

## STANDARDS FOR REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

A standard is defined as a required or agreed degree or level of requirement, excellence, or attainment<sup>1</sup>. A range of service and quality standards exist in every organisation, to which employees adhere in their everyday work. Standards for supervision have been developed to articulate the expectations of what would be expected of a nurse or midwife undertaking the process of reflective supervision, and the support to be provided by employing organisations.

### The purpose of these standards is to:

- ▶ Enable supervisors and supervisees to prepare for and acknowledge their role within the reflective supervision process.
- ▶ Provide a guideline for organisations to ensure effective implementation.
- ▶ Guide the development of education programmes for reflective supervision focusing on agreed best practice.
- ▶ Provide service users and the public with a contemporary description of the standards for reflective supervision.

## WHO

This standard describes the type of registrants who will undertake the process of reflective supervision for nursing and midwifery, in the context of this framework.

### Supervisor

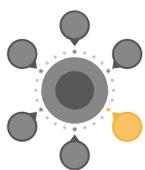
In the context of reflective supervision for nurses and midwives, a supervisor is currently registered on parts one, two or three of the NMC register. Supervisors should have a minimum of three years' experience and have been prepared or approved against agreed regional criteria<sup>2</sup>. A supervisor will have knowledge and skill specific to the composition of the supervisee's role, taking account of any particular specialised and expert requirements<sup>3</sup> and will be on the organisational register of accredited supervisors.

Each supervisor has a responsibility to maintain and develop his/her own skills and competencies, contributing to the models of learning and to the approaches used. They must seek and undertake reflective supervision, maintaining records for both personal supervision and professional supervision of others, in accordance with the guidance linked to this framework. A supervisor must be available to provide at least two formal sessions of reflective supervision annually for each supervisee in either one-to-one or group format.

1 Definition taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press (2015).

2 Please see Learning and Development Framework, pages 8 and 9. This element is for discussion with the members of the CNO Business Meeting.

3 For example, where the purpose of the reflective supervision session is related to a specialised area of clinical practice then the supervisor would require a certain level of knowledge in relation to this area. However, if the supervision was to reflect on positive feedback from a service user or undertaking further study, then the supervisor could be chosen from a wider area.



This will mean that each supervisor will need to ensure the number of supervisees he/she is supervising does not exceed the guidance of a total of 16 sessions per year. Supervisors are accountable to their line managers for appropriate management of their time and recording the number of sessions they provide. Each supervisor must agree ground rules with the supervisee and undertake the following responsibilities in each session:

- ▶ Protect the allocated time and maintain an environment conducive to supervision.
- ▶ Appropriate exploration of the supervisee's expectations.
- ▶ Follow the focus identified by the supervisee(s) and allow the supervisee(s) to express his/her/their individuality.
- ▶ Provide clear constructive feedback.
- ▶ Evaluate the perceived benefit of the session to the supervisee(s) including identification of agreed action plans.
- ▶ Manage areas of conflict, including onward action.

### **Supervisees**

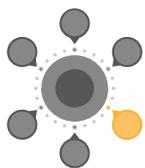
Nursing and midwifery supervisees are currently registered on parts one, two or three of the Nursing and Midwifery Council register. They have a responsibility to engage fully in reflective supervision, including the necessity to seek out an appropriate supervisor of their choice<sup>4</sup>. They have a responsibility to prepare for, and participate in, a minimum of two formal reflective supervision sessions a year, keeping personal reflective accounts including relevant actions. Nurses and Midwives in Northern Ireland are required to engage in this activity as part of both revalidation and appraisal processes.

### **Broad responsibilities for supervisees are to:**

- ▶ Seek an appropriate supervisor and agree that selection with his/her line manager, with the exception of safeguarding children supervision where the supervisor is appointed.
- ▶ Prioritise and attend reflective supervision as agreed with the supervisee's line manager, professional supervisors and safeguarding children named nurses as appropriate.
- ▶ Select and engage in an appropriate model of reflective supervision, making personal records for reference.
- ▶ Actively identify a focus for the meeting.
- ▶ Be open to constructive feedback.

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<sup>4</sup> An individual nurse or midwife can choose a supervisor from the register of supervisors. This choice must be agreed with his/her line manager. Supervisors may differ, depending on the purpose of supervision, for example a midwife working in a regional role may choose a supervisor that is a registered nurse for the purpose of supervision to reflect on and develop leadership knowledge, skills and attributes. The same midwife may also choose a supervisor who is a registered midwife for the purposes of reflection on midwifery practice for revalidation. Whilst the NMC does not require that a midwife engages with another midwife as part of their reflective discussions to meet the requirements of revalidation, it may be deemed appropriate on the part of individuals to assure that they are practising effectively against expected standards.



- ▶ Evaluate the perceived benefit of the session to his/her personal and professional life, reflecting on the opportunity to impact on safety, quality and patient or staff experience.
- ▶ Contribute to Knowledge and Skills Framework/Individual Performance Review/ Personal Development Plan process through identification of learning/ development and training needs in partnership with the supervisor.
- ▶ Align reflective supervision with revalidation processes appropriately.