



Guide Dogs Formal Supervision & Support Procedure

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Purpose of Procedure

To improve and formalise the quantity, quality, consistency and evidence of supervision. Your line manager will give you person-centred supervision and, where appropriate, a separate subject matter expert will provide your professional supervision.

Any line manager should be able to deliver person-centred Supervision, supporting the wellbeing and day-to-day aspects of any management support.

Guide Dogs aim is to ensure that **children, young people and adults, who are blind and partially sighted using our services will:**

- a. **receive person centred, high quality, effective interventions provided by suitability qualified (and registered with a relevant professional body where appropriate) person.**
- b. **Have experienced staff, with the right attitude and aptitude to work in a person-centred way, in line with our organisation behaviours, so that every person with sight loss we help has the confidence and support they need to live their lives to the full.**

To help achieve this aim we are **committed to ensuring that staff** delivering the above services are:

- **suitably qualified and experienced,**
- **registered with a recognised professional body (where appropriate),**
- **have access to effective line management including regular 121s,**
- **benefit from effective performance management and continuous professional development;**
- **will receive effective regular, professional (technical) expert supervision from a suitably qualified, experienced subject matter expert manager (formally Technical manager).**

This procedure sets out the **roles and responsibilities** of managers and staff involved in providing and benefitting from this supervision, the approach we require them to take to **supervision**, and the actions required of them to achieve the above aims.

This procedure applies to all roles who regularly work directly with our Service Users, and also other roles that come into direct contact with all children, young people and potentially vulnerable adults.

Definitions:

Formal supervision means staff can develop and build self-awareness so that they can recognise areas for improvement and identify their learning needs to make positive changes. This includes considering their values, behaviours and judgements and allows them to explore their practice, including ethical dilemmas, cultural issues and decision making.

All new staff will be made aware of this procedure for formal supervision.

All staff or managers undertaking a **supervisor role** will be provided with appropriate **training** and ongoing **support** to ensure their effectiveness.

Procedure Instructions

1 Responsibilities

1.1 Supervisee Responsibilities

To be able to receive and benefit from effective professional (technical) subject matter expert supervision, staff members must:

- Undertake, engage with and seek to benefit from regular professional, (technical), expert supervision and reflect on and improve their practice.
- Produce and keep safely records of supervision having taken place and be prepared to share these as appropriate to evidence meeting the required standards.
- Be open to learning from experience, share the learning outcomes from supervision with their line manager and incorporate any action to be taken into their quarterly My Contribution performance management and development reviews, thereby creating a cycle of experience, reflection, learning and change.

1.2 Supervisor Responsibilities

To be able to provide effective professional (technical) subject matter expert supervision, supervisors must:

- Be suitably qualified or experienced and skilled persons, with proven ability in the profession/area of work in which they seek to supervise others (i.e. habilitation specialists supervise habilitation specialists and orientation & mobility specialists supervise orientation & mobility specialists and central CYP, or CAS/SISS Operations Managers who also meet the above criteria).
- Have completed, or be prepared, to undertake the internal Supervision Pathway to support you in being a supervisor (this is a suite of seven lessons covering the fundamentals of supervision - refer to Appendix One - Supervision Pathway for more information).
- Ensure that all trainee and qualified roles in direct contact with our service users receiving supervision have access to regular professional, expert, (technical) supervision as set out below.
- Provide effective spoken and written feedback and guidance as part of the supervision process that supports and enables the supervisee to improve their practice.
- If not the supervisees line manager, provide the supervision records to the supervisee and their line manager to help inform their 121s and My Contribution reviews.
- Ensure that Supervisees consistently meet their requirements as set out above.
 - Have access to professional (technical) supervision themselves, if necessary, from another region. Where this is not available such as for more senior or centrally managed service roles this should be sourced externally if feasible.

2 Providing Supervision

2.1 What is supervision

Professional (technical) expert supervision can be defined as:

- A formal and recorded process through which the professional actions of staff are examined and regularly reviewed.
- Having many benefits, especially in acting as a means for ensuring that members of staff have access to the support, training and procedures they

require for professional growth and development within an open learning culture.

- Including support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promote the interests of children, young people and adults we support.
- Providing opportunities for staff to:
 - a. Carry out reflective practice on their professional practice.

“Reflective practice is a process that helps you ‘think analytically about your practice and learning. It’s a great way of using lessons learned to maintain good practice, make improvements where possible and identify where you may need more information or support”.
(AoMRC, COPMed, Aug 2018)

- b. discuss any issues in relation to their caseload management, particularly concerning children, young people, their parents and families and adults development or wellbeing.
- c. identify solutions to address issues as they arise.
- d. receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness
- e. have observed and received constructive feedback to improve their professional practice.
- f. receive feedback on the quality of their reporting, record keeping and data/systems management.

2.2 Benefits

Supervision should:

- Foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.
- Enable supervisors and supervisees to examine and reflect on the quality of their practice and to facilitate discussion, growth and development, supporting practitioners in their work and helping them to make decisions.
- In this sense, supervision provides a recorded system of decision making, which can be audited to improve practice and to improve the provision and help to safeguard those we come into contact with.

2.3 Content

All supervision meetings must include discussions concerning the development and wellbeing of each of the supervisee's caseload, especially any safeguarding issues. Where concerns are raised, the supervisor and supervisee must seek to identify solutions and identify further actions that need to be taken.

Supervision meetings should provide opportunities for staff to:

- discuss any issues, particularly concerning development and wellbeing, of those we come into contact with.
- identify solutions to address issues as they arise.
- reflect on their practice.
- receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

Supervision should be a two-way process that enables both parties involved to develop a positive and mutually supportive discussion and an ongoing development plan. It is for both the supervisor and supervisee to create an environment that encourages the cycle of experience, reflection, learning and change.

Understanding core values of the business is important as well as your own values and how these can affect professional judgement and can influence the actions, behaviours and the decisions for both Supervisee and Supervisor. It's important to have the self-awareness to be able to examine those values and assess how they affect decision making.

It's also important to respect the ethics and values of others (if they don't pose harm or risk to others), even where they differ from your own. You must not allow these differences to affect your work. Rather, you should use them to challenge yourself and reflect on their effect on your practice.

The supervisor will keep records of each supervision session. These are necessary to keep track of agreed discussions and actions, to give a starting point to the next meeting and to provide an opportunity for the member of staff to review where they have got to with any goals or actions.

Each member of staff should have a supervision file which will hold a copy of a supervision agreement and a copy of the supervision records.

Not all supervision needs to be planned. This procedure supports spontaneous supervision, especially in the event of safeguarding issue.

2.4 Frequency

All staff eligible to receive supervision should do so;

- a minimum of six (6) times in a year, - at least two of these occasions should involve observations of practice, for staff and once for volunteers.
- of approximate duration of a minimum of 1-1.5 hours per session for staff, dependent on experience and level to case load with office-based supervision, but this may take longer when observing practice and travelling long distance. Volunteer supervision should be a minimum of 30 minutes.
- of approximate duration of half a day with client based observed supervision for staff. For volunteers in service user facing roles e.g. MSG for 30 minutes.
- supervision for trainees and new staff should receive more frequent supervision sessions which will become less frequent over time.
- on occasion, for example when cases are discussed in detail at small specialist staff group meetings, supervision may be group based, i.e. Learning Community or multi-disciplinary case review.

Documentation

1. Supervision Pathway.
2. Record of Supervision (121 and Observation).
3. Skills Matrix and Guidance documentation.
4. **My Contribution** is our annual objective setting, quarterly action planning, behavioural and learning & development focussed, performance management system.
5. Professional Supervision Best Practice Guidance OP-SUPV-PR-001B
6. **Performance management** policy and procedure.
7. **Safeguarding** policy and procedure.
8. **Whistleblowing** policy and procedure.

Permissible exceptions

None identified at this time.

Governance Information. Please do not remove.

Governance Review & Approval Table*:

The table below contains two rows and five columns.

Governance Area:	H&S	Protection of Children & Adults	Insurance	Legal	GDPR
Date Approved:		November 2023			

Review Frequency:

Procedures - Core: Annually

Procedures - Subject Specific: Every 2 years

Reviews should be done in accordance with relevant regulation, legislation changes or as a result of ad hoc activity, such as continuous improvement initiatives.

Version control table:

The table below contains four rows and four columns. (Only the original approval date and the most recent amendment should be included in the table.)

Date	Version	Status	Details of Change
Dec 21	V3.0	Final	Sign-off agreed.
Nov 23	V3.1	Updated	Insert 'Subject Matter Expert' (Technical/ Professional) and expert supervision 'from a suitably qualified, experienced subject matter expert manager (formally Technical manager).'

*Please see below when a document must be reviewed by Governance

Safeguarding - All documents with any reference to safeguarding, recruitment and training, working with clients (Adult and CYP).

Legal - All documents with any reference to agreements or contracts, third party partnerships, potential reputational risk, reference to compliance with any statutory or regulatory obligation.

Health and Safety - All documents where an activity could cause harm to a member of staff, service user, volunteer or third party or where there is reputational risk.

Insurance - A change to the way we deliver our services.

GDPR - If we are gathering any personal information on volunteers or service users.

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