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1	Liz Westlund	Doug Canning	September 2016	

Case Management Supervision Policy for Youth Offending Services

Introduction:

This policy/guidance sets out the requirement for specific formal one-to-one casework supervision requirement for all members of the Youth Offending Service. Supervision has other purposes beyond case management including staff learning and development, performance management and HR matters such as booking annual leave. Details of this and supervision agreement templates can be found on Izzi for LBI staff.

Who does this policy relate to?

This policy covers all staff in the Youth Offending Service (YOS). The term “line manager” is used to describe a staff member who holds a managerial position and is responsible for supervision of staff. The term “case manager” is used to describe all case holding staff.

What is this policy?

Delivering YOS services involves working with young people and families, who often present a high level of risk of harm to others, as well as complex needs, safety & well-being challenges. The nature of the work is a stressful activity which involves managing risk, results in both professional and organisational anxiety.

The supervision process is in itself valuable to the case manager but will also provide a level of assurance that the work being carried out is of a high quality. Through supervision, every case manager and line manager demonstrates their accountability for the children, young people and families they are working with on their caseload.

Casework supervision is the process in which a line manager and case manager meet to discuss and review the case managers’ caseload in a formal one-to-one setting. Supervision provides case managers with a safe and confidential space to reflect on both their professional and personal responses to their work. It takes place at a pre-agreed, regular time in a private setting where there are no interruptions.

Line Managers’ primary function is to supervise the practice and decision making of the case managers. They have a key role in developing the knowledge, skills and confidence of case managers in order that they can deliver purposeful and effective outcomes for young people. They need to effectively and ethically use the influence and authority the organisation has given them, to be confident in analysing and decision-making and have a good understanding of the crucial role they play in quality assurance, performance management and improvement.

Rather than supervision of cases being solely a retrospective discussion of tasks that have been completed (or will be completed) line managers need to be curious about practice, asking how and why as well as what and when. They should encourage the case managers to explore various hypotheses to aid an understanding of a young person’s/family’s situation. Line Managers should use coaching and guiding techniques to help shape the trajectory of the work and the interventions

required. Supervision will focus on young person's safety & well-being and risks to them and harm to others. However, the work carried out must also be balanced by an understanding of young person's strengths through implement the "Good Lives Model", as well as family strengths, both current and potential.

Line Managers may need to help case managers recognise behaviours in young people that may indicate disguised compliance, resistance to change, ambivalent or selective cooperation with services, and be able to proportionally identify whether there may need to be immediate action taken, and if so, what steps should be taken to protect the young person, the wider community and potential victims of crime. Where a more planned approach is needed, line managers need to help guide case managers in the development of proportionate interventions to ensure our young people achieve intended outcomes to stop offending, effectively manage risks of serious harm and to appropriately promote health & well-being.

Why is case management supervision important?

Supervision is a complex activity that offers a number of benefits for the organisation, the line manager and the case manager.

For the **organisation** it:

- Provides a mechanism for ensuring young people are accurately assessed, and there is a good plan in place, and the young person and their family receive good quality, goal based and outcome focussed services.
- Provides a constant check on the safety and wellbeing of children, ensuring that identified risks are managed and new risks identified, assessed and addressed.
- Ensures that all staff understand the values and principles behind the Good Lives model, work in a restorative way, and understand that young people's offending behaviour is frequently influenced by past experience of trauma
- Promotes accountability to the organisation standards and policies, as well as local and national good practice.
- Demonstrates LBI's commitment to developing and supporting staff.

For the **Line Manager** it:

- Ensures that case managers receive the appropriate level of support, guidance and coaching (commensurate to their experience) in order to agree the direction of cases and ultimately improve the outcome for young people and families.
- Assists in evaluating the difference interventions are making in young people /families lives and its purposefulness.
- Helps case managers to make case decisions based on sources of evidence, observations and analysis, taking account of the perspective of young people
- Creates an ethos within which staff are motivated and supported to be ambitious on behalf of young people and families, victims of crime and the wider community.
- Provides, via case discussion and reflection, a level of quality assurance about the quality of YOS services and assures accountability for the highest professional standards and professional conduct.
- Ensures that cases are being planned and managed in accordance with the organisation's standards and policies as well as accepted best practice and lessons from research.
- Provides a structure for recognising the strengths and development needs of case managers
- Contributes to the continued learning and development of their supervisees to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and capability to undertake their role
- Provides oversight of the workload of case managers and highlights any issues with capacity or competency.

For the **Case Manager** it:

- Ensures that the Case Manager is clear about their role, responsibility and accountability
- provides the opportunity to recognise own professional limitations and how and when to seek advice
- Provides the opportunity to reflect on case direction, makes clear assessments based on evidence and manages goal based interventions including promoting early revocation on good progress (where appropriate & safe to do so) and exit strategies .
- Provides a space to explore multiple perspectives, the role of intuition and logic in decision-making, the difference between opinion and fact, the role of evidence, how to address common bias in situations of uncertainty and the reasoning of any conclusions reached and recommendations made.
- Allows them to demonstrate a critical understanding of the difference between theory, research, evidence and expertise and the role of professional judgment within that.
- Allows them to increase their autonomy and decision making in line with experience and capability
- Provides a process to reflect and receive feedback and coaching on their practice and development.

How?

Line Managers are asked to facilitate supervision that actively models the principles of reflection and analysis. Whilst tracking tasks agreed at a previous supervision is important, it is vital that this is not prioritised over reflection and analysis.

Frequency

- Formal one-to-one case supervision means a one-to-one meeting between case manager and their line manager in which all cases allocated to the case manager are reviewed and discussed. **Formal one-to-one case supervision MUST take place at a minimum of once every calendar month for all case-holding practitioners.**
- When a case manager is on leave (due to sickness or AL) which results in a gap in supervision, this must be clearly recorded on the Child View record and on the subsequent supervision record. Line Managers will need to give thought to re-allocating cases due to staff absences, particularly for any high-risk cases and/or for prolonged periods of absence. Supervision must be scheduled as a priority when the case manager returns.
- **Every open case, without exception, must be discussed each monthly supervision.**
- This policy applies to all staff, permanent and agency. New case managers and some case managers from time to time may have increased frequency of supervision timeframes reflecting their need for closer supervision and direction.
- Much of the information line managers and case managers will use in supervision will already be available from the fortnightly “Stat Wednesday” data cleansing process, as well as records on Child View and other reports run by the Performance Team. The line manager should prepare prior to the supervision session by reviewing cases, checking whether young people have been seen, whether assessments, planning and reviewing has taken place. By covering the basics prior to the session, line managers will create more time for reflective discussion focusing on the dynamics of the case rather than by going through a checklist of tasks that have, or have not, been completed. Equally, case managers need to prepare for supervision by deciding in advance which cases require a more in-depth discussion.

- The agenda should be set at the beginning of the supervision session in order that cases that require in-depth discussions can be agreed.
- Many cases will be stable and need only a basic check in. However, these cases still to be screened, albeit briefly. This allows line managers to satisfy themselves that plans are on track, that any issues are picked up on and that actions from the previous supervision have been undertaken. If for any reason they haven't been completed, the reasons can be noted. A case note supervision record on the young person's Child View record must be made by the line manager in a timely manner evidencing that these cases have been discussed, even if this is brief. This record within 5 working days or 24 hours for any significant case decisions and/or urgent matters.
- Some cases will be more complex and require a much more in-depth reflective discussion. This should review the evidence and the case dynamics with proportionate interventions and tasks being planned and then reviewed. A case note supervision record on the young person's Child view file for these cases also needs to be created by the line manager in a timely manner (within 5 working days or 24 hours for any significant case decisions and/or urgent matters). This record needs to capture the essence of the reflective discussion as well as demonstrating the planned intervention/task in relation to the level of risk identified.
- It is envisaged that in order to cover a typical caseload a case manager and line manager would need a two hour formal case supervision session once a month and additionally attending twice monthly peer case discussion & reflection for a total of 2 hours. However, this should be reviewed at times of exceptional circumstances of pressure on the service.
- As part of the multi-agency YOS, Specialist workers play a critical role of supporting case responsible case managers. We recognise that Specialist staff across Health, Education, Probation & Police are seconded into the Youth Offending Service, and there are distinct Service Level Agreements which will cover supervision of specialist staff. Specialist Workers are still required to have supervision every calendar month

Management oversight and informal supervision

- Informal supervision takes place as case managers update their line managers on cases, seek advice or help in situations on an on-going basis. This may happen many times between one-to-one formal case supervision; it is to be encouraged and is good practice but does NOT replace a formal one-to-one supervision session.
- The Service would recognise that case direction is sometimes given by the duty manager or others in the absence of the line manager. Nevertheless line managers should wherever possible is the main first contact point for practitioners.
- Any significant issues discussed in informal supervision or formal supervision, particularly if it influences a change in direction of the case, should be clearly recorded on the young person's Child View record by the line manager in a timely manner (within 5 working days or 24 hours for any significant case decisions and/or urgent matters) and be revisited at the next formal one-to-one supervision session.
- Discussions at MARP (Multi-Agency Risk Panel) as well as the outcomes of case audits are examples in which t significant issues may be raised with decisions made. These processes provide evidence of management involvement and oversight of casework. Therefore, it is

vital that they are recorded on the young person's Child View record in a timely manner demonstrating a clear management footprint on the case file.

- All management decisions involving cases outside of the one-to-one formal supervision need to be recorded on the young person's Child View file using the 'Management Supervision of Case' heading. It is the responsibility of the manager involved to make this recording and to do so in a timely manner. This provides both a clear record for the case manager, as well as a record for other managers becoming involved at a later stage. Ultimately, it also provides a record for the young person and family to explain how important decisions about their lives have been made, and that due consideration was given to the circumstances at the time.

Team Manager grade & above: Supervision and oversight

- Within the current Youth Offending Service structure, Team managers are required to provide supervision to deputy team managers a minimum of once a calendar month. This applies equally to Managers of the same and higher grade as the Team Managers up to Assistant Director, that there should be regular formal supervision of staff. There is an expectation that in part they should use this opportunity to check that case supervision is happening for the case managers in their teams. They will also need to ensure that they have checks and assurance mechanisms in place to satisfy them that there is an unbroken chain of formal supervision that links the case manager, to their line manager (DTM), to the Team Manager, to the Operational Service Manager, to the Head of Service to the Assistant Director.

Group Supervision

- Good practice indicates that any form of group supervision does not replace the need for formal 1:1 case supervision. Equally any significant issues discussed through informal supervision, particularly if they influence a change in direction of the case, should be clearly recorded by the line manager in a timely manner (within 5 working days or 24 hours for any significant case decisions and/or urgent matters) and be revisited at the next formal one-to-one supervision session.

This policy is effective as of 1st October, 2016