

5 Clinical Supervision Standard

PACFA values the role of clinical supervision as professional development that supports its registrants, and safeguards both their practice and those who access their services.

This standard provides a definition of terms relating to supervision and outlines the annual requirements for supervision.

Does this standard apply to me?

This standard applies to all registered counsellors, psychotherapists and Indigenous Healing Practitioners.

Definition of terms relating to clinical supervision

Clinical supervision

Clinical supervision is a contractual, collaborative process which monitors, develops and supports supervisees in their clinical role.

In clinical supervision, the central focus is on both the optimum outcome for the client, and the professional development and self-care of the supervisee.

The process of clinical supervision is seen to encompass a number of significant components, including a formal agreement between the supervisor and supervisee.

It is an opportunity for supervisees to present relevant material regarding their clinical practice via case discussion, recordings of client sessions, role plays, etc., allowing space for reflective review by the supervisee and feedback by the supervisor. The supervisory relationship and process of supervision should be congruent with the developmental needs of the supervisee.

Clinical supervision can be undertaken as individual supervision and group supervision, and for senior practitioners, peer supervision may be undertaken (see definitions below).

Individual supervision

Individual supervision refers to clinical supervision undertaken by an individual supervisee with a designated supervisor.

Group supervision

Group supervision is facilitated by a designated supervisor who simultaneously provides clinical supervision and facilitates the group supervision process. Group supervision can be comprised of 2 to 6 supervisee members.

Peer supervision

Peer supervision is a formal process where practitioners contract to provide collegial critiquing and enhancement of each other's clinical client work. Peers work together for mutual benefit, rotating the roles of supervisor and supervisee. Peer supervision can be undertaken as a dyad or within a small group of no more than 6 members.

Peer supervision is for senior practitioners only, who have been Registered Clinical registrants of PACFA for a minimum of 5 continuous years prior to the commencement of peer supervision.

Supervisor

A supervisor is a practitioner with a minimum of 5 years' clinical experience who has supervision competencies which are equivalent to the requirements of the PACFA Supervision Training Standards. The supervisor is generally seen to have more experience than the supervisee with regard to professional seniority, skill development, and possibly within a particular specialty.

Group supervisor

A group supervisor who facilitates a group of supervisees has developed specific skills to conduct the group process and to manage any group dynamics that arise. Group facilitation skills are needed in addition to the requirements for supervisors.

When you apply for registration

You will be required to commit to completing the annual requirements for clinical supervision during your application for registration.

While you hold registration

Sourcing your clinical supervisor

Your supervisor does not have to be a PACFA registrant but ideally is so. Your supervisor may be from a cognate field. Your supervisor of choice must nonetheless meet the criteria outlined in the supervisor definition above. If you are a Certified Practising registrant, you are, however, encouraged to use a Registered Clinical registrant as your supervisor.

Format of clinical supervision

Supervision may take the form of individual or group sessions (refer above).

If you are a Certified Practising Registrant, half of your supervision annually is to be individual supervision, to meet the individual supervision requirement for an [upgrade to Clinical registration](#).

Registrants who are eligible to claim peer supervision (refer above) may claim a maximum of 50% of their required supervision hours as peer supervision.

Hours of clinical supervision required annually

Registrants are required to undertake a minimum of 10 hours of clinical supervision of their client work in the 12-month period from July to June each year.

If a registrant accrues over 400 client practice hours in a 12-month period from July to June, they must undertake a minimum of 15 hours of clinical supervision in that period.

Registrants who are PACFA Mental Health Practitioners, or who are PACFA Accredited Supervisors, are required to undertake a minimum of 15 hours of clinical supervision in any 12-month period from July to June each year, irrespective of their client load. It is recommended that 5 hours of the 15 required hours relate specifically to their specialisation in either mental health or in clinical supervision.

Maintaining a supervision log

Maintaining an up-to-date log of your supervision hours, and distinguishing individual from group supervision, is required.

Your supervision log may be in a hard copy format. In addition, you have the option of logging the details of each session directly into the PACFA Member Portal.

Keeping this supervision log along with your client log, will guide you in determining the number of clinical supervision hours that you need to accrue in the 12-month period from July to June each year.

At renewal of registration

When you apply to renew your registration each year, you are required to have entered details of the clinical supervision undertaken into the PACFA Member Portal. This involves either multiple entries detailing each supervision session (as outlined above) or a single entry for each supervisor, providing their name and the total hours they provided you clinical supervision.

If you joined PACFA part-way through the year and have been a registrant for less than 12 months at your first renewal, the hours of CPD required are adjusted pro rata.

You are also required to keep evidence of your annual clinical supervision hours, that have been verified by your respective supervisor(s). It is recommended that the [PACFA Annual Verification Form](#) be used. This form does not need to be submitted at the time of renewal, but is to be kept in your professional portfolio for audit purposes.

Audit of hours of supervision records

An audit of clinical supervision records will be conducted on a rolling 3 yearly basis with all registrants being audited once every 3 years.

You will be notified in writing if you are selected for audit and will be required to submit signed evidence from your supervisor/s of your supervision undertaken, for one or more of the years in the previous 3-year period.

Review

This registration standard will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

Next review date: March 2026

This standard is effective from March 2023.