

BAPPS Code of Ethics & Practice

INTRODUCTION

Members of this Association are required to abide by existing Codes appropriate to them. They therefore accept a common frame of reference within which to manage their responsibilities to supervisees and their clients, colleagues, members of this Association and the wider community. Whilst this code cannot resolve all ethical and practice related issues, it aims to provide a framework for addressing ethical issues and to encourage optimum levels of practice. Supervisors and supervisees will need to judge which parts of this Code apply to particular situations. They may have to decide between conflicting responsibilities.

CODE OF ETHICS

A1 : GENERAL

- i) All members of BAPPS are bound by this Code of Ethics and Practice.
- ii) Members of BAPPS should conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with the dignity and status of the Association and the profession. Members shall seek to establish the highest ethical standards and shall hold the interests of the patients / clients to be paramount.
- iii) Members may not supervise beyond their training and experience.

A2 : CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- i) Completion of training assumes a level of competence in theoretical understanding and in clinical work monitored by supervision. The member is responsible for continuing the maintenance and development of his / her competence in both areas by such measures as:
 - Personal re-evaluation and continuation of professional education.
 - Further supervision or consultation. ie: supervision of supervision.

A3 : PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- i) Members are responsible for deciding if and when to re-enter therapy themselves.
- ii) Members are responsible for monitoring their physical and emotional health and must take necessary breaks from work to ensure physical and emotional fitness to practise.
- iii) Members are expected to seek satisfaction and interests outside work so that supervisees and /or clients are not the main source of either.

CODE OF PRACTICE

B1 : MANAGEMENT OF WORK

- i) Members must manage their work in a professional manner.
- ii) Members are required to disclose their qualifications when requested and not claim, or imply, qualifications that they do not have.
- iii) It is normally unethical for members to offer supervision if they are not also currently practising as therapists appropriate to their training and experience.
- iv) Members should consider whether their approach to the work is appropriate for a particular supervisee & or client and should be prepared to make referrals at any stage in the work if that appears to be in the supervisee's and / or the client's interests.
- v) Members are to ensure the supervisee is bound by a code of ethics appropriate to their work and as such has a complaints procedure.
- vi) There is a distinction between line management supervision and therapy supervision. Best practice is that the same person should not act as both line manager and therapy supervisor to the same supervisee. However where the therapy supervisor is also the line manager, the supervisee should also have access to independent therapy supervision if it should become necessary.

- vii) Members who become aware of a conflict between an obligation to a supervisee and an obligation to an employing agency or training body must make explicit to the supervisee the nature of the conflict of loyalties and the responsibilities involved.
- viii) Supervision may contain some elements of training, personal development or line management, but is not primarily intended for these purposes and appropriate maintenance of boundaries and management of these issues should be observed.
- ix) If, in the course of counselling supervision, it appears that personal therapy may be necessary for the supervisee to be able to continue working effectively, the member should raise this issue with the supervisee.
- x) Members must maintain a consistent working environment with clear boundaries. This means:
 - a) Members must make clear the boundaries of time and space, explain the arrangements for payment of fees at the outset and give adequate notice of any changes or planned breaks.
 - b) Members must not supervise the therapeutic work where the patient / client is a relative, friend or colleague, nor if possible, with anyone closely connected with an existing patient / client, except in exceptional circumstances.
 - c) Members and their supervisees must agree a contract which makes clear the expectations and requirements they have of each other. This is to include the manner in which any formal assessment is made; also policy regarding giving references and any fees that may be charged for this or any other work done outside the session time. When working with trainees the boundaries of the member's responsibility and accountability to their supervisees and the agency / training must be clarified.
 - d) Members must ascertain what personal counselling / therapy the supervisee has had, to take into account any effect this may have on the supervisee's counselling work.
 - e) Members must not exploit the dependence of the supervisee in the supervisory relationship sexually, financially, or in any other manner. Members are responsible for ensuring that any relationship with a supervisee after the termination of the contract is not exploitative.
- xi) Publication - BAPPS Members are required to safeguard the welfare and anonymity of supervisees/ patients/clients when any form of publication of clinical material is being considered and to obtain their consent whenever possible.
- xii) Research - BAPPS Members are required to clarify with supervisees/patients/clients the nature, purpose and conditions of any research in which the clients are to be involved and to ensure that informed and verifiable consent is given before commencement.
- xiii) Members must have adequate insurance to cover both professional and public liability.
- xiv) Members should monitor regularly how their supervisees engage in self-assessment & the self evaluation of their work.
- xv) Members must ensure that their supervisees acknowledge their individual responsibility for ongoing professional development and for participating in further training programmes.
- xvi) Members who have concerns about a supervisee's work with clients must be clear how they will pursue this if discussion in supervision fails to resolve the situation. Where disagreements cannot be resolved by discussions between the member and supervisee, the member should consult with a fellow professional and, if considered appropriate, make use of a facilitator or consultant supervisor to the supervisory pair. Only after such action, should relevant complaints procedure be invoked when appropriate.
- xvii)
 - a) Members must discuss with supervisees the need to have arrangements in place to take care of the immediate needs of clients in the event of a sudden and unplanned ending to the therapy relationship which is being supervised. It is good practice for the member to be informed about these arrangements.
 - b) Members are also responsible for similar safeguards for their own practice.

B2 CONFIDENTIALITY

- i) As a general principle, supervisors must not reveal confidential material concerning the supervisee or their clients to any other person without the express consent of all parties concerned. Exceptions to this general principle are contained in this Code. See B1 xiv, B2 iv, B2 v, B2 vi, B2 vii.
- ii) When initial contracts are being made, agreements about the people to whom members may speak about their supervisee's work must include those on whom they rely for support, supervision or consultancy. There must also be clarity at this stage about the boundaries of confidentiality having regard for the member's own framework of accountability. This is particularly relevant when providing supervision to a trainee therapist.

- iii) Members should take all reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the counsellor /client relationship. It is essential however that the member is aware of any possible conflict of interests or break of confidentiality which may arise with the member or and any other parties.
- iv) Members must not reveal confidential information concerning supervisees or their clients to any person or through any public medium except when the supervisor considers it necessary to prevent serious emotional or physical damage to the client, the supervisee or a third party. In such circumstances the supervisee's consent to a change in the agreement should be sought, unless there are good grounds for believing that the supervisee is no longer able to take responsibility for his / her own actions. Whenever possible, the decision to break confidentiality in any circumstances should be made after consultation with another experienced supervisor.
- v) The disclosure of confidential information relating to supervisees is permissible when relevant to the following situations:
 - a) Recommendations concerning supervisees for professional purposes or references
 - b) Pursuit of disciplinary action involving supervisees in matters pertaining to standards of ethics and practice.

In the latter instance, any breaking of confidentiality should be minimised by conveying only information pertinent to the immediate situation on a need-to-know basis. The ethical considerations needing to be taken into account are:

- bi) Maintaining the best interests of the supervisee
 - bii) Enabling the supervisee to take responsibility for their actions
 - biii) Taking full account of the supervisor's responsibility to the client and to the wider community.
 - c) When required to do so by a court of law i.e: under subpoena.
- vi) When a member wishes to publish or use in public, material about a supervisee's client, other than in a short unidentifiable example used in teaching:
 - a) The member must seek the supervisee's permission when possible.
 - b) The member must act in the best interest of the supervisee and client and refrain from publishing material, where to seek permission or to publish material, might disturb or disrupt the work.
 - c) The member must preserve the anonymity of both the supervisee and the client.
 - vii) On occasions when it is necessary to consult with professional colleagues, members should ensure that their discussion is purposeful and not trivialising, and takes place in an appropriate confidential setting involving only the parties concerned.

B3 ISSUES OF RESPONSIBILITY

- i) Members are responsible for ensuring that an individual contract is worked out with their supervisees which will allow them to present and explore their work as honestly as possible.
- ii) Within this contract members are responsible for helping supervisees to reflect upon their work, while at the same time acknowledging that clinical responsibility remains with the supervisee.
- iii) Members are responsible, together with their supervisees, for ensuring that the best use is made of supervision time, in order to address the needs of the clients.
- iv) Members are responsible for setting and maintaining the boundaries between the supervision relationship and other professional relationships, e.g. training and management.
- v) Members and supervisees should take all reasonable steps to ensure that any personal or social contact between them is minimal and does not adversely influence the effectiveness of the therapy supervision process.
- vi) Members must not have a supervision and a personal therapy contract with the same supervisee over the same period of time.
- vii) Members must not exploit their supervisees financially, sexually, emotionally or in any other way.
- viii) Members have a responsibility to enquire about any other relationships which may exist between supervisees and their clients as these may impair objectivity and professional judgement of supervisees.

- ix) Members must recognise, and work in ways that respect the value and dignity of supervisees and their clients with due regard to issues such as origin, status, race, culture, gender, age, beliefs, sexual orientation and disability. This must include raising awareness of any discriminatory practices that may exist between supervisees and their clients, or between the member and supervisee.
- x) Members must ensure that together with their supervisees, they consider their respective legal liabilities to each other, to the employing or training organisation, if any, and to clients. The member is responsible for clarifying the legal liabilities from an informed position, and seeking legal guidance when necessary.
- xi) Members are responsible for taking action if they are aware that their supervisee's practice is not in accordance with the relevant Codes of Ethics & Practice.
- xii) Members are responsible for helping their supervisees recognise when, in their opinion, their functioning as therapists is impaired due to personal or emotional difficulties, any condition that affects judgement, illness, the influence of alcohol or drugs, or for any other reason, and for ensuring that appropriate action is taken.
- xiii) Members must conduct themselves in their supervision-related activities in ways which do not undermine public confidence in either their role as a supervisor or in the work of other supervisors.
- xiv) If a member is aware of a possible misconduct by another supervisor which cannot be resolved or remedied after discussion with the supervisor concerned, they should implement the Complaints Procedure, doing so within the boundaries of confidentiality required by the BAPPS Complaints Procedure.
- xv) Members are responsible for making careful and appropriate consultation before former clients are taken on as supervisees or former supervisees are taken on as clients.

B4 DETRIMENTAL BEHAVIOUR OF MEMBERS

- i) Members are required to refrain from any behaviour that may be detrimental to the profession, colleagues or supervisees.
- ii) Members concerned that a colleagues conduct may be unprofessional to the profession, to colleagues or to supervisees, are required to initiate the Complaints Procedure of the relevant Member Organisation .

B5 ADVERTISING

- i) Members may advertise services; however advertising, , including the use of personal websites, must be limited to a statement of name, address, qualifications and type of supervision offered. Such statements should be descriptive but not evaluative.
- ii) The media should not be used in any way bring the Association or the Profession into disrepute.
- iii) Members should not use their membership of BAPPS when the media is used without prior clarification with the BAPPS board

B 6 PUBLICATION

- i) BAPPS Members are required to safeguard the welfare and anonymity of supervisees/patients/clients when any form of publication of clinical material is being considered and to obtain their consent whenever possible.

B 7 RESEARCH

- i) BAPPS Members are required to clarify with supervisees/patients/clients the nature, purpose and conditions of any research in which the supervisees/patients/clients are to be involved and to ensure that informed and verifiable consent is given before commencement

We would like to acknowledge the pioneering work done by BAC in preparing their Code of Ethics for Supervisors, and the important part it has played in influencing the preparation of this code.

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