The Evaluation of Professional Supervision: an Interprofessional Perspective.

TE AO MARAMATANGA NZ COLLEGE OF MENTAL HEALTH NURSES CONFERENCE, 15 - 17 JULY 2015 AT TE PAPA, WELLINGTON

1. Michael

Interdisciplinary Research Team Introductions:

Michael O'Connell

Clinical Nurse Director - Mental Health & Addiction Service Lakes District Health Board

Janet May

Senior Lecturer, Counselling and Supervision, Waikato Institute of Technology

Allyson Davys

Registered Social Worker, Private Consultancy.

Beverley Burns

Registered Psychologist, Private Consultancy.

2. Michael

Provide an overview of presentation - present findings from Stage 1 of our research and then keen to hear your thoughts so will workshop at the end three questions.

Some definition of prof sup and our reasoning to use the term prof. sup.

3. This whakatauki is used by a number of commentators to describe and reflect the essence of professional supervision. It describes a collaborative approach within a supportive relationship, to address issues within a supervisee's nursing practice and professional role so that they and the service user and service benefit and hence the "basket is full". McKenna et al 2008

The background to our Aotearoa study

- The growth of professional supervision within the health and social services in Aotearoa has been well documented (Maidment & Beddoe, 2012; May & Stanfield, 2010).

- The evaluation of professional supervision has been promoted as best practice yet how this is translated into practice remains unclear and there have been repeated calls for further research into the place, role and process of evaluation in supervision (O'Donoghue, 2006; Beddoe, 2010).

4. Bev

Our starting point meeting over a coffee over a two year period with a shared interest in prof. supervision. Supportive of each other and had evolving discussions about research and what ifs.

We were all involved in writing about, providing and teaching about prof. sup.

We agreed that the practice of sup had been happening for many years, across numerous professions, that many practitioners believe sup is essential to good practice and that much time and resources are invested into the provision of sup. as an important part of safe and competent practice. We recognised that there criticism of

Our starting point.....

- Best practice guidelines recommend evaluation of the supervision relationship and process at least informally and annually
- e.g.: Te Pou (2011) Professional Supervision Guidelines

- Increasing interest in paper and pencil tests which typically measure satisfaction within supervision
  O'Donovan & Kavanagh (2014)

5. Bev

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We agreed that the practice of sup had been happening for many years, across numerous professions, that many practitioners believe sup is essential to good practice and that much time and resources are invested into the provision of sup. as an important part of safe and competent practice. Yet evaluation of prof sup did not seem to us to be well developed or imbedded into the practice of sup. Added to this much of the research is with trainees and students.

Despite this best practice guidelines such as those published by Te Pou recommending supervision is evaluated. These guidelines often describe informal and ad hoc method and proces sto do this.

We had also noted that there In increasing interest in paper and pencil instruments in evaluating supervision. These are usually completed by the supervisee and supervisor and are typically measures of satisfaction with the

supervisory relationship, for example the Manchester Clinical Scale of Supervision. In NZ we had heard of and worked with practitioners using such tools as Supervision Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ). The Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) and we had attended David Green's presentation which included a discussion of the Leeds Alliance Scale of Supervision (Wainwright, 2010). This is a simple visual analogue scale to be used at the conclusion of each session measuring the supervisee's opinion in terms of the approach of the supervisor (whether focused or not), the relationship with the supervisor (whether they understood each other or not) and whether the supervision met the supervisees needs (was it helpful or not). Such a tool allows for useful discussion and may add depth to the actual work of supervision. And one does not have to go far in the literature to find an unexpectedly large number of measurement tools often developed for the specific research context.

These factors were happening against a backdrop of increasing need to ensure the accountability of practice yet sup seems to have avoided the outcome evaluation measures that our professions are engaged in.

Notes for Bev

This tool is comparable to the session rating scale (Miller, Duncan, Sorrell & Brown, 2005) a brief user-friendly measure that demonstrates good reliability and validity, and it is designed to reflect the constructs measured in existing alliance measures (see Wainwright (2010) for a full discussion). Although it is too early for any tests of its utility to have been carried out the authors maintain that it is "easy to incorporate into regular supervision and is at least useful tool" (Green & Latchford, 2012: 184)

. O'Donovan and Kavanagh (2014) offer a full description of, a discussion of usefulness, and construction of these instruments and note the limitations of these instruments, as many have been developed for use with trainees and their supervisors and with clinical psychologists.

6. Bev

On the other hand others in the literature such as Michael Carroll suggesting the acid test of effective sup is the impact on client outcome. Many commentators and researchers will agree with this.

Carroll goes on to ask what have you learned from the past hour in sup with me? What shifts have taken place in the supervision room that have been transferred to your work? Great and powerful questions Carroll is discussing transformational learning – changes in action and behaviour. Both of which are critical to evaluating the effectiveness of sup and on the face of it seems to be a reasonable way of evaluating sup. Here the evaluation is 1 to 1 reliant on self report involves only the supervisor and supervisee and relates specifically to the learning of the supervisee in the session. Important part of the process of evaluating sup but is that all there is to it. Again this is both ad hoc and informal – we were asking is this enough and what else needs to be considered? And are we actually asking about impact on client outcome or the supervisee's perception of this?

7. Bev

Perhaps evaluation is not as simple as it seems. Our review of the literature suggests

There is confusion in the literature between feedback and evaluation. At a simple level feedback is providing information on performance hoping that change follows and evaluation is a systemic approach to assessing the merit or worth or significance of some aspect of a process against a set of criteria. The focus here is on gaining insight into a process to enable reflection and assist with identifying future change. Further work is needed about what is it that wea re focusing on a means of giving feedback or a means by which we are evaluating sup.

There are many more questions than answers in evaluating sup. Is it clear what needs to be evaluated? Is it the supervisory process and relationship; or is it changes in the supervisee's behaviour, and skills; or is it a measure of change in the client's behaviour? Is it an evaluation of the supervisor's competencies or the supervisee's attitude and use of supervision? Is it a self-assessment, is it at every session or three monthly or annually or should we using a more formal measure? Measures are suggested but usually in relation to a specific research task. Interestingly Wheeler and Barkham (2014) have evaluated many of these measures and have suggested five possible measures that they recommend to be

used routinely in sup. Research so that a broad cumulative evidence base for the effectiveness of sup can be built. These measures focus on the supervisory alliance, therapist professional development, the identification of supervisory issues and helpful aspects of supervision.

Ethical and professional questions which need answering include: What is the purpose of the evaluation, who has access to the results and how will the material be used as well as what constitutes sufficient or good enough evaluation? Should prof. sup be evaluated? How what and when and what happens in reality and what is relevant o experienced practitioners.

Despite the complexities there is a growing consensus in the international literature that the ...

"Evaluation (of supervision) has advanced from nuisance to necessity and is being implemented within supervision, across individuals and within systems"

Watkins & Milne (2014 p.661)

8. Bev

Milne and Watkins in their very useful Handbook published last year comment that "evaluation (of supervision) has advanced from nuisance to necessity. They present evidence that evaluation of supervision is now being implemented within clinical supervision, across individuals (supervisors and supervisees) and within systems (hospitals and training contexts)."

This conclusion surprised us and did not reflect our experience hence this study.. Our view is that evaluation continues to be underdeveloped and not well understood we needed to find out what was the experience of evaluation of supervision in NZ for experienced practitioners.
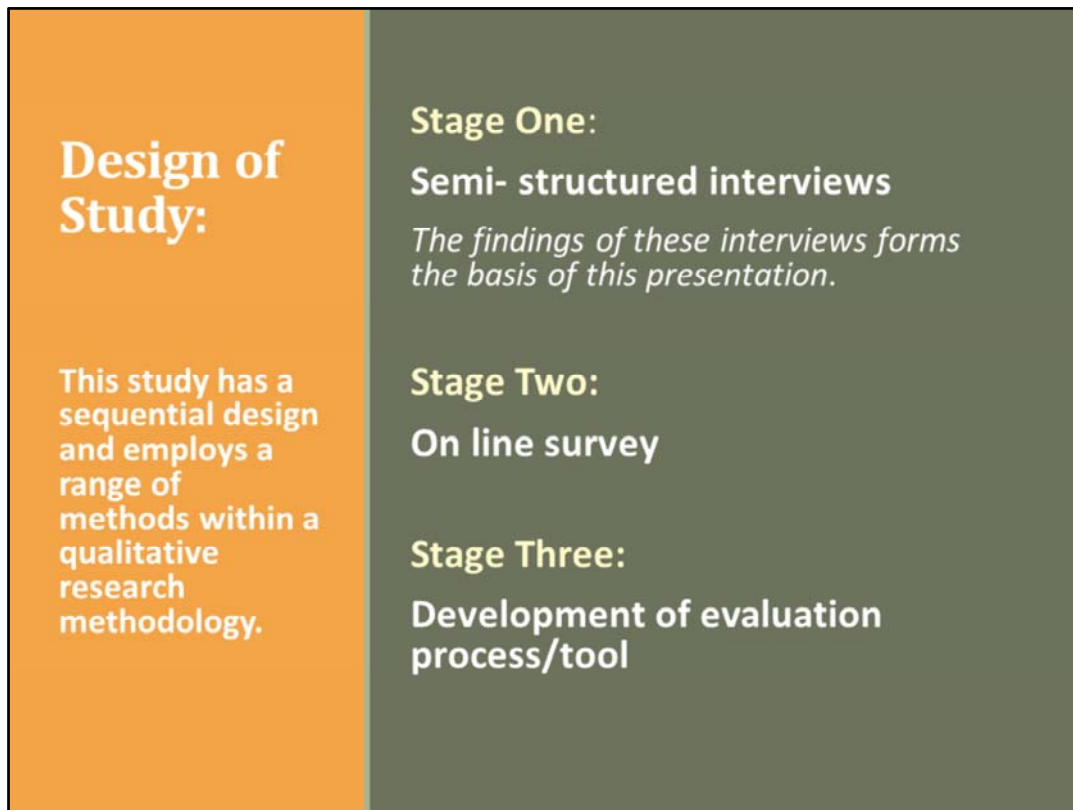
The research purpose:

To explore and document the current status of evaluation and identifying issues, concerns and/or gaps and make appropriate recommendation about supervision evaluation in the Aotearoa/New Zealand

Four aims:

I. To map and document the current practice

II. To ascertain interest to evaluating supervision.

III. To explore the need for a formal supervision evaluation tool

IV. To explore a theoretical framework for constructing such a tool

Wintec Ethics Approval for Study

9. Janet

Design of Study:

This study has a sequential design and employs a range of methods within a qualitative research methodology.

Stage One:

Semi- structured interviews

The findings of these interviews forms the basis of this presentation.

Stage Two:

On line survey

Stage Three:

Development of evaluation process/tool

10. Janet

were conducted with 2 supervisors, 2 supervisees and 2 managers from each of the four professions – a total of 24 interviews.

Stage Two:

The interviews from stage 1 shaped the development of an online survey which was made available to practitioners, through professional networks, in July 2015.

Stage Three:

Subject to the responses from stage 2, a third stage will involve the exploration of a theoretical framework for constructing such an evaluation tool.

Stage One:

Aims

• To explore - map and document the current practice in terms of how supervision is valued and evaluated.

• To ascertain what the parties to supervision (supervisor, supervisee and funding organisation) consider of interest to evaluate.

24 Semi- structured interviews were conducted across mental health nursing, social work, psychology and counselling:

2 supervisors, 2 supervisees and 2 managers from each of the four professions.

Findings from this stage are presented here.

11. Janet

Participants

Demographics and Characteristics

- Age range: 30's – 70's
- Gender: 4 males 20 females
- Ethnicity Identified: 8 Maori & 16 Tauiwi
- All had a tertiary qualification
- Training in supervision:
  ranged from non assessed short courses in supervision to postgraduate qualifications in supervision.
- All had been receiving supervision for a number of years and had experience of at least two supervision relationships.
- Of those currently providing supervision this range from several years to over 30 years.

12. Janet

Interview questions:

What is their current practice of evaluation in supervision?

(e.g.: role of evaluation; policies and/or rationale for evaluating; information gathered; analysis and distribution of the information)

What would they consider to be an ideal or future for the evaluation of supervision?

(e.g.: would they do differently, consider as ideal practice in evaluation and if a recognised evaluation process/tool would be of value)

13. Bev

Research Findings

Current Practice of Evaluation of Supervision

1. Most of those interviewed did not employ a formal evaluation process.
2. A number had no process of evaluation.
3. The frequency of evaluation ranged from every supervision session, 3 monthly and annually.
4. Individuals used informal and ad hoc approaches to evaluation.
5. Often participants were using own subjective measures rather than based on a formally established approach to evaluation.
6. 1 or 2 used recognized supervision evaluation measures.
7. No overarching culture of evaluating supervision, all were aware of a supervision policy in their organizations but the policy not inclusive of evaluation.
8. No standardized organizational process for evaluating supervision existed.

14. Michael

Many interviewees commented that they had not considered the evaluation of

supervision prior to this interview…

Evaluation versus feedback appeared to be viewed as the same with many interviewees.

The frequency of any form of evaluation ranged from after every session to yearly with the following differences noted:

Occurred at yearly appraisal

No opportunity

Several RNs used a tool

Several interviewees never thought of it.

Research Findings

Ideal Process in the Evaluation of Professional Supervision

Mixed response:

1. Overall preference for a formal process/tool.
2. Evaluation should attend to process as much as it attends to content
3. Evaluation needs to have an impact
4. Yet others were satisfied with their current process
5. And others were suspicious of implementing an evaluation process

15. Michael

Consistent message about preference for a formal process/tool such as a questionnaire *that captured a predetermined areas within professional supervision.*

Our preliminary reflections on findings....

1. There were marked similarities between the four disciplines with regards to the evaluation of   professional supervision

2. The results indicate a range of practice from formal evaluation to no evaluation at all.   Most engage in adhoc and or informal evaluation processes.

3. There appears to be no universal understanding of evaluation of supervision

4. Many research participants expressed an interest about evaluation but were uncertain as to how this could be achieved in practice.

5. Consistent message about preference for a formal process/tool such as a questionnaire *that evaluated predetermined aspects of professional supervision.*

16. Michael

There was evidence that some participants held differing perceptions of what constituted informal versus formal.

Additional Themes:

- The different needs (and hence evaluation criteria) for students, new and experienced practitioners

- There are power differentials within supervision which may have an effect on evaluation

- The role of the organisation and risk that evaluation becomes a management tool

- There is a varied understanding and practice of supervision (standards of practice versus reflection and learning) that would need considering in evaluating it.

17.Janet

Differences in understanding evaluation of supervision, as a requirement of competencies review versus evaluation from the purposes of evaluating relationship/process/dynamics and content. (This relates to the final bullet point in this slide

When we discussed supervision people frequently came back to the importance of the relationship to effective supervision

Additional Themes Continued:

- Formal evaluation would enable supervisees to give feedback to supervisees

- Cultural considerations in evaluation are critical.   Evaluation processes from Te Ao Maori perspectives.

- Evaluation would grow the credibility of the supervision 'profession' (transparency is important)

- Potential benefits to the professions from having an ongoing supervision evaluation database capturing what is happening for professionals in contemporary work.

18. Janet

19. Michael

Feedback and questions

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