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# Guidelines for Clinical Supervision in Health Service Psychology

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American Psychological Association

**T**his document outlines guidelines for supervision of students in health service psychology education and training programs. The goal was to capture optimal performance expectations for psychologists who supervise. It is based on the premises that supervisors (a) strive to achieve competence in the provision of supervision and (b) employ a competency-based, meta-theoretical approach to the supervision process.<sup>1</sup> The Guidelines on Supervision were developed as a resource to inform education and training regarding the implementation of competency-based supervision. The Guidelines on Supervision build on the robust literatures on competency-based education and clinical supervision. They are organized around seven domains: supervisor competence; diversity; relationships; professionalism; assessment/evaluation/feedback; problems of professional competence, and ethical, legal, and regulatory considerations. The Guidelines on Supervision represent the collective effort of a task force convened by the American Psychological Association (APA) Board of Educational Affairs (BEA).

The purpose of the Guidelines for Clinical Supervision in Health Service Psychology is to delineate essential practices in the provision of clinical supervision. The overarching goal of these Guidelines on Supervision is to promote the provision of quality supervision in health service psychology by using a competency framework to enhance the development of supervisee competence in a framework of accountability, ensuring the protection of clients/patients and the public. Supervision is a cornerstone for the preparation of health service psychologists (Falender et al., 2004). Although a substantial amount of conceptual, theoretical, and research literature pertaining to supervision exists, prior to the development of these *Guidelines on Supervision*, there has been no set of consensually agreed upon guidelines adopted as association policy to inform the practice of high-quality supervision for health service psychology.

Although supervisor competency is assumed, little attention has been focused on its definition, assessment, or evaluation (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender & Shafranske, 2014). The assumption of supervisor competence has diminished the perceived necessity for training in supervision. Articulating practices consistent with competent supervision ultimately facilitates the provision of quality services by supervisees and minimizes potential harm to supervisees and clients (Ellis et al., 2014).

Competence entails performing one's professional role within the standards of practice. Metacompetence, or

the ability to know what one does not know and to self-monitor reflectively one's ongoing performance (APA, 2010, 2.01; Falender & Shafranske, 2007; Hatcher & Lasiter, 2007) is an essential component of supervisee and supervision training. Professional negligence is the failure of competence and is legally actionable: A failure of competence is practicing below a reasonable standard of care for supervision (Falender & Shafranske, 2014; Saccuzzo, 2002).

While clinical supervision has been recognized as a distinct activity in the literature, its recognition as a core competency domain for psychologists has been a long time coming (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992; Hess, 2011). Since the profession's adoption of supervision as a distinct professional competence (Fouad et al., 2009; Kaslow et al., 2004), a definition of supervision has emerged and encompasses the knowledge, skills, and values/attitudes specific to the practice of supervision (Falender et al., 2004; Falender & Shafranske, 2004, 2007; Fouad et al., 2009). This recognition of supervision as a distinct competency has evolved in the context of an overall focus on competency-based education and training in health service psychology

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These guidelines were approved as APA policy by the APA Council of Representatives on August 6, 2014. The guidelines were developed by the Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) Task Force on Supervision Guidelines. Members of the task force were: Carol Falender, Chair; Beth Doll; Michael Ellis; Rodney K. Goodyear; Nadine Kaslow (liaison from the APA Board of Directors); Stephen McCutcheon; Marie Miville; Celiene Rey-Casserly (liaison from BEA); and APA Staff: Catherine L. Grus and Jan-Sheri Morris.

The term *health service psychology* (HSP) is preferred as it is narrower than professional psychology, a designation that includes the specialty of industrial-organizational psychology, which was not addressed by the task force. Health service psychology is inclusive of the specialties of clinical, counseling, and school psychology.

The term guidelines generally refer to pronouncements, statements, or declarations that recommend or suggest specific actions, goals, or endeavors. The education community and other scientific disciplines use the term guidelines to refer to recommendations that are aspirational or advisory in intent. These guidelines are scheduled to expire ten years from the date of their adoption, in August 2024. After this date, users are encouraged to contact the APA Education Directorate to determine whether this document remains in effect.

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<sup>1</sup> A competency-based approach is meta-theoretical and refers to working within any theoretical or practice modality, systematically considering the growth of specific competencies in the development of competence.

that has gained momentum over the past decade (Fouad & Grus, 2014). The movement is consistent with the national dialogue about the responsibility of education and training programs to be accountable for ensuring quality education and training that leads to expected student learning outcomes (New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability, 2012).

Supervisory competency includes valuing supervision as a distinct professional competency and valuing specific training in clinical supervision (Falender, Burnes, & Ellis, 2013; Falender, Ellis, & Burnes, 2013; Reiser & Milne, 2012). However, the recognition that training in supervision is necessary has also been slow to occur (Rings, Genuchi, Hall, Angelo, & Cornish, 2009). A preliminary framework for supervisor competence was produced by the 2002 Competencies Conference (Falender et al., 2004), received confirmatory support from doctoral internship directors (Rings et al., 2009), and serves as a basis for this framework. To be a competent supervisor, an individual possesses and maintains knowledge, skills, and values/attitudes that comprise the distinct professional competency of clinical supervision, as well as general competence in the areas of clinical practice supervised and in consideration of the cultural contexts.

Supervision that applies a competency-based approach entails the creation of an explicit framework and method to initiate, develop, implement, and evaluate the process and outcomes of supervision. A competency-based approach is predicated on supervisors having the knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding the provision of quality supervision and professional psychology models, theories, practices. In addition, supervisors have knowledge, skills, and values with respect to multiculturalism and diversity, legal and ethical parameters, and management of supervisees who do not meet criteria for performance. Supervisors also attain knowledge and skills in theories and processes for group, individual, and distance supervision. Implicit in the concept of competence is an awareness of and attention to one's interpersonal functioning and professionalism and valuing individual and cultural diversity (Kaslow et al., 2007). The competency-based approach is being adopted in multiple specialties (e.g., Stucky, Bush, & Donders, 2010), psychotherapy theoretical approaches (e.g., Farber, 2010; Farber & Kaslow, 2010; Sarnat, 2010), and internationally (e.g., Psychology Board of Australia, 2013).

A logical next step to build upon the identified elements of competence in supervision is to develop and approve guidelines that promote the provision of competent supervision. Other organizations have published guidelines on supervision that have informed the development of these *Guidelines on Supervision*. Specifically, the following regulatory boards and psychological associations have promulgated guidelines related to supervision: the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (Borders et al., 2011), the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (2007), the National Association of School Psychologists (2010), the Psychology Board of Australia (Psychology Board of Australia, 2013), the Australian Psychological Society (2003), the New Zealand Psychologists

Board (2007), the British Psychological Society, Committee on Training in Clinical Psychology (2008), the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (Steve DeMers, personal communication, August 8, 2013), the California Board of Psychology has published a document on supervision best practices (California Board of Psychology, 2010), the College of Psychologists of Ontario (2009), the Canadian Psychological Association (2009), the Association of Social Work Boards (2009), and the National Association of Social Workers and the Association of Social Work Boards (2013).

## Scope of Applicability

These *Guidelines on Supervision* are meant to inform the practice of clinical supervision with supervisees in areas of health service psychology and training. They apply to the full range of supervised service delivery including assessment, intervention, and consultation and across all aspects of professional functioning. The *Guidelines on Supervision* are predicated on a number of pre-existing policies, fundamental assumptions, and definitions.

Supervision can occur in a variety of contexts: supervision of service delivery by supervisees, administrative supervision, supervision of research activities conducted by supervisees, and supervision of individuals mandated by regulatory entities related to disciplinary actions. This document addresses supervision of clinical services provided by individuals in health service psychology education and training programs and applies to supervision of practicum experiences, internships, and postdoctoral training.

Interprofessional education is a valuable training activity, and supervisees should have opportunities to learn from and with professionals other than a psychologist. Recent guidelines for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice (2011) were endorsed by the APA (*Interprofessional Education Collaborative*, 2011). However, this supervision guidelines document refers exclusively to supervision provided by psychologists to supervisees in health service psychology.

Supervisors are committed to upholding the *APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (2010) and adhering to state and federal statutes regulating psychologist and psychological practice. Supervisors strive to adhere to relevant APA general practice guidelines including but not limited to the *Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Clients*, *Guidelines for Assessment of and Intervention with Persons with Disabilities*, *Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Girls and Women*, *Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults*, and the *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists* (American Psychological Association, 2003, 2004a, 2007a, 2011b, 2011a).

Supervisors are expected to comply with relevant education and training standards such as those promulgated through the APA Commission on Accreditation (*APA Commission on Accreditation*, 2009), as well as other relevant guidelines, e.g., *APA Guidelines for the Practice*

of *Telepsychology* (APA, 2013a), *Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems* (APA, 2013b), and *Record Keeping Guidelines* (APA, 2007b).

## Assumptions of the Guidelines on Supervision

The development of these *Guidelines on Supervision* is predicated on a number of assumptions. These assumptions were agreed upon by the members of the task force as foundational to the provision of clinical supervision and are reflected in the guidelines delineated in this document. Specifically, supervision:

- is a distinct professional competency that requires formal education and training.
- prioritizes the care of the client/patient and the protection of the public.
- focuses on the acquisition of competence by and the professional development of the supervisee.
- requires supervisor competence in the foundational and functional competency domains being supervised.
- is anchored in the current evidence base related to supervision and the competencies being supervised.
- occurs within a respectful and collaborative supervisory relationship, that includes facilitative and evaluative components and which is established, maintained, and repaired as necessary.
- entails responsibilities on the part of the supervisor and supervisee.
- intentionally infuses and integrates the dimensions of diversity in all aspects of professional practice.
- is influenced by both professional and personal factors including values, attitudes, beliefs, and interpersonal biases.
- is conducted in adherence to ethical and legal standards.
- uses a developmental and strength-based approach.
- requires reflective practice and self-assessment by the supervisor and supervisee.
- incorporates bi-directional feedback between the supervisor and supervisee.
- includes evaluation of the acquisition of expected competencies by the supervisee.
- serves a gatekeeping function for the profession.
- is distinct from consultation, personal psychotherapy, and mentoring.<sup>2</sup>

The Guidelines on Supervision are organized around seven domains:

- Domain A: Supervisor Competence
- Domain B: Diversity
- Domain C: Supervisory Relationship
- Domain D: Professionalism
- Domain E: Assessment/Evaluation/Feedback
- Domain F: Problems of Professional Competence
- Domain G: Ethical, Legal, and Regulatory Considerations.

These domains are drawn from a review of the literature on supervision, as well as competency-based education and training. The domains and their associated Guidelines are interdependent and while some overlap exists among them, it is important that they are considered in their entirety.

## Domain A: Supervisor Competence

Supervision is a distinct professional practice with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that supervisors require specific training to attain (Falender et al., 2013; Falender, Ellis, & Burnes, 2013; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Reiser & Milne, 2012). The supervisor serves as role model for the supervisee, fulfills the highest duty of protecting the public, and is a gatekeeper for the profession ensuring that supervisees meet competence standards in order to advance to the next level or to licensure.

**Guideline 1: Supervisors strive to be competent in the psychological services provided to clients/patients by supervisees under their supervision and when supervising in areas in which they are less familiar they take reasonable steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect others from harm**

Supervisors possess up-to-date knowledge and skills regarding the areas being supervised (e.g., psychotherapy, research, assessment), psychological theories, diversity dimensions (e.g., age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status), and individual differences and intersections of these with diversity dimensions. Supervisors also have knowledge of the clinical specialty areas in which supervision is being provided and of requirements and procedures to be taken when supervising in an area in which expertise has not been established (APA, 2010, 2.01, 2.03; Barnett, Erikson Cornish, Goodyear, & Lichtenberg, 2007; Goodyear & Rodolfa, 2012). Supervisors are knowledgeable of the context of supervision including its immediate system and expectations, and the sociopolitical context. Supervisors are knowledgeable too about emergent events in the setting or context that impact the client(s)/patient(s) (Falender et al., 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Supervision is distinguished from these other professional activities by (a) professional responsibility and liability, (b) the purpose of the activity, (c) the relative power of the parties involved, and (d) the presence or absence of evaluation. In consultation, the consultant does not evaluate the referring provider, does not bear case responsibility, and the consultee is not required to implement the input of consultation. Supervision is distinguished from personal psychotherapy of the supervisee by maintaining the focus of inquiry on the client/patient, supervisee reactions to the client/patient, and/or the supervision process related to the client/patient (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender & Shafranske, 2004). Mentoring is distinguished from supervision by an absence of evaluation or power differential, and by the mentor's advocacy for the protégée's professional development and welfare (Johnson & Huwe, 2002; Kaslow & Mascaró, 2007).

**Guideline 2: Supervisors seek to attain and maintain competence in the practice of supervision through formal education and training**

Competence entails demonstrated evidence-based practice, as well as in the various modalities (e.g., family, group, and individual), theories, and general knowledge, skills, and attitudes and research support of competency-based supervision. Supervisors obtain requisite training in knowledge, skills, and attitudes of clinical supervision (Newman, 2013; Watkins, 2012). Supervisors are skilled and knowledgeable in competency-based models, in developing and managing the supervisory relationship/alliance (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender & Shafranske, 2004; Ladany, Mori, & Mehr, 2013), and in enhancing the supervisee's clinical skills (Milne, 2009). The formal education and training should include instruction in didactic seminars, continuing education, or supervised supervision. At a minimum, education and training in supervision should include the following: models and theories of supervision; modalities; relationship formation, maintenance, rupture and repair; diversity and multiculturalism; feedback, evaluation; management of supervisee's emotional reactivity and interpersonal behavior; reflective practice; application of ethical and legal standards; decision making regarding gatekeeping; and considerations of developmental level of the trainee (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender & Shafranske, 2012; Newman, 2013). The supervision reflects practices informed by competency- and evidence-based practice to enhance accountability (Milne & Reiser, 2012; Reese et al., 2009; Stoltenberg & Pace, 2008; Watkins, 2011; Watkins, 2012; Worthen & Lambert, 2007). Assessment entails use of outcome measures and ratings from multiple supervisors (e.g., Reese et al., 2009; Watkins, 2011; Worthen & Lambert, 2007). Assessment strategies include both formative and summative evaluation and procedures for competence assessment.

**Guideline 3: Supervisors endeavor to coordinate with other professionals responsible for the supervisee's education and training to ensure communication and coordination of goals and expectations**

Coordination can assist supervisees in managing these multiple roles and responsibilities, as well as supervisory expectations. Coordination is especially important to seek when a supervisee is exhibiting performance problems, when the supervisory relationship is under stress, or when the supervisor seeks another perspective (Thomas, 2010).

**Guideline 4: Supervisors strive for diversity competence across populations and settings (as defined in APA, 2003)**

Diversity competence is an inseparable and essential component of supervision competence that involves relevant knowledge, skills, and values/attitudes (for more information, see Domain B: Diversity).

**Guideline 5: Supervisors using technology in supervision (including distance supervision), or when supervising care that incorporates technology, strive to be competent regarding its use**

Supervisors ensure that policies and procedures are in place for ethical practice of telepsychology, social media, and digital communications between any combination of client/patient, supervisee, and supervisor (APA, 2013b; Fitzgerald, Hunter, Hadjistavropoulos, & Koocher, 2010). Considerations should include services appropriate for distance supervision, confidentiality, and security. Supervisors are knowledgeable about relevant laws specific to technology and supervision, and technology and practice. Supervisors model ethical practice, ethical decision-making, and professionalism, and engage in thoughtful dialogues with supervisees regarding use of social networking and internet searches of clients/patients and supervisees (Clinton, Silverman, & Brendel, 2010; Myers, Endres, Ruddy, & Zelikovsky, 2012).

**Domain B: Diversity**

Diversity competence is an inseparable and essential component of supervision competence. It refers to developing competencies for working with diversity issues and diverse individuals, including those from one's own background. More commonly, these competencies refer to working with others from backgrounds different than one's own but includes the complexity of understanding and factoring in the multiple identities of each individual: client(s), supervisee, supervisor and differing worldviews. Competent supervision attends to a broad range of diversity dimensions (e.g., age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status), and includes sensitivity to diversity of supervisees, clients/patients, and the supervisor (APA, 2003, 2004a, 2007a, 2010 (2.03), 2011b; 2011a, APA Presidential Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice, 2006). Supervisors are encouraged to infuse diversity into all aspects of clinical practice and supervision, including attention to oppression and privilege and the impact of those on the supervisory power differential, relationship, and on client/patient and supervisee interactions and supervision interactions.

**Guideline 1: Supervisors strive to develop and maintain self-awareness regarding their diversity competence, which includes attitudes, knowledge, and skills**

Supervisors understand that they serve as important role models regarding openness to self-exploration, understanding of one's own biases, and willingness to pursue education or consultation when indicated. Supervisors also are important role models regarding their diversity knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Supervisors' ability to self-reflect, revise, and update knowledge and advance their skills in diversity serve as important lessons for supervisees. Modeling these competencies helps to establish a safe environ-

ment in which to address diversity dimensions within supervision as well as in the larger professional setting.

**Guideline 2: Supervisors planfully strive to enhance their diversity competence to establish a respectful supervisory relationship and to facilitate the diversity competence of their supervisees**

Supervisors consider infusion of diversity competence in supervision as an ethical imperative and respect the human dignity of their supervisees and the clients/patients with whom the supervisee works (APA, 2010; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender, Shafranske, & Falicov, 2014). Supervisors play a significant role in developing the diversity competencies of their supervisees. Research finds that diversity competence among supervisors can lag behind that of their supervisees (Miville, Rosa, & Constantine, 2005). Fortunately, diversity competence can be directly and constructively addressed by supervisors, who in turn can facilitate the diversity competence of their supervisees. Moreover, all supervision can be viewed as multicultural in the same manner that all therapy is multicultural (Pedersen, 1990). Adopting such a framework strengthens the supervisory relationship, enhances supervisor competence, and promotes the diversity competencies of both supervisors and supervisees (Andrews et al., 2013; Dressel, Consoli, Kim & Atkinson, 2007; Snowman, McCown, & Biehler, 2012). Viewing diversity as normative, rather than as an exception, aids supervisors in being sensitive to important similarities and differences between themselves and their supervisees that may affect the supervisory relationship.

**Guideline 3: Supervisors recognize the value of and pursue ongoing training in diversity competence as part of their professional development and lifelong learning**

To ensure diversity competence sufficient to provide culturally sensitive supervision, supervisors seek to continue to develop their own knowledge, skills, and attitudes, particularly in diversity domains that are most commonly relevant to their clinical supervision. At a minimum, supervisors should have attained formal training in diversity through their own doctoral training program or continuing professional development workshops, programs, and independent study, should be familiar with APA guidelines addressing diversity (APA, 2003, 2004a, 2007a, 2008, 2011a, 2011b), and should pursue continuing education to maintain current competence and build knowledge in emerging areas (APA, 2010, 2.03).

**Guideline 4: Supervisors aim to be knowledgeable about the effects of bias, prejudice, and stereotyping. When possible, supervisors model client/patient advocacy and model promoting change in organizations and communities in the best interest of their clients/patients**

Supervision occurs within the context of diversity and social and political systems. Of special importance is the

impact of bias, prejudice, and stereotyping, both positive and negative, on therapeutic and supervisory relationships within these systems. Supervisors promote the supervisee's competence by modeling advocacy for human rights and intervention with institutions and systems (Burnes & Singh, 2010).

**Guideline 5: Supervisors aspire to be familiar with the scholarly literature concerning diversity competence in supervision and training. Supervisors strive to be familiar with promising practices for navigating conflicts among personal and professional values in the interest of protecting the public**

Considerable scholarship has been published on supervision and diversity (e.g., Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender et al., 2013; Miville et al., 2009). Resources include competency-based training models for integrating diversity dispositions of supervisors and supervisees (Miville et al., 2009), and the duty of supervisors to assist supervisees in navigating inevitable tensions between personal and professional values in providing competent client/patient care (e.g., Behnke, 2012; Bienschke & Mintz, 2012; Forrest, 2012; Mintz et al., 2009; Winterowd, Adams, Miville, & Mintz, 2009).

## **Domain C: Supervisory Relationship**

The quality of the supervisory relationship is essential to effective clinical supervision (e.g., Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983; Falender & Shafranske, 2004; Holloway, 1995; O'Donovan, Halford, & Walters, 2011). Quality of the supervision relationship is associated with more effective evaluation (Lehrman-Waterman & Ladany, 2001), satisfaction with supervision (Ladany, Ellis, & Friedlander, 1999), and supervisee self-disclosure of personal and professional reactions including reactivity and countertransference (Falender & Shafranske, 2004; Ladany, Lehrman-Waterman, Molinaro, & Wolgast, 1999). The power differential is a central factor in the supervisory relationship and the supervisor bears responsibility for managing, collaborating, and discussing power within the relationship (Porter & Vasquez, 1997).

**Guideline 1: Supervisors value and seek to create and maintain a collaborative relationship that promotes the supervisees' competence**

Supervisors initiate collaborative discussion of the expectations, goals, and tasks of supervision. By initiating this discussion, they establish a working relationship that values the dignity of others, responsible caring, honesty, transparency, engagement, attentiveness, and responsiveness, as well as humility, flexibility, and professionalism (Ellis, Ring, Hanus, & Berger, 2013). In discussing the supervisory relationship, the supervisor should: (a) initiate discussions about differences, includ-

ing diversity, values, beliefs, biases, and characteristic interpersonal styles that may affect the supervisory relationship and process; (b) discuss inherent power differences and supervisor responsibility to manage such differences wisely; and (c) take responsibility to establish relationship conditions that promote trust, reliability, predictability, competence, perceived expertise, and developmentally appropriate challenge.

**Guideline 2: Supervisors seek to specify the responsibilities and expectations of both parties in the supervisory relationship. Supervisors identify expected program competencies and performance standards, and assist the supervisee to formulate individual learning goals**

The supervisor is encouraged to explicitly discuss with the supervisee aspects of the supervision process such as program goals, individual learning goals, roles and responsibilities, description of structure of supervision, supervision activities, performance review and evaluation, and limits of supervision confidentiality. The supervisor also provides clarity about duties including that the primary duty of supervisor is to the client/patient, and secondarily to competence development of the supervisee. (The supervision contract is discussed further in the Legal and Ethical Section.)

**Guideline 3: Supervisors aspire to review regularly the progress of the supervisee and the effectiveness of the supervisory relationship and address issues that arise**

As the supervisory relationship and the supervisee's learning needs evolve over time, the supervisor should work collaboratively with the supervisee to revise the supervision goals and tasks. When disruptions occur in the supervisory relationship, supervisors seek to address and resolve the impasses and disruptions openly, honestly, and in the best interests of client/patient welfare and the supervisee's development (Safran, Muran, Stevens, & Rothman, 2008).

## **Domain D: Professionalism**

Professionalism goes hand in hand with a profession's social responsibility (see Hodges et al., 2011; Vasquez & Bingham, 2012). The "professionalism covenant" puts the needs and welfare of the people they serve at the forefront (Grus & Kaslow, 2014). Grus and Kaslow (2014) summarized these as "behavior and comportment that reflect the values and attitudes of psychology (Fouad et al., 2009; Hatcher et al., 2013). The essential components include: (1) integrity—honesty, personal responsibility, and adherence to professional values; (2) deportment; (3) accountability; (4) concern for the welfare of others; and (5) professional identity."

**Guideline 1: Supervisors strive to model professionalism in their own comportment and interactions with others, and teach knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with professionalism**

Supervisory modeling of professionalism occurs across professional settings. Supervisees' understanding of what is professional or ethical is still developing (Gottlieb, Robinson, & Younggren, 2007). Modeling is a powerful means to teach attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Tarvydas, 1995), including professionalism (Cruess, Cruess, & Steinert, 2009). Supervisors, in vivo, can exemplify virtue, humanism, and honest communication (Grus & Kaslow, 2014, modified from Hatcher et al., 2013). One important aspect of supervision is to socialize supervisees into a particular profession (e.g., Ekstein & Wallerstein, 1972); to help them learn to "think like" those in that profession. In interprofessional settings, supervisors model professionalism in cooperative, collaborative, and respectful interaction with team members.

**Guideline 2: Supervisors are encouraged to provide ongoing formative and summative evaluation of supervisees' progress toward meeting expectations for professionalism appropriate for each level of education and training**

Modeling alone is insufficient to teach professionalism; it should be embedded in a larger training curriculum incorporating developmentally expected behaviors (Grus & Kaslow, 2014). Supervisees need clear criteria to judge the extent to which they are demonstrating developmentally appropriate professionalism (Fouad et al., 2009; Kaslow et al., 2009), as well as feedback about the extent to which they are meeting those criteria. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with professionalism have been addressed within and across disciplines with much congruence. These include "altruism, accountability, benevolence, caring and compassion, courage, ethical practice, excellence, honesty, honor, humanism, integrity, reflection/self-awareness, respect for others, responsibility and duty, service, social responsibility, team work, trustworthiness, and truthfulness" (Grus & Kaslow, 2014).

## **Domain E: Assessment/Evaluation/Feedback**

Assessment, evaluation, and feedback are essential components of ethical supervision (Carroll, 2010; Falender et al., 2004). However, supervisors have been found to provide it relatively infrequently (e.g., Ellis et al., 2014; Friedlander, Siegel, & Brenock, 1989; Hoffman, Hill, Holmes, & Freitas, 2005), which leads to failures in gatekeeping and failures of supervisors in informing supervisees about their competency development (Thomas, 2010), and creates potential for ethical complaints (Falvey & Cohen, 2004; Ladany et al., 1999). To be effective, assessment, evaluation, and feedback need to be directly linked to specific

competencies, to observed behaviors, and be timely (APA, 2010, 7.06; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

**Guideline 1: Ideally, assessment, evaluation, and feedback occur within a collaborative supervisory relationship. Supervisors promote openness and transparency in feedback and assessment, by anchoring such in the competency development of the supervisee**

Establishment and maintenance of the supervisory relationship provide the basis for assessment, evaluation, and feedback. Supervisee disclosure of client data is enhanced by a strong relationship (See Domain C in this document on the Supervisory Relationship).

**Guideline 2: A major supervisory responsibility is monitoring and providing feedback on supervisee performance. Live observation or review of recorded sessions is the preferred procedure**

Supervisee self-report is the most frequently used source of data on supervisee performance and client/patient progress (e.g., Goodyear & Nelson, 1997; Noelle, 2003; Scott, Pachana, & Sofronoff, 2011). The accuracy of those reports, however, is constrained by human memory and information processing as well as by supervisees' self-protective distortion and biases, (Haggerty & Hilsenroth, 2011; Ladany, Hill, Corbett, & Nutt, 1996; Pope, Sonne, & Green, 2006; Yourman & Farber, 1996) that result in their not disclosing errors, resulting in the loss of potentially important clinical data.

The more direct the access a supervisor has to a supervisee's professional work, the more accurate and helpful their feedback will likely be. Supervisors should use live observation or audio or video review techniques whenever possible, as these are associated with enhanced supervisee and client/patient outcomes (Haggerty & Hilsenroth, 2011; Huhra, Yamokoski-Maynhart, & Prieto, 2008). Supervisors should not limit work samples only to those identified by the supervisee; some work samples should be selected by supervisors. Review of work samples should be planful and focus on specific competency development and defined supervision goals (Breunlin, Karrer, McGuire, & Cimmarusti, 1988; Hatcher et al., 2013). In addition, the developmental level of the supervisee should be considered when identifying methods to monitor and provide feedback to the trainee. An organization can reduce legal risk through direct observation of the supervisee's work (e.g., using live or video observation of sessions) thus satisfying the monitoring standard of care in supervision.

**Guideline 3: Supervisors aspire to provide feedback that is direct, clear, and timely, behaviorally anchored, responsive to supervisees' reactions, and mindful of the impact on the supervisory relationship**

In delivering feedback, supervisors are sensitive to (a) the power differential as a function of the supervisory evalua-

tive and gatekeeping roles; (b) culture, diversity dimensions (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status), and other sources of privilege and oppression (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Ryde, 2000; Shen-Miller, Forrest, & Burt, 2012); (c) supervisee developmental level (Stoltenberg & McNeill, 2010); (d) the possibilities of the supervisee experiencing demoralization (Watkins, 1996) or shame (Bilodeau, Savard, & Lecomte, 2012) in response to the feedback; and (e) timing and the amount of feedback that a supervisee can assimilate at any given moment (Westberg & Jason, 1993).

Feedback should occur at frequent intervals, with some positive and corrective feedback in each supervision session so that evaluation is not a surprise (Bennett et al., 2006). In instances when a supervisee exhibits problems in professional competence, supervisors are expected to be courageous and provide this difficult feedback, doing so in a direct and supportive manner. Indirect delivery of difficult feedback to supervisees is not associated with good training outcomes (Hoffman et al., 2005). The difficulty of delivering difficult feedback is especially challenging in multicultural supervision (Burkard, Knox, Clarke, Phelps, & Inman, 2014; Shen-Miller et al., 2012). Collaborative conversations among supervisors regarding diversity, consultation, and examination of biases were described as helpful in contextual understanding of individual supervisee development (Shen-Miller et al., 2012).

**Guideline 4: Supervisors recognize the value of and support supervisee skill in self-assessment of competence and incorporate supervisee self-assessment into the evaluation process**

Incorporating the use of supervisee self-assessment into the evaluation of supervisees can enhance skill development, provide useful reflection on the delivery of services, and inculcate attitudes of self-assessment as a lifelong learning tool (Wise et al., 2010). Research has shown that there are limitations to the accuracy of self-assessments (Dunning, Heath, & Suls, 2004; Gruppen, White, Fitzgerald, Grum, & Woolliscroft, 2000), indicating that the provision of significant feedback to supervisees should be used to enhance supervisee assessment of self-efficacy (Eva & Regehr, 2011).

**Guideline 5: Supervisors seek feedback from their supervisees and others about the quality of the supervision they offer, and incorporate that feedback to improve their supervisory competence**

It is important that supervisors obtain regular feedback about their work. Supervisors may not obtain regular feedback once they are licensed and as a result may tend to overestimate their competence (e.g., Walfish, McAlister, O'Donnell, & Lambert, 2012) and tend to grow in confidence about their abilities, even though that is not necessarily matched by corresponding increases in ability (see Dawes, 1994). Although studies on supervisee nondisclosures (e.g., Ladany et al., 1996; Mehr, Ladany & Caskie,

2010; Yourman & Farber, 1996) suggest difficulty in obtaining candid information from supervisees, it is important that supervisors routinely seek—and utilize—feedback about their own supervision (see, e.g., Williams, 1994).

## Domain F: Professional Competence Problems

Only a small proportion of supervisees in health service psychology programs demonstrate significant problems in professional competence, but most academic and internship programs report at least one supervisee with competence problems in the previous five years (Forrest et al., 1999). When this occurs it can be helpful to consider the multiple contexts in which problem behavior is embedded (e.g., cultural beliefs, licensure and accreditation, peers, faculty, supervisors; Forrest et al., 2008). Supervisors must be prepared to protect the well-being of clients/patients and the general public, while simultaneously supporting the professional development of the supervisee. They also must be mindful of the effects on the training program itself, as peers typically are aware of trainees with problems of professional competence and often have concerns that those problems are not being addressed (Rosenberg, Getzelman, Arcinue, & Oren, 2005; Shen-Miller et al., 2011; Veilleux et al., 2012).

Supervisors give precedence to protecting the well-being of clients/patients above the training of the supervisee. When supervisees display problems of professional competence decisions made and actions taken by supervisors in response to supervisees' competence problems should be completed in a timely manner (Kaslow et al., 2007). They also are guided by the training program's intentional and well-prepared plans for addressing such problems (Forrest et al., 2013).

**Guideline 1: Supervisors understand and adhere both to the supervisory contract and to program, institutional, and legal policies and procedures related to performance evaluations. Supervisors strive to address performance problems directly**

Effective management of professional competence problems begins with the supervision contract (elements of that contract are presented in the Ethics section of these *Guidelines on Supervision*; Goodyear & Rodolfa, 2012; Thomas, 2007). The contract provides prior written notice of the competencies required for satisfactory performance in the supervised experience (Gilfoyle, 2008), as well as the process of evaluation, the procedures that will be followed if the supervisee does not meet the criteria, and procedures available to the supervisee to clarify or contest the evaluation. This contract shall occur in the context of the program communicating clearly the Due Process Guidelines to the supervisees as required by the Commission on Accreditation Guidelines and Principles (Domains A and G). In the event a supervisee is exhibiting performance problems, supervisors seek consultation to ensure understanding of

program, institutional, and legal policies and procedures related to performance evaluations.

**Guideline 2: Supervisors strive to identify potential performance problems promptly, communicate these to the supervisee, and take steps to address these in a timely manner allowing for opportunities to effect change**

Supervisors evaluate on an ongoing basis the supervisee's functioning with respect to a broad range of foundational and functional competencies, including professional attitudes and behaviors that are relevant to professional practice. Their determinations about areas in which the supervisee does not meet competence expectations must (a) take into consideration distinctions between normative developmental challenges and significant competence problems (Fouad et al., 2009; Hatcher et al., 2013; Kaslow et al., 2004; Rodolfa et al., 2005) and (b) be attuned to the intersections between diversity issues and competence (Constantine & Sue, 2007; Kaslow et al., 2007; Shen-Miller, Forrest, & Elman, 2009). Supervisors also seek consultation from and work in concert with relevant program and institutional participants when addressing potential performance issues.

Especially when potential performance problems are suspected, supervisors directly observe and monitor supervisees' work, and seek input about the supervisee's performance from multiple sources and from more than one supervisor. Supervisee's professional behaviors and attitudes should be carefully documented in writing with dates and specific behaviors included in the record. Documentation is essential throughout the training trajectory in establishing clarity regarding the performance expectations and the supervisee's attaining the requisite competencies and is important in remediation or in adversarial actions.

Once supervisors have identified that a supervisee has professional competence problems, they have an ethical responsibility to discuss these with the supervisee and to develop a plan to remediate those problems (APA, 2010; 7.06). Supervisors do so in a manner that is clear, direct, and mindful of the barriers to assuring that such conversations are effective and likely to maintain the supervisory relationship (Hoffman et al., 2005; Jacobs et al., 2011). Conversations addressing competence problems shall occur with sensitivity to issues of individual and cultural differences (Constantine & Sue, 2007; Shen-Miller et al., 2012).

**Guideline 3: Supervisors are competent in developing and implementing plans to remediate performance problems**

In conjunction with the supervisee and relevant training colleagues, the supervisor develops written documentation of areas in which the supervisee has competence deficits, performance expectations, steps to be taken to address deficits, responsibilities for each party, performance monitoring processes, and the timelines that will be followed (Kaslow et al., 2007). The supervisor will follow the steps

outlined in this plan, including the development of timely written evaluations that are anchored in the stipulated performance criteria (Kaslow et al., 2007). Supervisors evaluate their role in the supervisory relationship and adjust their role as needed, providing more direction and oversight and assuring that client/patient welfare is not threatened and appropriate care is provided. These responsibilities need to be balanced with both training and gatekeeping responsibilities.

**Guideline 4: Supervisors are mindful of their role as gatekeeper and take appropriate and ethical action in response to supervisee performance problems**

In most situations, supervisees are ethically and legally entitled to a fair opportunity to remediate the competence problems and continue in their program of study (McAdams & Foster, 2007). Supervisors strive to closely monitor and document the progress of supervisees who are taking steps to address problems of competence. Should the supervisee not meet the stipulated performance levels after completing the agreed-upon remediation steps, attending to supervisee due process, supervisors must consider dismissal from the training program. Supervisors must have a clear understanding of competence problems that reflect unethical and/or illegal behavior that is sufficiently serious to warrant immediate dismissal from the training program (Bodner, 2012). Such considerations occur in the context of the training program's organization's explicit plans for addressing such problems.

**Domain G: Ethics, Legal, and Regulatory Considerations**

Valuing and modelling ethical behavior and adherence to relevant legal and regulatory parameters in supervision is essential to upholding the highest duty of the supervisor, protecting the public. Improper or inadequate supervision is the seventh most reported reason for disciplinary actions by licensing boards (Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards, 2013). Supervisees may perceive their supervisors to engage in unethical behavior (Ladany et al., 1999), sometimes because of misunderstanding the structure of the supervisory relationship and/or a supervisor's failure to secure informed consent. Generally, though, there is some evidence that supervisors and supervisees agree on what comprises ethical behavior (Worthington, Tan, & Poulin, 2002).

**Guideline 1: Supervisors model ethical practice and decision making and conduct themselves in accord with the APA ethical guidelines, guidelines of any other applicable professional organizations, and relevant federal, state, provincial, and other jurisdictional laws and regulations**

Supervisors support the acculturation of the supervisee into the ethics of the profession, their professionalism, and the integration of ethics into their professional behavior (Han-

delsman, Gottlieb, & Knapp, 2005; Knapp, Handelsman, Gottlieb, & VandeCreek, 2013). Supervisors ensure that supervisees develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for ethical and legal adherence. The supervisor is a role model for ethical and legal responsibility. Supervisors discuss values that bear on professional practice, applications of ethical guidelines to specific cases, and the use of ethical decision-making models (Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 2008; Pope & Vasquez, 2011).

The supervisor is responsible for understanding the jurisdictional laws and regulations and their application to the clinical setting for the supervisee (e.g., duty to warn and protect; Werth, Welfel, & Benjamin, 2009).

Supervisors are knowledgeable of legal standards and their applicability to both clinical practice and to supervision.

**Guideline 2: Supervisors uphold their primary ethical and legal obligation to protect the welfare of the client/patient**

The highest duty of the supervisor is protection of the client/patient (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Supervisors balance protection of the client/patient with the secondary responsibility of increasing supervisee competence and professional development. Supervisors ensure that supervisees understand the multiple aspects of this responsibility with respect to their clinical performance (Falender & Shafranske, 2012). Supervisors understand that they are ultimately responsible for the supervisee's clinical work (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

**Guideline 3: Supervisors serve as gatekeepers to the profession. Gatekeeping entails assessing supervisees' suitability to enter and remain in the field**

Supervisors help supervisees advance to successive stages of training upon attainment of expected competencies (Bodner, 2012; Fouad et al., 2009). Alternatively, if competencies are not being attained, in collaboration with the supervisee's academic program, supervisors devise action plans with supervisees, with the understanding that if the stated competencies are not achieved, supervisees who are determined to lack sufficient foundational or functional competencies for entry to the profession may be terminated to protect potential recipients of the supervisee's practice (Forrest et al., 2013). Descriptions of such processes are in the training program's or organization's explicit plans for addressing competency problems or the unsuitability of the supervisee for the profession.

**Guideline 4: Supervisors provide clear information about the expectations for and parameters of supervision to supervisees preferably in the form of a written supervisory contract**

A supervision contract serves as the foundation for establishing the supervisory relationship by specifying the roles, tasks, responsibilities of supervisee and supervisor and performance expectations of the supervisee (Bernard &

Goodyear, 2014; Osborn & Davis, 2009; Thomas, 2007, 2010). Supervisors convey the value of the points in the supervision contract through conversations with supervisees and may modify the understanding over time as warranted as the goals for supervision change. The contract includes a delineation of the following elements:

- a. Content, method, and context of supervision—logistics, roles, and processes.
- b. Highest duties of the supervisor: protection of the client(s) and gatekeeping for the profession.
- c. Roles and expectations of the supervisee and the supervisor, and supervisee goals and tasks.
- d. Criteria for successful completion and processes of evaluation with sample evaluation instruments and competency documents (APA, 2010, 2.06).
- e. Processes and procedures when the supervisee does not meet performance criteria or reference to such if they exist in other documents.
- f. Expectations for supervisee preparation for supervision sessions (e.g., video review, case notes, agenda preparation) and informing supervisor of clinical work and risk situations.
- g. Limits of confidentiality of supervisee disclosures, behavior necessary to meet ethical and legal requirements for client/patient protection, and methods of communicating with training programs regarding supervisee performance.
- h. Expectations for supervisee disclosures including personal factors and emotional reactivity (previously described, and worldviews (APA, 2010, 7.04).
- i. Legal and ethical parameters and compliance, such as informed consent, multiple relationships, limits of confidentiality, duty to protect and warn, and emergent situation procedures.
- j. Processes for ethical problem-solving in the case of ethical dilemmas (e.g., boundaries, multiple relationships).

**Guideline 5: Supervisors maintain accurate and timely documentation of supervisee performance related to expectations for competency and professional development**

Keeping supervision records is an important means of documenting the conduct of supervision and supervisee progress (e.g., APA, 2007b; Falvey & Cohen, 2004; Luepker, 2012; Thomas, 2010).

**Conclusion**

The *Guidelines on Supervision* address seven domains of supervision and offer specific suggestions in each of these domains that delineate essential practices in the provision of competency-based clinical supervision. The overarching goal of the *Guidelines on Supervision* is to promote the provision of quality supervision in health service psychology using a competency framework to enhance the development of supervisee competence while upholding the highest duties of supervision, ensuring the protection of

patients, the public, and the profession. The *Guidelines on Supervision* are intended to be aspirational in nature and are responsive to current trends in education and training in health service psychology. They are considered a living document. Accordingly, they should be reviewed periodically and informed by developments, including the evidence-base regarding clinical supervision.

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