



Dietitians Board

Te Mana Mātanga Mātai Kai

PRACTICE SUPERVISION POLICY

DEFINITION

PRACTICE SUPERVISION

The Dietitians Board definition of ‘Supervision’ comes from the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act). The HPCA Act provides the following definition of supervision:

“Supervision means the monitoring of, and reporting on, the performance of a health practitioner by a professional peer” (Part 1, S5(1)).

The HPCA Act also refers to certain practitioners *“practising subject to the supervision of one or more nominated health practitioners or health practitioners of a stated class” (Part 2, S22(3)(a)).*

POLICY

Since 2010, the Dietitians Board has required all entry-level practitioners to have practice supervision for a minimum of one year¹ to enable the consolidation of professional, management and dietetic skills and to establish on-going learning habits. This is the establishment phase for continuing competency and lifelong learning and is entered as a condition on the practitioner’s Annual Practising Certificate (APC).

Practice Supervision is workplace related and compulsory for the following practitioners:

- all newly trained dietitians in their first year of practice¹
- all overseas trained dietitians for their first year of practising in NZ¹

It may also be required for:

- dietitians returning to work in New Zealand after a break of 2 years or more
- dietitians changing their area of practice
- dietitians with identified competence deficits (or ‘Professional Supervision’ may be required).

Practice supervision is a supportive process for all entry level practitioners and is especially helpful for overseas trained dietitians to assist them in adjusting to working in New Zealand, and those returning to work after a length of time. One of the Dietitians Board’s roles is to ensure dietitians practise in a manner which ‘protects the health and safety of the public’.

THE SUPERVISION AGREEMENT AND PROCESS

Supervision is a formal relationship between the supervisory partners, which begins when the supervisee starts work. The Board must be informed of the supervisor’s name **before a practitioner begins practising dietetics** in New Zealand, ideally upon applying for an APC. A practitioner must arrange for their supervisor to sign-on through the **Dietitians login** on the Board website within a fortnight of commencing work, if not at the time of APC application. (For dietitians returning to work after a break of 2 years or more, sign-on must be completed and My CCP learning goals submitted to the Board, **prior** to an APC being issued.)

The supervisor must be an NZ Registered Dietitian with an APC, who does not require supervision. The supervisor should be an experienced dietitian with expertise in the supervisee’s area of work.

¹ See Supervision Agreement and Process for requirements where less than 16 hours per week are worked.

The supervisor should be someone who listens, inspires, challenges, and is a role model and who supports growth and development of the individual. She/he may provide oversight of dietetic, management and communication issues, skill/technique, decision making and problem solving.

Supervision is an agreement between the supervisee and supervisor wherein the dietitian can reflect upon practice with a view to consolidating competence and identifying areas for development, through the feedback and guidance of the supervisor. Supervision is seen as a way to check professional competencies are being met to ensure the health and safety of the public. Supervision can also be the establishment phase of continuing competency and lifelong learning.

The interaction between supervisor and supervisee may vary; it could be daily or weekly, and could be oral or written. **The Board requires at least fortnightly supervision for the first 6 months of the supervisory period for full time work or part time work of 16 hours or more per week.** Following that, one hour of formal supervision per month may suffice, especially for those with previous dietetic work experience. **Where a practitioner works less than 16 hours per week,** the Board requires supervision be undertaken for a total of 2 years with supervision at least once per month in the first year.

If you are employed \geq 16 hours per week		If you are employed \leq 16 hours per week	
1 year supervision required		2 years supervision required	
1 st 6 months	Minimum 12 sessions (at least fortnightly meetings)	1 st year	Minimum 12 sessions (at least monthly meetings)
2 nd 6 months	Minimum 6 sessions (at least monthly meetings)	2 nd year	Minimum 6 sessions (at least bi-monthly meetings)

*A suggested guideline is that **new graduates** have one hour of formal practice supervision each week to begin with (as well as informal supervision as and when needed). This should be reviewed regularly and may be changed to one hour of formal supervision fortnightly. Regular review of the development and supervisory requirements of the supervisee will assist in setting a realistic and useful meeting schedule.*

At the time of APC renewal, all practitioners who have a supervision condition are must ask their supervisor to complete the 'approve APC' form on the supervisor's 'my supervisees' section of the Board website. The form will ask the supervisor to confirm that their supervisee has:

- met the supervision requirements to date,
- that they have reviewed the supervisee's My CCP learning goals and activities (checking appropriateness for level of experience and learning goals achievement), and
- that there are no outstanding concerns regarding the supervisee's APC renewal.

At the completion of the Board's stated practice supervision time period, the supervisor must complete the final evaluation and submit it to the Board via the 'supervisor sign-off' function on the 'My supervisees' section of the Board website. This is a useful form for the practitioner to reflect on their development going forward. Following formal supervision, all dietitians are encouraged to have ongoing practice and professional reviews (see Continuing Competency Programme - practice review).

THE ROLE OF THE PRACTICE SUPERVISOR

The role of a supervisor in this situation is particularly important and should therefore involve:

- formal observations,
- practice/peer review components,
- and informal supervision.

This will allow for more formal evaluation of competencies and more valuable feedback to be provided.

Supervision provides a confidential forum:

- to help develop the supervisee's 'learning objectives/professional goals'
- to identify where assistance is required (e.g. entry level competencies, compliance with NZ legislation, cultural competence and specific practice areas)
- to provide support and constructive feedback that helps the individual move forward professionally and learn how to prioritise workloads
- to empower the supervisee
- to enhance professional development and competencies
- to assess and provide feedback to the Dietitians Board on professional competencies and the learning goals achieved/not achieved by the supervisee.

RECORD KEEPING (Supervisee responsibilities)

- **Supervision Agreement** At the outset of your period of supervision, you and your practice supervisor must sign on through the dietitians' portal. At the end of the supervision period (or when a supervisor is changed for any reason) you must arrange for your supervision to be signed off via the portal. In each case, an electronic form will be available to your supervisor and visible to you once completed. The Board is notified automatically of sign-on and sign-off activity when the on-line forms are completed.
- **My CCP learning goals** developed in consultation with your supervisor to meet your specific needs. Use the 'Statement of Registration Competencies Requirements' (on website) as a basis for writing learning goals.
- **Attendance record** of supervision is to be maintained (signed and dated).
- **Written records** of issues, patients discussed, action to be taken and by whom, is to be recorded (each person will retain a copy).
- **Evaluation**, the supervisor will write and submit to the Board: 1) a brief interim evaluation at the time of APC renewal and 2) a brief final evaluation at the end of the supervision period. Both these reports are made via the 'my supervisees' sections of the portal.
- **Continuing Competency Programme records**

NB: Any information will be treated as confidential material and will stay within the supervisory and Dietitians Board relationship.

TASK CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPERVISEE AND SUPERVISOR

Supervisee:

- preparing for supervision
- identifying practice issues where help is needed and bringing them to supervision for reflection
- being open to others' feedback
- sharing responsibility for ensuring that regular supervision occurs
- ensuring that the objectives are met
- contributing to a mutually respectful supervision relationship
- completing written documentation required and providing copies to your supervisor and the Board (see section on Record Keeping)
- where conflict arises, follow the process outlined on the next page

Supervisor:

- preparing for supervision
- helping supervisee explore and clarify thinking & feelings that underlie practice
- sharing information, experience and skills appropriately
- giving clear feedback and constructive criticism
- challenging practice
- guiding, rather than leading development
- assisting the supervisee to develop his/her role
- modelling good professional behaviour and boundaries
- sharing responsibility for ensuring that regular supervision occurs
- ensuring that the objectives of supervision are met
- contributing to a mutually respectful supervision relationship
- ensuring written documentation is being kept
- emailing interim evaluation at the time of APC renewal to the Board
- completing final evaluation (Section 2 of Supervision Agreement) and sending it to the Board at the completion of the stated Board time requirements
- ensuring My CCP has been established and the CCP criteria and requirements are being met
- where conflict arises, take responsibility for following process outlined in Appendix 2 and ensure the Board is notified in a timely manner.

NB: Supervision can also be used within the supervisor's own Continuing Competency Programme, as it provides an opportunity to reflect on practice issues and learn from the experience.

Please note – supervision is a confidential process with the following exceptions:

- When both parties agree that an issue can be shared outside of supervision
- When there is a serious concern regarding the supervisee's practice (for example breaching code of ethics, harm to self or patients).

DISCLAIMER

Please note that the supervisor is not legally responsible for the malpractice of an employee.

Adapted from Supervision Policy for Allied Health Professionals (Clinical Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Social Work, Speech Language Therapy) - Capital & Coast DHB)

APPENDIX 1: TYPES OF SUPERVISION

Practice supervision

Practice supervision is compulsory for the following practitioners:

- All newly trained dietitians in their first year of practice²
- All overseas trained dietitians for their first year of practising in NZ²
- Dietitians returning to work after a break of 3 years or more
- Dietitians changing their area of practice (may be required)
- Dietitians with identified competence deficits (or 'Professional Supervision' may be required)

Needs to be dietitian with APC, and not a new graduate themselves

See NZ Dietitian's Board Practice Supervision Policy

Prescribing supervision

- All prescribing dietitians must have a prescribing supervisor
- Must be a dietitian with prescribing rights and at least 3 years' experience working in NZ
- See NZ Dietitian's Board Prescribing Policy

Professional supervision

- Can be anyone i.e.; can be another professional if relevant. Recommended to have done supervisor training.
- Optional, but recommended for all dietitians

APPENDIX 2: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The objective is to find a mutually acceptable resolution where conflict arises between supervisor and supervisee. Every effort should be made to work through the contentious issues.

Either the supervisor or supervisee needs to alert the other if expectations are not being met, clearly and as early as possible.

The supervisor should set up a specific meeting to discuss the issues where expectations are not being met:

- Supervisor to provide written feedback to supervisee for their appraisal within 5 working days of the meeting and requesting a response within 5 working days.
- Written comment back to the supervisor must be received within the next 5 working days.
- If resolution is possible, the supervisor should continue working with the supervisee and advise workplace manager of the issue and its resolution.

If resolution cannot be achieved, the following steps should be taken:

- Supervisor to discuss with workplace manager the outcome of the meeting with supervisee.
- Workplace policy should be followed. Mediation may be possible, using a professional leader or advisor, cultural supervisor, team leader or a workplace manager.
- Supervisor to advise the Registrar of the Dietitians Board in writing within 1 month of the initial conflict resolution meeting. Outline the issue, the outcome of the meeting and response of the supervisee. Copies of the correspondence should be included.
- Dietitians Board to work with the complainant as applicable (either supervisor or supervisee) to find a resolution, which may include finding alternative supervision.

² See Supervision Agreement and Process for requirements where less than 16 hours per week are worked.