

The Implementation of Clinical Supervision

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Our Definition of Clinical Supervision

Planning, directing, monitoring and evaluating the work of another in the context of a collaborative mentoring relationship

The Purpose of the Work

By providing technical assistance directly within agencies we hope to:

1. Strengthen the value of clinical supervision at the agency level.
2. Increase direct observation, feedback and mentoring of direct service staff.
3. Improve counselor performance.

The Implementation Steps

1. Assess the agency for “readiness”
2. Train clinical supervisors in mentoring.
3. Distribute TAP 21 to all counselors.
4. Establish regular meetings between clinical supervisors and direct service staff.
5. Discuss the model of supervision and the implications for the counselor.
6. Provide performance assessment tools, the professional development plan and assist counselors with self rating of TAP 21 competencies.

More Steps

7. Supervisor observes the counselors at work.
8. Supervisor provides strength-based feedback.
9. Supervisor and counselors collaborate on a professional development plan.
10. The supervisor teaches, mentors and coaches the counselor.
11. The supervisor observes and assesses performance resulting from professional development plan activities.
12. Celebrate success and develop a new plan to continue skill improvement.

How it is working so far

We have completed implementation projects in three agencies and have 6 on-going projects in Washington and Oregon.

The State of Idaho adopted this model for all agencies providing services under contract with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.

Lessons Learned

1. Top management must be willing to support the effort 100%.
2. There must be a well defined process for bi-directional communication.
3. The agency must be prepared for change to occur at many levels.
4. The consultant must be flexible - agencies will not implement on the same schedule.
5. There must be a commitment from all levels of the agency and especially the clinical supervisory staff.

More Lessons

6. An external consultant is essential to be a guide, mentor and support to the clinical supervisors.
7. There must be a “sustainability” plan so that the model will be continued after the work of the consultant is finished.
8. There must be a strong CHANGE leader within the agency who will support and guide the process.
9. The implementation of this type of clinical supervision may precipitate other changes within the agency.

Stumbling Blocks

- ▶ Lack of “actual” commitment to the implementation process by upper management.
- ▶ Lack of commitment by members of the clinical supervision team.
- ▶ Lack of strong leadership by the CHANGE leader.
- ▶ Agencies often have more going on at any given time than the staff can manage effectively.

When we are successful

- ▶ “We will never go back to the way we used to do supervision”
- ▶ Counselors value feedback.
- ▶ Supervisors gain confidence in both themselves and their supervisees.
- ▶ Management has tools to assure safety and effectiveness of clinical services.
- ▶ Agencies retain valued staff and lose some whose performance is unacceptable.

What's next?

- ▶ Watch for the *Clinical Supervision in Substance Abuse Treatment* TIP due to be published in 2009.

Let me Know if I Can Help

Thank you

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