

The Ethical Review of Appropriate Supervision: A Summary and Recommendation

After receiving views from The Training Committee, the Trustees, the Graduate group, the Staff group, The Re-accreditation Committee, various individuals or peer supervision groups, the Standards and Ethics Committee has summarised the findings and is here presenting a recommendation coming out of them to clarify future discussions about appropriate supervision.

There was widespread agreement for the need for graduates to have formal supervision in a purely professional relationship, with only one group dissenting. For the majority of respondents supervision with a relative or life partner was proscribed as the primary supervision relationship, because too close a relationship could create dynamics which interfered with the supervision. Every inappropriate relationship could not be proscribed, but too close a relationship would be as inappropriate as one's therapist being one's supervisor. It was seen as the responsibility of the graduate to not enter a collusive relationship with a supervisor, and to justify the nature of their supervisory relationship. It was felt that a greater emphasis on ongoing and reflective questioning of practice and the need for continuing professional development could be stated more fully and clearly in the ethical principles of BCPC. The nature of this ongoing questioning would need to involve professionals who are independent of a graduate's personal network. Within a wide ethical framework contained in the principles, any Code of practice would need to be broad enough to encompass students, graduates and trainers.

For students at BCPC, any rules about the frequency or ratio of supervision are laid down by the training committee.

Recommendations coming out of this Review

- 1: To add to Ethical Principles 2.5, that practitioners are committed to an ongoing questioning, and reflection on their practice, so that an ongoing dialogue with other professionals takes place.
- 2: To include in the Code of Practice that it is the responsibility of each practitioner that there is sufficient distance and appropriate boundaries in their supervision arrangements. Any arrangements should be consistent with the core values of BCPC.
- 3: That checks on the appropriateness of an individual's supervision would automatically be made on a case by case basis, by the Training Committee, the Re-accreditation Committee, or if controversial could be dealt with through the Complaints procedure or be sent to the Standards and Ethics Committee.