



Christian Counsellors Association of Australia

## **Christian Counsellors Association of Australia**

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### **Supervision Update to members - November 2011**

Supervision is a formal, collaborative process between a supervisor and supervisee, which monitors, develops and supports supervisees in their clinical role as well as fulfilling an essential component of Counselling and Psychotherapy training programs. The supervisor is generally seen to have more experience than the supervisee with regard to professional seniority and skill development, possibly within a particular speciality. Supervision is a learned discipline separate from counselling. As such, it is a mandatory requirement of most professional organisations and must be seen as a vital part of professional process and emerging best practice standards.

#### **Why establish standards for supervisors?**

It is recognised that supervisors employ a different set of skills to clinical counselling skills when supervising, and that these skills need to be acquired. There are now a number of courses available to those training to become supervisors within the counselling profession. PACFA has established minimum standards for supervisors as a step towards ensuring that counsellors are receiving supervision which reflects best practice, and that supervisors are maintaining currency in both supervisory and clinical practices. Regulation of supervisors may be a future step in the development of the counselling profession. Supervision has many different elements, and may include:

- Ongoing training in therapeutic techniques, micro skills and counselling interventions.
- Reflective space to help the supervisee learn about their own thoughts and feelings, and the effect of self on clients.
- Case management, including assessment and development of treatment plans.
- Evaluation of counsellor practice.
- Attention to legal and ethical issues regarding counsellor practice.
- Monitoring counsellor wellbeing, providing supportive and preventative measures to guard against burnout or impairment.

#### **Supervisor Credentials**

It is the task of CCAA to maintain the required training standards for membership as Supervisors with CCAA, as set by PACFA standards. Supervision presumes a level of competence beyond standard counselling process. For accreditation, supervisors will be eligible for approval once clinical membership has been achieved for a period of 5 years with clinical experience. As from January 2012, the new PACFA Supervision guidelines take effect. Two important aspects of this process follow, as regards:

- New Training Standards For supervisors
- Transitional Accreditation Pathway

## **1. New Training Standards For supervisors**

Supervision is an important part of counsellor training, one of its focuses being the development of clinical competence and ethical practice in counsellors. It is incumbent upon supervisors, even more so than counsellors, to remain conversant and up to date with relevant research and best practice. As you are aware, PACFA, as a peak body in Counselling and Psychotherapy has, through consensus with all Member Associations, agreed to minimum generic standards for training in supervision. These standards take into account the breadth and depth of approaches to supervision within all PACFA Member Associations. The current changes are seen by PACFA to be relevant in the area of supervision in that they are replacing specific content areas with competencies which they believe allow for greater flexibility and interpretation in the delivery of supervision training.

As of January 2012, a Supervisor is a practitioner with a minimum of 5 years clinical experience and who has supervision competencies which satisfy the requirements of the PACFA Supervision Training Standards. This becomes a period of transition to ensure that CCAA professional standards and practice are in line with the new PACFA Supervision standards.

Theoretical Components for Supervisor Training effective January 2012:

Supervisor graduates must have attended 39 hours of person-to-person teaching in supervision theory and practice. This class-based teaching should involve methods such as lectures, (live or audiovisual), written notes, set readings, seminars, group discussions, role-plays and experiential methods such as practice dyads. Since supervision is a practical skill, theoretical components must be taught in ways which relate to practice situations.

Supervisor graduates must:

- be able to situate their supervision theory and practice modality within the broader field of psychotherapy, counselling and supervision models and will have deepened their understanding of relevant psychological theories.
- have completed a course that includes competencies in terms of skills, knowledge and values with reference to PACFA's current standards and codes of ethics. Integral to the development of these competencies are the trainee supervisor's capacities for self-awareness and self-assessment.

We realise that undertaking supervision training can be an expensive and time consuming activity, and we want CCAA members to have confidence that our Association is currently considering ways of providing affordable and PACFA approved Supervision training commencing early in 2012.

## **2. PACFA Transition Accreditation Pathway (until January 2017)**

Entry level: A minimum total of 5 years clinical experience as a Clinical Member of CCAA.

See the PACFA transition pathway listed below:

- Evidence to show 50 hours over a minimum of 2 years of practice as a supervisor
- Evidence of a minimum of 10 hours of supervision on supervision
- Evidence of a minimum of 20 hours training or professional development in supervision

The new supervisor requirements of 5 years clinical experience as a clinical member come into effect in January 2012. This current change is seen by PACFA as a **5 year** process of transition to allow member associations such as CCAA to bring their training standards into line with the new requirements. All current supervisors will be offered opportunity to upgrade their skills.

This is obviously a period of training and stretching to ensure CCAA professional standards and practise are in line with the PACFA standards . CCAA is currently working closely with PACFA in developing training requirements that will allow current counsellors to upgrade their skills. At this stage current supervisor need to be mindful to ensure that they are keeping records according to this transition pathway

I trust that this information is of assistance to you.

If you require further information or wish to discuss any aspect of the changes to Supervision and Supervision Training please direct your questions via email to your local State CCAA Offices. Their email addresses are:

**NSW** - email: [nsw@ccaa.net.au](mailto:nsw@ccaa.net.au)

**QLD** - email: [gld@ccaa.net.au](mailto:gld@ccaa.net.au)

**VIC** - email: [vic@ccaa.net.au](mailto:vic@ccaa.net.au)

**SA** - email: [sa@ccaa.net.au](mailto:sa@ccaa.net.au)

**TAS** - email: [tas@ccaa.net.au](mailto:tas@ccaa.net.au)

**WA** - email: [wa@ccaa.net.au](mailto:wa@ccaa.net.au)

Sincerely,

**Lyndy Burt**

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CCAA Supervision Chair