

The Evaluation of Professional Supervision: an Interprofessional Perspective.

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Whakatauki

Nau te raurau
Naku te raurau
Ka ki te kete

With your input
And my input
The basket will be
full



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).

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)

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- Increasing calls of for accountability and for supervision to be ‘changing’ practice.

“the acid test of how effective supervision is, is simple. What are you (the supervisee) doing differently now that you were not doing before supervision?” (Carroll, 2010, pg.1)

However ...evaluating supervision is not as simple as it sounds

- confusion between feedback and evaluation
- many more questions than answers (e.g.: what needs evaluating?) Watkins (2014)
- ethical and professional considerations (e.g.: access issues) Milne (2014)

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)

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

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

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.

Participants

Demographics and Characteristics

- Age range: 30's – 70's
- Gender: 4 males 20 females
- Ethnicity Identified: 8 Maori & 16 Tauwiwi
- 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.

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)

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.

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

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.*

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.

Additional Themes Continued:

- Formal evaluation would enable supervisees to give feedback to supervisors
- 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.

This workshop – we welcome your reflections on....

1. What thoughts do you have about our research thus far?
2. Will you do anything differently in your own supervision practice as a result of this presentation? If so what?
3. If a more 'organised or formalised' evaluation process was offered to the professions, what would you like to see included?

Please look out for and take part in our survey - thank you.

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