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Safeguarding Children Supervision Policy for Nurses

Regional Policy for Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

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1 Supervision Policy

1.1 Introduction

This Safeguarding Children Supervision policy sets the framework and minimum standards for Health and Social Care Trusts to implement an effective and consistent approach to safeguarding nursing practice. It should be implemented alongside the Trust's nursing supervision policies.

Safeguarding children supervision ensures that practitioners deliver a high standard of service to children and families, carry out their duties according to policy and procedures and meet departmental and corporate targets. Supporting staff through supervision improves working practices and contributes to better service delivery and outcomes for children.

1.2 Aim

To promote good practice and improve standards of care through reflective practice, risk assessment, planned intervention and ongoing quality assurance of practice which safeguards children and promotes their welfare.

1.3 Scope

All nurses¹ should have access to safeguarding children supervision.

The frequency of Safeguarding Children Supervision varies in accordance with the nurse's role and responsibilities with children and potential to safeguard children.

1.4 Accountability

Professional governance must be embedded within the Trust's safeguarding infrastructure. Clear lines of professional accountability including the roles and responsibilities of designated and named nurses must be identified to Trust Board.

1.5 Definition

Safeguarding children supervision provides specialist professional advice, case management and support to staff in their role of safeguarding children. This includes children in need of protection, children in need, looked after children and families of concern. The safeguarding children supervision process includes assessment of staff performance, professional development in relation to safeguarding children and families and quality assurance of practice to ensure compliance with best practice guidelines.

Safeguarding Children Supervision is separate from but complimentary to other forms of management and nursing supervision.

¹ Nurses includes all registered nurses and public health practitioners

1.6 Core Values and Principles

1. The quality of supervision has a direct bearing on the quality of service delivery and children's outcomes.
2. Safeguarding Children Supervision supports staff, develops knowledge, skills and competence, promotes evidence based practice and identifies development opportunities.
3. All nursing staff working directly to safeguard children and families, irrespective of their role, have the right to receive high quality supervision.
4. Safeguarding children supervision should only be carried out by an experienced competent safeguarding children supervisor who has attended a recognisable safeguarding children supervision training course.
5. All nursing staff have responsibility for the quality of their own work and should prepare for and make a positive contribution to the supervisory process. They are not passive recipients.
6. Managers have a responsibility to promote safeguarding children supervision by implementing this policy and ensuring training is provided for both supervisors and supervisees.
7. Good communication channels should be in place to share the outcomes of both safeguarding children and management supervision, as it is likely they will be carried out separately.
8. Senior managers need to conduct regular audits to ensure that this policy and standards are being implemented.
9. Supervision must promote anti oppressive practice.
10. All practice must be consistent with the Nursing & Midwifery Council Codes of Professional Conduct (2008).

1.7 Responsibilities

1. The Executive Director of Nursing is accountable to the Chief Executive for the implementation of this policy.
2. The Assistant/Co Director for Governance will oversee the implementation and monitoring of this policy.
3. An identified Senior Nurse for Safeguarding Children (usually the named nurse for Child Protection) will promote, coordinate and facilitate the implementation of this policy.
4. Senior Managers will ensure that this policy is implemented within their sphere of responsibility.
5. Safeguarding Children Supervisors will have responsibility to provide and maintain a high standard of safeguarding children supervision.
6. Line managers must ensure that safeguarding children supervision is integrated into induction and that practitioners have the opportunity to avail of safeguarding children supervision.

7. Supervisors will maintain and develop their own skills and competence relative to safeguarding children issues, supervision and practice. They will promote and adhere to the standards set out in section 2 of this document.
8. Supervisors and supervisees have a responsibility to contribute positively to Safeguarding children supervision. This entails preparation, open discussion and the implementation of decisions.

1.8 Methods

A range of safeguarding children supervision methods may be used in Trusts in order to meet the four functions of supervision. Key nursing groups require individual safeguarding children supervision (see appendix A).

1.9 Confidentiality

Supervision sessions are confidential exchanges between supervisor and supervisee. However the supervision record is an organisational document which may be required for audit and inspection purposes or where there are grievances or disciplinary proceedings.

Nurses who discuss personal and private issues at supervision can be assured of confidentiality unless:

- The supervisor is of the opinion that this information must be shared if it is likely to have a serious detrimental effect on professional practice.
- The supervisor believes that not to share the information places the nurse, client or others at risk of significant harm (see NMC Guidance Sheet on Confidentiality 2007)

1.10 Recording

Safeguarding children supervision should always be recorded in a timely manner and in such a way that the content and decisions can be readily understood and audited in line with NMC Guidance on record keeping (2007).

1.11 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is the responsibility of both the safeguarding children supervisor and senior management.

Senior managers must ensure that an annual audit of safeguarding children supervision is carried out. The results of this audit should be forwarded to the Trust's Assistant/Co Director of Governance.

2 Safeguarding Children Supervision Standards

These standards define what needs to be in place in order to ensure a consistent approach to supervision at all levels and across the Trusts. Under each standard are a number of criteria – indicators that will help decide whether this standard has been met.

The ability of the organisation to reach and maintain the standard will be dependent on the workforce and the opportunities for support and continuous improvement.

Safeguarding children supervision provides an opportunity to reflect on standards of practice and also consider the needs of the individual in terms of support and continuous professional development.

Standard 1

All nurses will have safeguarding children supervision at a level that reflects their knowledge, competence, experience and caseload demands. The levels of safeguarding children for specific nursing groups are outlined in Appendix A

Criteria:

- All nurses should be aware of this policy and standards
- All nurses will be provided with information and contact details of the Safeguarding Children Nurse Specialist
- All nurses may request and will be provided with individual safeguarding children advice, support and supervision regarding any child or family where the nurse has safeguarding concerns
- Trust policy will outline the level of planned safeguarding children supervision provided to each nursing group

Standard 2

Supervision is arranged and conducted in such a way as to permit reflection and discussion.

Criteria:

- Supervision takes place in an environment which affords privacy and where arrangements have been made to avoid interruptions.
- A planned supervision session should be expected to last up to three hours. This includes preparation and record keeping.
- Supervision is only postponed in exceptional circumstances. Any postponed session is reconvened at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the supervisor is absent long-term from work, alternative arrangements should be made by senior managers to secure the delivery of appropriate supervision.
- All supervisory relationships are subject to a written agreement to be drawn up within the first six weeks of the start of the relationship

Standard 3

Supervision is a planned and purposeful activity.

Criteria:

- Both supervisor and supervisee prepare for supervision by identifying issues to be addressed.
- An agenda is agreed at the start of each supervision meeting. Both supervisor and supervisee contribute to this.
- Decisions made at the previous supervision meeting are reviewed to ensure actions have been taken.
- It is the responsibility of the supervisee to contact the supervisor to make an appointment for a supervision session.
- Mandatory policies and processes are in place to ensure staff attend supervision.
- The supervisor reads a sample of the supervisee's children in need case records regularly in line with Trust policy.

Standard 4

All supervision sessions should be recorded in accordance with NMC guidelines contemporaneously and stored in a locked filing cabinet.

Criteria:

- All safeguarding supervision records relating to clients are recorded and placed on the client's file.
- Records relating to supervisees are recorded and held separately

Standard 5

Supervisors and supervisees are competent to carry out their role.

Criteria:

- Induction of all staff addresses the Trust's safeguarding children supervision policy and standards.
- Supervisors will attend a designated safeguarding children supervision course within 12 months of taking up their first supervisory post.

Standard 6

The supervisor ensures the continuing professional development of nursing staff to safeguard children and families.

Criteria:

- Supervisee's training and development needs are addressed
- Supervisee's are encouraged to initiate fresh ways of working in response to changing needs.
- Supervisee's are enabled to relate theory and research to practice.

- Supervisee's are enabled to reflect on their work and interaction with service users.
- Supervisee's are provided with feedback on performance.
- The Education Commissioning process is used to secure the provision of appropriate education and training in preparation of role as supervisor and supervisee.

Standard 7

The supervisor provides support for supervisees.

Criteria:

- Supervisees are supported to cope with the stresses that safeguarding children work entails.
- Supervisors offer advice on help available to cope with stress
- Supervisors create a safe climate for practitioners to examine their practice.
- Any management or competency issues will be discussed with line managers with the supervisee action plan being developed and reviewed

Standard 8

Supervision promotes a commitment to diversity and promotes human rights in all aspects of work

Criteria:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1999), Human Rights Act and Children Order Principles underpin the decision making process during Safeguarding Children Supervision
- All children receive an appropriate level of protection.
- All assessments, plans and interventions address the implications of the child's ethnicity
- The potential vulnerabilities of specific children e.g. disabled/ deaf are identified in so far as is possible, addressed by the service.
- Discrimination that children may experience is acknowledged and, in so far as this is possible, countered by service provision.
- There is effective communication with all children (this to include e.g. children for whom English is a second language or who are disabled).
- Supervisors and supervisees must work positively with cultural practices and belief systems without compromising childcare concerns

Standard 9

Senior Managers assure the quality of supervision.

Criteria:

- There is an annual audit against these standards

Further Information

DHSSPS (2004) Clinical Supervision for Mental Health and Learning Disability Nurses in Northern Ireland: Best Practice Guidelines

DHSSPS/NIPEC (2008) Supervision Project, Learning and Development Strategy

DHSSPS (2006) Quality Standard for Health and Social Care

Morrison T (2000) Staff Supervision in Social Care Brighton Pavilion

NSPCC (2007) Supervision Skills in Child Protection

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2006) Clinical Advice Sheet Supervision

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2007) Guidance on Record Keeping

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2008) Code of Professional Conduct, Performance and Ethics, London NMC.

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (April 2006) Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competencies for Health Care Staff

DHSSPS (2008) Supervision Policy, Standards and Criteria, Regional Policy for Health & Social Care Trusts

Appendix A

Minimum Levels of Safeguarding Children Supervision for Nurses

Nursing Group	Individual	Group	Comments
Health Visitors, School Nurses & CCN's	4 monthly by SCNS	Yearly	Required for those school nurses and CCN's taking a lead nursing role in safeguarding cases
Health Visitor, School Nurse & CCN Managers		6 monthly by SCNS	
CAMHS and CPN's	Arranged with SCNS as and when the nurse is involved in a child protection case. Managers to provide safeguarding children supervision at managerial supervision sessions.	6 monthly by SCNS	A named SCNS is required to work specifically within mental health services.
CAMHS and CPN Managers	6 monthly by SCNS		
SCNS	Monthly by named nurse for child protection	4 monthly by named nurse	
Named Nurse for Child Protection	As and when required by Public Health Agency Nurse for Child Protection	4 monthly by Public Health Agency Nurse for Child Protection	Named Nurses may require supervision by senior staff from other nursing disciplines depending on issues arising.