP will identify an area of relevant training which may benefit the AMHP group as a whole. A form has been included in the Training Log so that this can be recorded and a copy of the form should also be sent to the Training Officer for consideration as a potential topic for next year's training programme

A form for recording this is also included as a part of the learning Log ([Appendix: 3b](#)).

Recording the Session.

Issues discussed at each supervision meeting and any action agreed should be briefly recorded and countersigned by both parties. A detailed write-up of the proceedings is not expected. The primary reason for recording supervision meetings is to provide those involved with a reminder of:

- Each of the subjects covered in the meeting
- Any actions agreed, and by whom
- Any agreements made about the agenda for the next meeting.

Record keeping Standards

Supervisors should keep an individual supervision file for each AMHP that they supervise, containing their own copies of the notes made at the supervision meeting. Attached to these notes should be a copy of the updated Learning Log and the reflective practice presented at that session.

Supervisees should include their copy of the supervision notes in their Re-approval portfolio as their evidence of on-going supervision. Where there is a disagreement about a recorded matter, both parties should be able to record their understanding of the issue separately and where appropriate refer the matter to the Service Manager, Mental Health for arbitration.

Both of these files should be made available upon request to the Service Manager, Mental Health for the purpose of monitoring supervision practice.

Steve Nash
05/06/2013

Bibliography:

GIBBS, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Further Education Unit, Oxford Brookes University.

Staff Supervision Policy for Qualified Social Workers; Social Care and Inclusion, Walsall Council, February 2013.

List of Appendices:

Appendix: 1 Supervision Agreement.

Appendix: 2 Professional Reflective Practice Log.

Appendix: 3 AMHP Professional Training Log.

Appendix: 4 Process Map.