



## Thinking Outside the Box: Providing Supervision for Home Based Social Workers

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## Changes in Providing Supervision

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- Economic Reality
- Distance and Mileage Costs
- Social Work Environment

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## Definition of Supervision Practice

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- NASW Social Work Supervision  
Principles in Practice
- Change Produces New Models of  
Supervision Practice

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Current Research on Supervision Model for Home Based Social Workers.

- Research is very limited
- Special Considerations for the Supervision of Home-Based Counselors by Gerard Lawson (Virginia Tech) May 2011
- Social Workers are confronted by Multiproblem/multichallenged families- Concrete Needs (financial assistance/ employment and transportation) and Emotional Problems.

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Current Research on Supervision Model for Home Based Social Workers.

- The existing research details the gaps in the training of counselors who will work in the home and the struggles that counselors experience while acclimating to the home environment.
- With those gaps and concerns illuminated, the importance of supporting the work of home-based counselors through effective supervision is highlighted.

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Current Research on Supervision Model for Home Based Social Workers.

- Supervision methods that have been used: Video, Case Consultation and Live supervision.
- Case consultation supervision relies almost exclusively on the report and interpretation of the counselor in guiding the supervision.
- For this reason, supervisors should be careful using case consultation supervision exclusively, particularly with inexperienced counselors.

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## Current Research on Supervision Model for Home Based Social Workers.

- **Littell and Tajima's A multilevel model of client participation in intensive family preservation services. *Social Service Review*,(2000) findings that counselor's perceptions of their supervision played a role in facilitating greater client collaboration and compliance with treatment and a strength-based perspective in counselors.**
- **Adequate and quality supervision was positively correlated with collaboration and compliance characteristics in families, and there was a negative correlation between supervision and a deficit orientation in the counselor.**

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## Current Research on Supervision Model for Home Based Social Workers.

- **Supervising Home Based Social Workers should focus on the following factors:**
  - **Managing Sessions**
  - **Using the Home Environment**
  - **Systemic Thinking**
  - **Safety Issues**

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## Home Based Model at Medica

- **Care Coordinators-Social Workers (LSW,LISW and LICSW) and Registered Nurses (RN and PHN) across Minnesota to provide home based care coordination for MSHO, MSC+,SNBC and Chronic SNP.**
- **Supervisors are also home based and provide supervision to up to 10 home based employees and a case load of up to 25 members.**

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## Home Based Model at Medica

- Supervisors balance providing supervision along with administration tasks and meetings.
- Care Coordinators meet twice a month- once in person at our corporate office and the other by Web-Ex/Secure Meeting.
- Individual supervision is once a month along with Care Coordinators having access to supervisor by cell phone and email.

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## Survey of Home Based Care Coordinators/Supervisors

- Results from 23 Care Coordinators/3 Supervisors
- Questions from the Survey
- Care Coordinators report:
  - What type of Supervision was beneficial-office or Web Ex?
  - More personal for 1:1's in person than on the phone
  - Depends on Content of the consultation-some questions are easier by phone or email and other in person.
  - Case Consultation is easier in person
  - Combination of in person and phone/secure meeting works best

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## Structure of Home Based Supervision

- Is using Secure Meeting Productive?
  - Less time consuming
  - Less distance/not convenient to meet in person all the time
  - All of your work is in front of you with secure meeting
- Does the meeting place outside of the office seem appropriate?
  - Building Relationship and getting out of the house to a coffee house/for food and talk is positive.
  - Important to be careful with confidential information in a public place

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## Structure of Home Based Supervision

- **What was your most productive supervision session?**

Discussion of cases

To feel I have a voice, a supporter to get suggestions and ideas on issues that are hard to do in group setting.

Template is used for the sessions and there is a structured agenda

Likes receiving a paper copy of the 1:1 session so she/he can remember the items discussed.

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## Structure of Home Based Supervision

- **Supervisors reported parts that are beneficial :**
- **Structure of the session**
- **Fact to Face is easier to read signals**
- **Once a month 1:1's are sufficient and more if performance issues.**
- **Negative aspects-inability to watch day to day operations or performance.**

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## Summary of Results from Survey

- Components of the supervisor/supervisee relationship need to have a more active envelopment and supportive elements.
- Structured individual sessions are important in addressing issues and being productive.
- Flexibility and positive feedback are important to develop a positive interact with supervisee.
- Structured meeting outside the office is a good break.

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## Structure of Home Based Supervision

- **Web-Ex/1:1-Alternate face to face**
- **Meeting place and confidentiality**  
Space needs to be private enough to discuss cases  
No use of client's names  
Wi-Fi Laptop for teaching
- **All Staff meeting structure**  
Important to have meetings with all staff at least once month in person (if possible).
- **Web-Ex-important to have an ice breaker on the phone and work with engaging topics to keep the interest level.**

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## Positive Aspects of Technology

- **Social Workers are able to work more effectively with fewer distractions.**
- **Satisfaction with work is higher. Less position turns over.**
- **Flexible schedule**

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## Negative Aspects

- **Social Workers who are unable to multi-task fall behind and have difficulty completing tasks.**
- **Social Workers who are less likely to engage (on the phone) are more difficult to evaluate work performance.**
- **Boundary and ethical issues may take longer to address.**
- **Miscommunication can cause a negative relationship between supervisor/supervisee.**

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## Transition from Office to Home

- Interview Process-Questions:
- Organization skills-time management
- Boundaries-"My work is my life" or "I am not able to work past.."
- New Hires:
- Develop Mentor Program-Supervisor will not be able to address every issue.
- Address isolation in the first year

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## Performance Issues

- Oversight is essential however micromanagement creates hostile environment.
- Red Flags-Multi-calls from clients, providers and community resources.
- Supervisee avoids meetings, paperwork and refuses to give information (no return phone calls, calendar not filled out and unable to find).

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## Break out groups

- How would you resolve the issue?
  
- What type of support do you need as a supervisor?
  
- Would the supervisee feel respected with the solution?

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## Case Examples

- **Group 1**

During a supervisory session your supervisee states that she is having a hard time with one of her clients. The client is a senior who has a hard time saying “no” to his family. The last home visit your supervisee felt “threatened” by one of the sons who was not satisfied with a service that she had put in and stated that “his father was at risk and if something happened, it was her fault”.

Your supervisee has been working in the field for about a year and has been a good performer but states “I do not know if I was cut out for this job”.

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## Case Examples

- **Group 2**

One of your supervisee’ has received a complaint regarding not showing up at an appointment with a member. You leave a voice and email message for him and he does not return your call. When you look at his calendar he has nothing for three days. The supervisee has worked on your team for about three years and has had overall good performance.

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## Case Examples

- **Group 3**

Your team has received a large influx of clients and you have heard negative comments from some of your team. During your team meeting at the beginning of the month on Web-Ex there were many silent moments and uncomfortable comments. The next meeting is in person, two social workers voice some uncomfortable negative comments about the agency and process.

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## Case Examples

- **Group 4**

During one of your document audits, you find out that your supervisee has not completed her assessments for the past three months. You schedule a 1:1 and she cancelled at the last minute saying that she needs to see a client in crisis. During the rescheduled 1:1 she states that there is too much to keep up with and you have not provided enough supervision to assist her. When probing deeper you discover that she feels very isolated and unhappy about her position.

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## Case Examples

- **Group 5**

During a Home Visit Audit your supervisee says some inappropriate cultural comments and the member is upset. After the home visit you ask him about his attitude and comments during the home visit and he states that he took a class and felt they were appropriate and when trying to correct his perceptions, he states- "Let's just agree to disagree".

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## Case Examples

- **Group 6**

You have been working longer hours due to one of your supervisee' quitting and left you with completing her documentation. One of your supervisee' has called you three times for non-important issues. One conversation you find yourself feeling irritated and are too quick with her. She complains to your clinical manager.

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## Summary

- Supervision can be an enriching experience.
- Receiving your own supervision and support from other supervisors is the most important part of providing effective supervision to others.
- Turn off your laptop at the end of the day.

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