

REPORT OF CRITICAL REVIEW OF SUPERVISION

BACKGROUND:

This review arose from Council's Planning Day in 2015, in which one of the strategic goals was to critically review existing structures and processes in the interests of creating an Association able to promote psychotherapy and provide a place of belonging and development for psychotherapists. This planning day recognized that a growing organization had to be able to shed itself of attitudes and processes that would hinder this growth.

Council established a small group to write a brief for a committee to work to and approached four members to form such a committee. The committee was asked to produce a report efficiently and economically. The committee comprised Sarah Robins (Christchurch, Council member) Diane Zwimpfer (Wellington) Louise Marmont (Nelson) and Gabriela Mercado (Auckland).

The brief was as follows:

Brief:

- Assess the place of supervision within NZAP, particularly within in the context of registration
- Review the place and role for RSGs
 - Review their relationship to a central NZAP committee
- Advise on: the place and need for a Supervision Committee. Consider:
 - purpose, size, scope, membership, budget and MOU with the Council
- Seek advice from NZAP members and others as needed
- Consider the link between supervision and professional development.
- Advise on: training or workshop strategies in the next 2-3 years

PROCESS:

Each committee member became familiar with the history of the Supervision Committee and NZAP's structure with the help of such documents as our brief, the Final Report of the SPDC, the Supervision Handbook, the Code of Ethics and an informal summary of the history NZAP with regard to supervision.

Each of us reported in by email at two separate points in time about our then-current thoughts and understandings of the issues. Reading each other's thoughts and consulting widely with known colleagues and stakeholders enabled us to deepen our understanding of the complexities involved and the issues that seemed to be most relevant.

A call through Connect to ask for members' views elicited few responses and we all attempted personal conversations with members about the issues. The "member-on-the-street" expressed views about the ideals of supervision but had insufficient knowledge of NZAP to understand the structural and process issues that were under review.

Through our own individual deepening understandings over these two email "meetings" we were able to meet in Wellington in early December with quite informed minds and a readiness to see if we could reach an agreed critical analysis of the difficulties and their solutions.

We spent a solid day working through the issues with the help of an agenda, interpolating our discussions with emailed contributions from members.

As the day progressed we seemed to quite naturally come to be of one mind about the issues and the solutions, albeit perhaps somewhat radical ones. It was helpful that we were a mix of people in terms of our length of experience with NZAP. We were from four different centres and two of us are supervisors. This mix gave us more confidence that we represented some diversity and could avoid establishment bias.

We were mindful of the concept of the "drag" in institutions when facing changes which was emphasized in the Council planning day with Hamish Brown, and felt able to recognize when this kind of anachronistic thinking was being presented to us and when we could discern it in ourselves. We felt it important that we consciously release ourselves from assumptions about structures and processes within NZAP which belong to an earlier, pre-registration era.

EMERGING ISSUES;

The themes which quickly emerged out of material consulted, of our own observations and from expressed views of members could be summarized as follows:

- Replication of supervision with PBANZ
- Non-compliance with written processes
- Variability between regions in their use of current structures and processes
- Very high level of expressed need and wish for professional development through supervision and other input, and wonderings about training for supervisors
- Very strong perception of almost all RSGs creating a hierarchy with senior colleagues not attending branch meetings

EMERGING ANALYSIS:

We used a structural analysis to help clarify our thinking; this analysis focused on whether processes and proposals were **required, provided created or desired**. A structural analysis enabled an abstraction from the content of our processes to being able to recognize and name the nature of the various relationships between membership and the Association:

We have operated as an association **requiring** particular things to become and to remain a member. Little was **provided** apart from things intrinsic to the value of belonging. When there is a high degree of **requirement** in an organization there is little room for **creation**.

We are aware, as has been Council, that our Association is beginning to be very changed as a result of registration. Primarily, one becomes a member through either Registration or the ACP (or HAMACP). Almost all members are registered and are subject to conditions and audits around supervision which are more stringent than anything our association ever had. The members recognized this and shortly after Registration began to not bother with the supervision contracts submitted to RSGs. (Reported to Council by NSG Chair and anecdotally within Branches). This was the first major indication that RSGs and the National Supervision Committee would be starting to be unsure of their function and at our last AGM the membership voted to dispense with formal supervision contracts.

We felt that for our Association to be relevant and attractive in this age, there had to be a absolute minimum of **requirements**, and in order to respond to members' expressed **desires**, there needed to be an emphasis on what the Association could **provide** to members nationally in terms of professional development, including supervision. There also needed to be some kind of greater space opened up at branch level for local initiatives to be **created**.

OUR PROPOSALS:

1. RSGs

In view of the fact that, following Registration, RSGs have lost their formal functions it seemed to make sense to recommend that we **disband the RSGs and instead have someone on each branch committee who holds a supervision portfolio**. We see this as potentially going a long way to solve the often expressed desire to have senior members attending branch meetings to provide the richness of their clinical experience and wisdom. Supervisors could continue to meet in peer groups to discuss supervision issues, but they would be freer then to discuss non-NZAP supervision and also freer to choose their own circles of trust as these groups would no longer hold any title or official relationship to the Branch or to the Association.

The person (a senior supervisor is envisaged) holding the supervision portfolio on the branch committee could approve the supervision contracts of non-registered members. These approved contracts are not compulsory but

are needed if the EO is asked to provide a Certificate of Membership. This person (and any others as need arises) could also be the person to approve the supervision contract for any member who has returned after three years' absence. This seems to be the only process left which requires some formal oversight. (It is also noted by us that actually if all that is needed is confirmation of the existence of a Supervision Contract, this could equally be done by the EO.)

We envision and hope that this proposal would result in branches creating their own focus on supervision in the form of discussions and presentations.

We also see this structural change as enabling individual branches to become the primary source of information, discussion and initiatives. Branches have a formal relationship to Council and a clear two way communication is possible. This is in comparison with the RSGs which have no formal relationship to Council but which seem to occupy positions of power without transparency. Council affirmed at its Planning Day the wish to not support hierarchies.

2. ACP:

We realized that the ACP committee and process are now totally separate within NZAP, linked only to Council. We could see that its system of enforceable supervision contracts and attendant ACP Training Supervisors' Groups lent itself more to a national focus than to a regional focus. With relatively few ACP candidates, and fewer in the future, we thought that Training Supervisors would especially in the smaller centres need to join with other centres to fulfill their functions. Therefore we thought that to remain with an ACP RSG descriptor was not useful, particularly as it could give rise to there being a perception that there still existed a regional supervisors' group with the attendant problems that this perception brings. We therefore suggested that in each region the group of Training Supervisors who meet to discuss their supervision of their ACP candidates be **renamed ACP Training Supervisors' Group** in each region.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

We did not neglect the part of the brief which asked us to look at the relationship between supervision and professional development. We were very clear that a significant part of professional development is through supervision, and that opportunities to develop supervision skills are needed. In addition it was recognized that professional development needs to become the major thrust of **provision** to our members. This is clearly in the area of the committee charged with reviewing Professional Development.

We also looked at the Supervision Handbook and if our proposals are accepted, almost the entire contents of this handbook become redundant. We propose that this handbook be deleted from the website, and instead a

paragraph inserted in some relevant part of our website emphasizing the value of supervision.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS:

- Council formally disestablish the NSPD Committee
- Council formally disestablish all RSGs
- All Branch Committees have a senior member holding a supervision portfolio
- Locus of communication and creativity be in branches
- Rename ACP RSG group as ACP Training Supervisors' Group
- Emphasis of focus and energies away from supervision onto Professional Development
- Deletion of Supervision Handbook from Website. Statement about value of supervision inserted in Website.

We attach a diagram which shows the structures, lines of communication and processes which we envisage would result if our recommendations are accepted.

CONCLUSION:

We submit this report to Council to consider and appreciate the privilege of being given time and space to think about such an important topic in the interests of our association and its members.

Diane Zwimpfer (Chair)

Sarah Robins

Gabriela Mercado

Louise Marmont

