Supervision, Appraisal and Spot Checks Policy

Supportive Bridge Ltd | Community Support and Healthcare Staffing | Bradford, England

POLICY AT A GLANCE

- **Supervision is a right, not a favour.** Every worker has formal one-to-one supervision at least **six times a year**, and new workers monthly for their first six months.
- **An appraisal once a year** for everyone, looking back at the year and forward to the next.
- **Two unannounced spot checks a year** for every worker, and one within the first month for new starters.
- **Supervision is protected time.** It is planned, private, uninterrupted, and does not get cancelled because the office is busy.
- **It is a two-way conversation,** not a telling-off. Workers bring their own agenda items, and concerns about the service are welcome.
- **Everything is recorded and signed** by both people, with actions, owners and dates.
- **Lone workers need this more, not less.** Supervision is often the only time a worker's practice is discussed at all.

SERVICE DETAILS (fill in before issuing)

Registered Manager	
Nominated Individual	
Office phone	
Date issued	
Next review date	

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 This policy explains how Supportive Bridge Ltd ("Supportive Bridge", "we", "us") supervises, supports and appraises the people who work for us, and how we check what actually happens in people's homes.

1.2 It reflects Regulation 18 (Staffing) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, which requires that people employed receive appropriate support, training, professional development, supervision and appraisal to enable them to carry out their duties.

1.3 Our workers spend nearly all their time alone. Without supervision and spot checks, a manager has almost no idea how someone actually works, what they are struggling with, or what they are seeing. These are not administrative tasks; they are the main way we know our service is safe.

2. SCOPE

2.1 Supportive Bridge Ltd operates two arms, and this policy applies to both: our **healthcare staffing service**, supplying care and support workers to care homes, hospitals and other providers; and our **community support service**, where our own support workers visit adults and older people in their own homes, including council housing, on morning and evening shifts, to support them with daily living.

2.2 Supportive Bridge does **not** provide personal care. Personal care is a regulated activity under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and we will provide it only if and when we are registered with the Care Quality Commission. Our support workers provide non-personal support such as companionship, meal preparation, shopping, domestic help, prompting, and support to get out and about. This policy is written to meet both local authority provider assurance requirements and the standards we will be assessed against at CQC registration.

2.3 This policy applies to everyone who works for us, including support workers, workers supplied to clients, bank and zero-hours workers, office staff, coordinators and managers. The Registered Manager receives supervision from the Nominated Individual.

2.4 Workers supplied to a client organisation are supervised by us. Where the client also gives feedback on their performance, we take it into account.

3. THE FOUR PURPOSES OF SUPERVISION

Purpose	What it covers
Management	Is the work being done to the standard we expect? Punctuality, records, following support plans, training compliance, conduct.
Development	What does this worker need to learn? Training, competency, career progression, feedback on practice.
Support	How is this worker coping? Wellbeing, workload, difficult situations, bereavement, stress, and anything affecting their work.
Mediation	Connecting the worker with the organisation: explaining changes, hearing concerns about the service, and passing them up.

3.1 A supervision that only covers the first of these is not supervision, it is a performance check. All four matter.

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4. FREQUENCY

Who / what	How often
Formal one-to-one supervision, all workers	At least 6 times a year (roughly every 8 weeks)
New workers, first 6 months	Monthly
Workers on a performance or development plan	Monthly, or more often as agreed
Appraisal	Once a year, for everyone
Unannounced spot check	At least twice a year per worker
Spot check for a new worker	Within the first month
Direct observation of a specific task or specialist guideline	As set by the support plan; at least yearly
Team meetings	At least every 3 months
Registered Manager's own supervision	At least 6 times a year, by the Nominated Individual

4.1 These are minimums. Supervision may be more frequent where a worker is new, returning from absence, struggling, supporting someone with complex needs, or has been involved in an incident.

4.2 Supervision must not be cancelled because the office is busy. If it has to be moved, it is re-booked immediately, and the reason is recorded.

5. HOW SUPERVISION WORKS

- supervision is planned in advance, with a date and time both people know;
- it happens somewhere private and uninterrupted, in the office or by video call, not in a car park or in a person's home;
- phones are put away, and the session is not cut short;
- the worker is invited to bring their own items, and these are covered first;
- the supervisor prepares: reading the last record, checking training, spot checks, incidents, complaints and compliments relating to that worker;
- the discussion is honest in both directions. Praise is specific, and concerns are raised clearly, with examples, not hinted at;
- actions are agreed with owners and dates, and the previous actions are reviewed at the start;
- the record is written up, signed by both, and a copy given to the worker.

A standard agenda

- the worker's items;
- how they are: wellbeing, workload, anything difficult;
- review of actions from last time;
- the people they support: any changes, concerns or good practice;
- records: quality of daily notes and MAR charts, from the audits;
- punctuality, attendance and any missed or late shifts;
- training due or overdue, and competency;

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- spot check findings and feedback from people we support;
- safeguarding, incidents or complaints involving them;
- professional boundaries: anything awkward or uncomfortable;
- anything they want to raise about the service, including concerns about others;
- development and what they want next;
- actions and date of next supervision.

5.1 Supervision is confidential in the sense that it is not discussed casually, but it is not secret. Safeguarding concerns, risks to people, and matters that must be acted on will always be taken forward, and the worker is told that.

6. GROUP AND REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

6.1 Formal one-to-one supervision may be supplemented, but never replaced, by team meetings, group reflective sessions after a difficult event, and informal support by phone. Team meetings are held at least quarterly and minuted, and are used for learning from incidents and complaints, policy changes and practice discussion.

6.2 After a serious incident, a death, an allegation or an assault, a debrief is offered promptly to everyone involved, separately from any investigation.

7. SPOT CHECKS

7.1 A spot check is an unannounced visit to observe a worker supporting a person in their home. It is the only way we see the real thing.

- the person we support is asked at assessment whether they consent to spot checks, and this is recorded in their support plan and reviewed;
- checks are genuinely unannounced to the worker, and spread across different times, including early morning and evening shifts;
- the supervisor observes rather than takes over, and steps in only if something is unsafe;
- the person's views are asked for afterwards, in private where possible;
- findings are discussed with the worker at the time, in private, and recorded on the spot check form;
- good practice is recorded as well as concerns, and workers are told when they have done well;
- the record goes on the personnel file and is followed up in supervision.

What a spot check looks at

- arrival on time, log-in, ID shown, waiting to be invited in;
- consent asked, and the person given choices;
- respect, communication and pace, and whether the worker talks with the person or only at them;
- whether the support plan is being followed, and whether it still fits;
- hand hygiene, PPE and infection control;
- medicines support within scope, and the MAR chart;
- money handling and records where relevant;
- safety: moving and handling, the environment, anything hazardous;
- record keeping: notes written at the visit, factual and respectful;

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- how the person responds to the worker, and what they say afterwards.

7.2 Where a spot check finds poor practice, the supervisor acts at the time if the person is at risk, records it, and arranges retraining, closer supervision or, where conduct is the issue, action under our Disciplinary Policy. A re-check is booked.

8. APPRAISAL

8.1 Every worker has an annual appraisal with the Registered Manager or a senior colleague. It looks back over the year and forward to the next, and is separate from supervision, not a longer version of it.

8.2 The appraisal covers: achievements and contribution over the year; feedback from people we support, families and colleagues; attendance, punctuality and reliability; training completed and competency; areas to develop; the worker's own goals and what they want from the coming year; and any support or adjustments they need.

8.3 Objectives for the coming year are agreed, written down, and reviewed in supervision through the year. The appraisal record is signed by both and kept on the personnel file. Where a worker disagrees with anything, they may add their own comments to the record.

8.4 Pay is discussed separately from appraisal, so that the conversation about development stays open.

9. WHEN PERFORMANCE IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

9.1 Concerns are raised early and honestly, in supervision, with specific examples, and the worker is given a genuine chance to improve.

- the concern is explained clearly, with what good looks like;
- support is offered: retraining, shadowing, mentoring, a change of allocation, or adjustments for a health condition;
- an informal improvement plan is agreed, with what must change, by when, and how it will be measured;
- progress is reviewed at agreed intervals;
- where there is no improvement, or where the matter is serious, it moves to the formal procedure in our Disciplinary Policy.

9.2 Nothing at a disciplinary hearing should be a surprise. If a worker first hears about a problem when they are invited to a meeting, we have managed it badly.

9.3 Where poor performance is caused by something we control, such as unrealistic rotas, poor plans or missing training, we fix that first.

10. WELLBEING

10.1 Supervision is where we notice that someone is struggling. Supervisors ask openly about wellbeing, workload and anything outside work affecting them, and respond supportively.

10.2 Where a worker is affected by a death, an assault, a safeguarding case or personal difficulty, we offer time, adjustments and signposting to further support. We take account of workload, travel and shift patterns when planning rotas, and act on what supervision tells us about pressure across the team.

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11. RECORDS

11.1 Supervision, appraisal and spot check records are kept on the personnel file, securely, and retained for six years after employment ends. They are treated as confidential and handled in line with our Data Protection Policy.

11.2 The Registered Manager keeps a tracker showing when each worker's last supervision, appraisal and spot checks took place, and when the next are due. Compliance is reported monthly.

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Nominated Individual	Supervises the Registered Manager, checks supervision and spot check compliance at least quarterly, and makes sure there is enough management time to do this properly.
Registered Manager	Makes sure every worker receives supervision, appraisal and spot checks on time, carries out many of them personally, and acts on what they reveal.
Field Supervisor / Care Coordinator	Carries out supervisions and spot checks as allocated, records them properly, and escalates concerns.
All workers	Attend supervision and appraisal, prepare, be honest, raise concerns, and act on agreed actions.

13. MONITORING AND REVIEW

13.1 Supervision, appraisal and spot check compliance is reported in the monthly quality report and reviewed at the quarterly governance meeting. Below-target compliance is treated as a governance failure, not an administrative one.

13.2 This policy is reviewed every year, or sooner if guidance changes or monitoring shows it is not working.

14. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, especially Regulation 18 (staffing), Regulation 19 and Regulation 17
- Care Act 2014
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (staff wellbeing and stress)
- Skills for Care: Effective supervision guide and Care Certificate standards
- Social Care Institute for Excellence guidance on supervision
- ACAS guidance on managing performance
- NICE guideline NG21: Home care

15. RELATED POLICIES AND FORMS

Related policies: Staff Training and Competency; Safer Recruitment, Selection and DBS; Staff Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries; Disciplinary; Grievance; Safeguarding Adults; Whistleblowing; Governance and Quality Assurance; Lone Working; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Staff).

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Forms: Supervision Record (Appendix A); Spot Check Record (Appendix B); Appraisal Record; Supervision and Spot Check Tracker; Improvement Plan.

16. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Date	Approved by	Role	Reason
1.0			Nominated Individual	New policy for local authority assurance and CQC registration

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APPENDIX A: SUPERVISION RECORD

Both people sign. The worker gets a copy. Actions are reviewed at the start of the next session.

Worker: _____ Supervisor: _____ Date: _____ Last supervision: _____

The worker's items (covered first)	
How are you? Wellbeing, workload, anything difficult	
Review of actions from last time	
People you support: changes, concerns, good practice	
Records: daily notes, MAR charts, audit findings	
Punctuality, attendance, missed or late shifts	
Training due or overdue; competency	
Spot check findings and feedback from people we support	
Incidents, complaints or safeguarding involving you	
Professional boundaries: anything awkward?	
Anything you want to raise about the service	
Development and what you want next	

Action agreed	Who	By when

Signed (worker): _____ Signed (supervisor): _____ Next supervision date: _____

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APPENDIX B: SPOT CHECK RECORD

Unannounced. Check the person has consented to spot checks. Observe; do not take over. Feed back at the time.

Worker: _____ Person supported: _____ Date and time: _____ Observed by: _____

Observed	Yes / No / N/A	Comments
Arrived on time and logged in		
Knocked, announced themselves, showed ID, waited to be invited in		
Greeted the person by their preferred name		
Explained what they were doing and asked consent		
Offered choices; went at the person's pace		
Followed the support plan; plan still fits the person		
Communication respectful; talked with, not at, the person		
Hand hygiene and PPE correct		
Medicines support within scope; MAR chart completed correctly		
Money handled and recorded correctly (if applicable)		
Safe working: environment, moving and handling, equipment		
Records written at the visit; factual and respectful		
Drink and anything needed left within reach before leaving		
Logged out; left the home secure		

What the person said about the worker and their support: _____

Good practice noted: _____ Concerns and action: _____

Feedback given at the time: Yes / No Signed (observer): _____ Signed (worker): _____
Re-check due: _____

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