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SUPERVISION POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. Staff are a key resource to RB Mind and RB Mind is committed to staff development and training. All staff should complete a course evaluation form (F8) following any training programme.
- 1.2. All staff have a right to expect a supportive enabling environment, which values staff and develops their skills and RBMind gives a high priority to supervision with the aim of maintaining high standards of work.
- 1.3. Supervision will be conducted in a way that recognises people as individuals, the unique experiences they bring to their work, and the impact their work has on them, including their race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and mental health.
- 1.4. RBMind believes that all staff have the right to formal regular, one to one, supervision. All staff will receive a minimum of 1 hour's supervision every 6 weeks or more regularly by agreement (the frequency can be reduced on a pro-rata basis for part-time staff).
- 1.5. During probation it may be necessary to plan more frequent supervision sessions.
- 1.6. Unpaid staff, working within the line management structure, must be given appropriate supervision time. The amount of time offered will depend on the number of hours worked and the nature of the work. This can include group supervision.
- 1.7. RBMind values the unique experience that people who are experiencing, or have experienced, mental health problems can bring to their work and the process will respect people's differing work needs and methods.



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- 1.8. Supervision should provide both positive and negative feedback and acknowledge the recipient's work and energy.

- 1.9. RBMind's annual appraisal forms part of the system of supervision. Supervision focuses predominately on a short-term review of work while appraisal concentrate on a longer-term and hence broader perspective.

2. AIMS

- 2.1 RBMind's supervision scheme aims to:
 - value a member of staff both as a worker and person
 - ensure that no one is left to carry unnecessary difficulty and problems alone
 - receive information and another perspective on one's work
 - plan and utilise personal and professional development
 - achieve appraisal objectives
 - be pro-active rather than reactive
 - offer and discuss practical solutions
 - problem-solve in relation to workload and priorities
 - ensure quality of work
 - give space to explore and express personal issues that may be affected by the work

- 2.2 The scheme aims to enable the individual to find their own solutions and to reflect on their work and any problems.

- 2.3 Supervision aims to cover the following components:

line management: line management involves aspects of accountability and responsibility. Every member of staff will have a line manager to whom s/he is accountable for each aspect of his or her work. The line manager is responsible for monitoring work undertaken by staff and has the authority to require that work be carried out in a particular way that relates to agreed objectives and the organisation's quality standards.

facilitation and support - the facilitation function is intended to enable members of staff to work to their full potential through discussion of their work. This process will include careful listening, offering encouragement, challenging and clarifying ideas and boundaries, helping to identify new directions and methods, encouraging creativity and offering advice, identifying patterns and blocks, allowing staff to consider the impact of other interactions. Central to this



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process is the need for an awareness of issues relating to the race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and mental health of the supervisor and supervisee, exploration of the worker's relationship with users, colleagues/other agencies and being sensitive to the impact on other the staff members of the work s/he undertakes.

There is a supervisory responsibility to provide personal support where this may be required, for example, because there are personal issues affecting the staff member's work performance. However it is not the supervisor's responsibility to provide counselling. The supportive aspect of management skills can be especially important when people are experiencing stress/mental health difficulties: managers need to find ways to support the individual and/or link people into the support they need.

learning and development - the training and development need of the member of staff should be identified and addressed.

exchange of information/resources - staff need to be able to control their work and be given the relevant information to understand their role in the context of corporate objectives and work plans. Management needs to ensure that staff have the resources to do the job and need to address deficiencies in practical ways.

practical issues - work priorities, leave and flexi-leave, diary planning etc

3. PURPOSE AND CONTENT

- 3.1 The main purposes of supervision are direction, support, encouragement and assessment of training needs. Supervision ensures that staff and line managers meet regularly to discuss work and work related issues. Supervision provides a regular space for staff to reflect on their work with their line manager.
- 3.2 The line manager and member of staff should agree the purpose, structure and content of supervision in a "supervision contract".
The supervision contract should cover the purpose of supervision at RBMind and the elements listed above.
- 3.3 As the line manager, the supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that the staff member:
 - receives appropriate support in his/her work
 - has his/her training and development needs identified and met
 - does relevant work
 - upholds organisational and quality standards



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- 3.4 It is the responsibility of each Director (or line manager's manager) to ensure that all staff are receiving all aspects of supervision from a person with the necessary skills.

4. SUPERVISION CONTRACT

- 4.1 The supervisor must agree a supervision contract with the member of staff at the beginning of the supervisory relationship

- 4.2 The supervision contract must be in writing within RBMind's format. This will be reviewed annually or as appropriate.

- 4.3 In agreeing a contract the supervisor and supervisee should discuss:

- the purpose
- the structure
- the style
- goals
- nature and boundaries of the relationship
- any other specific support needs

- 4.4 The contract will list:

- the frequency - once every 4-6 weeks
- duration - at least an hour
- place - should be quiet and confidential
- confidentiality - *clarify* what sort of information may need to be taken over the boundary of the relationship and how this would be done
- recording - how will the notes be kept, what will they include
- review date

- 4.5 The supervisor is responsible for negotiating with the staff member a mutually agreed contract. He/she should ensure that the purpose is clear. It is important that the supervisor and supervisee explore their expectations, resolving any conflict of purpose. Issues of style and any fears concerning the working relationship should also be discussed.

5. SUPERVISION NOTES

- 5.1 The person writing up the minutes should make notes during each supervision session. The staff member is entitled to a copy of the notes that should be kept in a secure place. The aim of the notes is to record shared agreements.



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5.2 The notes should be brief and should include the following:

- the date of the supervision
- the name of the member of staff
- the name of the manager
- a summary of the discussion topics
- any points of action or agreements made (e.g. work standards, future action, and agreed deadlines);
- any management decisions or instructions
- consequences of failure to follow agreements work standards or management instructions.
- a record of any disagreement (initialled by member of staff)

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1 Supervision sessions are usually confidential meetings between a manager and member of staff. However, there may be occasions when information may be divulged to another party, e.g. the supervisor's manager, or in the case of a supervisee, a union representative. Supervision notes may be open to investigation as part of disciplinary, grievance or anti- harassment procedures, health and safety investigation.

6.2 Where a new or "acting" manager is appointed, with supervisory responsibilities, previous supervision notes for the staff members s/he will supervise should be accessible to him/her, with agreement by member of staff.

6.3 The manager should specify under what circumstance confidentiality with regard to supervision would not be broken for example personal information, and this should agreed in the contract.

6.4 It may be that information needs to be communicated to others as a result of discussion in the meeting. This should be agreed at the meeting including who to, whose responsibility this is and how it should be communicated.

7. OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

7.1 At the beginning of each appraisal period, objective and work standards will be agreed in the key work areas for each individual. Progress towards these objectives and work standards should be reviewed and monitored throughout the year in supervision sessions.



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- 7.2 Action plans will need to be implemented and training needs addressed during the course of the 12-month period. The appraisal form, is therefore, a working document that should be referred to throughout the year. (See Appraisal Policy)
- 7.3 Supervision sessions should include discussions to review progress towards achieving objectives.

8. TRAINING AND INDUCTION

- 8.1 On implementation all staff will be made fully aware of this policy through training and briefing sessions.
- 8.2 All new staff will be informed during their induction of this policy.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 9.1 RBMind will monitor the policy to ensure consistency.
- 9.2 The policy will also be reviewed to ensure it meets the need of both supervisees and supervisors.
- 9.3 The Director will be responsible for producing procedures for monitoring and review.

GUIDANCE FOR SUPERVISEE

1. **What are your rights?**

- 1.1 You have the right to expect regular supervision
- 1.2 This will take place no less than every 6 weeks and planned for no less than 1 hour. Once agreed the session will not be cancelled (exceptionally sessions can be re-arranged, but must be rescheduled)
- 1.3 Once you meet if you do not need the whole hour you can use less time, by mutual agreement.
- 1.4 A supervision contract which is agreed between you and your line manager.



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- 1.5 If you are not receiving regular and effective supervision you should talk to the union, another manager or the Human Resource department to resolve this issue.

2. **What do you have to do?**

- 2.1 Prepare for your supervision sessions (see 4)
- 2.2 Report the work you have undertaken since the last session
- 2.3 Participate in negotiating an agenda for the session
- 2.4 Work within agreed time scales
- 2.5 Be open to constructive feedback !
- 2.6 Be committed to and involved in the process of supervision
- 2.7 contribute to an open and honest relationship

3. **What can you expect?**

- 3.1 An agenda
- 3.2 To be respected and valued an individual
- 3.3 Time to discuss your needs
- 3.4 To be given acknowledgement if your needs cannot be met
- 3.5 To be listened to
- 3.6 That your manager has prepared for the supervision session
- 3.7 Confidentiality is maintained regarding the content of supervision
- 3.8 Notes from your manager
- 3.9 To be given clear and reasonable guidelines/expectations on work deadlines and performance.
- 4.0 To be given adequate resources to achieve expectations and deadlines.

4. **How should you prepare for supervision?**

- 4.1 Keep notes of topics you want to raise between sessions and add these to the agenda
- 4.2 Ask for clarification
- 4.3 Make sure your supervisor is clear about the things you need to do your job well
- 4.4 Discuss your ideas for further training and development
- 4.5 Ask for feed-back



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GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

Setting up supervision sessions

- 1.1 You must establish supervision sessions with all the staff that you manage.
- 1.2 These sessions will take place no less than every 6 weeks and last for no less than 1 hour and once agreed should not be cancelled (exceptionally sessions can be re-arranged, but must be rescheduled)
- 1.3 Once you meet if you do not need the whole hour you can use less e time, by mutual agreement.
- 1.4 You need to agree a supervision contract with each individual.
- 1.5 You should take notes of each meeting and give a copy to the member of staff.
- 1.6 If there is a note/record of disagreement, you should get this initialled by the member of staff.

2. What do you need to do?

- 2.1 Agree an agenda for each meeting
- 2.2 Prepare for the sessions
- 2.3 Provide clarity about your expectations
- 2.4 Listen and be open
- 2.5 Be committed to and involved in the process of supervision

3. What can you expect?

- 3.1 That preparation for supervision will happen
- 3.2 It is acceptable to challenge and be challenged
- 3.3 That allocated tasks will be completed

4. Agenda

The agenda for each meeting should cover the following standard items:

1. Report back on period since last supervision/feedback on previous tasks
2. Current work issues/monthly report/workload/priorities
3. Objectives/targets/review of progress on current work



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4. Issues/problems/difficulties
5. Training and development
6. Exchange of information
7. Other issues
8. Practical issues/leave/flexi-time
9. Date, time, place of next meeting

5. **Objectives**

The following questions could be used when considering the individual's objectives:

- What work have you been doing in the last month?
- What do you feel have been your successes or things you feel good about this month?
- What are you having any problems with?
- Are there any interesting issues to flag up?
- What difficulties could be coming up?
- What areas are being ignored/not getting done? If so, why?
- Are there any changes to be made to the objectives?
- What do you need from me?

6. **Main tools and skills**

- . Questions
- . Active listening skills
- . Effective feedback skills
- . Creative and positive problem solving
- . Reflection
- . Honesty
- . Confidentiality
- . Objectivity