

Policy 1.6

Supervision and Staff Support

All agency workers will receive the support and supervision they need to carry out their jobs. Such support will be available through the normal day-to-day supervisory and managerial processes although agency workers with direct responsibility for the delivery of care will have organised and regular review sessions with a nominated supervisor/manager. This process is known as supervision, and is in addition to the agency worker's annual performance appraisal.

Procedure Purpose

The Objectives of the Supervision sessions are as follows:

- a) To ensure that each agency worker understands A24 Group's philosophy and aims and is able to translate these into the evaluation, delivery and monitoring of care given to individuals, thus maintaining and developing the service provided;
- b) To provide regular review of the work undertaken with individuals, with a focus on successes, problem areas, discussion of solutions, etc;
- c) To provide support and professional guidance, enabling the agency worker to gain a greater understanding (using the experience of the supervisor, for example) of the "environmental" or less obvious factors impacting any given situation, clarifying roles and responsibilities, etc;
- d) To promote the personal and professional development of agency workers, identifying training needs, for example, on an ongoing basis;
- e) To promote positive relationships, not only between the agency worker and the supervisor, but with colleagues etc, facilitating a good working atmosphere;
- f) To discuss the causes and alleviation of stress within the workplace.

Scheduling

Each agency worker who is to be the subject of supervision will be informed by his/her supervisor or manager. The aim will be to have one to one supervision from a senior member of staff at least three-monthly (in addition to the annual performance appraisal) and each session will be planned/scheduled no less than one month in advance.

Direct Observation

Care workers will, in addition to supervision, and formal performance appraisal, (and with the approval of the client) receive direct supervision in the workplace, which will, on occasion, be unannounced.

Records

Each session of supervision will be recorded and filed in the agency worker file.

Ongoing Review and Assessment

Supervision is an important process which will ensure that regular dialogue takes place on all important matters which relate to the care of the clients. Managers will ensure at all times to ensure that the process takes place, in an appropriate fashion, and with a view to achieving the established goals, and to the continuous improvement of the services provided. If any agency worker feels dissatisfied with any aspect of supervision, then they are asked to discuss this either with their manager.

Supervision Session

Notes for Supervisors

Preparation for the Agency Worker Supervision Meeting (face to face)

- collect all the information you will need in order to conduct the discussion properly, e.g. record of previous supervision sessions, information on progress etc;
- consider the session record from the last discussion and the content of any interim discussion between you and the agency worker.
- inform the agency worker of the date, time, likely duration and location of the discussion, at least four weeks in advance. Agency workers should be given as much time as is necessary to allow all issues to be debated properly, with 45 –90 minutes being the expected norm;
- ensure that you have arranged a private room in which to have the discussion, and one which is not likely to result in you being disturbed;
- determine, and record so that you don't forget, the key points that you want to discuss;
- prepare a plan of how you will conduct the meeting.

Conduct

- avoid interruptions, e.g. telephones, visitors etc;
- try to arrange the room informally, and remove physical barriers;
- try to get the discussion moving as a two-way conversation;
- remind the agency worker of the purpose of the meeting. Give an outline of its structure, and an approximation of how long you think it will last. Make sure that the agency worker knows that they will be encouraged to contribute to the discussion;
- get the agency worker talking by using "open" questions (the type that cannot be replied to with a yes/no response), probing their answers, not interrupting, and giving recognition where it is due;
- Do not "save things up" for the interview. There should be no surprises;

- Never get into an argument. Agree to differ if there are any contentious points. Agree to meet again after you and your agency worker have had time to think about the issue;
- always be in a position to justify your comments;
- be open, direct and honest;
- Try to end, always, on a positive note. Summarise what you have agreed.

Follow Up

- make notes on the meeting;
- complete the Supervision record, and make sure that the agency worker receives a copy;
- monitor progress on a regular basis, and make sure that you do what you said you were going to do. Make sure that the agency worker does likewise.