



**Churches
of Christ**

Building Communities
of Hope & Compassion

SUPERVISION

BETTER TOGETHER

“Quis custodiet Ipsos custodes?”

(Who will care and protect the carers?)

Juvenal, Satires, vi: 347-8

Updated 13.11.2017

churchesofchrist.org.au/supervision

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WHAT IS SUPERVISION?

Churches of Christ Vic/Tas (CCVT) is committed to doing better at building Communities of Hope and Compassion and developing Leaders to lead them. We know we will be doing better when each affiliated community is a safe place for everybody to grow in their discipleship of Jesus, and in their relationships with one another. The Supervision of People in Ministry in CCVT is a vital element in developing safe places. CCVT hopes to support those in ministry to meet with the increasing demands of their role and better support their diverse communities so that together they can be a sign, witness, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.

Supervision is a joint endeavour in which a minister, with the help of a Supervisor, develops themselves in relation to their ministry and wider context, attends to the people they minister to and, by developing their own practice, feeds back into the knowledge and effectiveness of the wider CCVT Movement. To better understand the meaning behind the word Supervision, we delve deeper into each phrase below.

Supervision is a joint endeavor...

It is vital to recognise that Supervision is not a passive activity for the Supervisee, it involves both parties working in partnership, together facing the challenges of ministry, in service of the Supervisee and the wider mission.

...in which a minister develops themselves in relation to their ministry and wider context...

A key element of Supervision is to allow a minister to reflect on practise, learn, and be held and supported in that process.

...attends to the people they minister to...

Supervision always involves the community the Supervisee ministers in, otherwise it becomes an activity in counselling. Done well, Supervision is a time where the Supervisee can stand back and reflect on their community and the people they minister to so as to understand and serve them better.

...feeds back into the knowledge and effectiveness of the wider CCVT Movement.

Supervision should be a source of organisational learning. It is important to note that Supervision is not a process where the more experienced shape the practise, behaviour, and understanding of the novice, but rather a place where the Supervisor and Supervisee are standing side by side to together face the challenges of ministry. Supervision can be an effective tool to support an organisational culture which aims to constantly learn and develop.

Supervision starts with the premise that God is active in the minister and the life of the church. CCVT believes that healthy ministry requires those in ministry to continue in community with one another, it is the type of work that cannot be met with in isolation. A humble posture and a commitment to Lifelong Learning is required. Supervision lends itself to the practice of discernment, firstly about God's activity in both the minister and the church, and secondly in terms of our response—this will vary from situation to situation. In Supervision, we will learn, we will be challenged, we will be supported, and we will discover and face the risks of entering into the mystery of God's call and where it leads us. Whatever the circumstance, Supervision is to be one place where joy and pain can be freely expressed, but also a space of resurrection, redemption, and healing.

CCVT SUPERVISION PATHWAYS

CCVT aims to enable those in ministry to access Supervision through two primary pathways, Registered Supervision and Accredited Supervision.

REGISTERED SUPERVISION

Registered Supervision is Supervision practised by an experienced Minister/professional who has completed a lower level of training. Training will be provided through CCVT and those who have received training will enter a pool of Supervisors available to CCVT People in Ministry.

To access this form of Supervision, People in Ministry can contact Jay Sawyer (jsawyer@churchesofchrist.org.au), or other CCVT staff.

Registered Supervisors within CCVT are required to fulfil the following requirements:

- Appropriate training (either provided by CCVT or approved by CCVT)
- Uphold the ethical responsibilities outlined in the CCVT *Practice of Ministry, Code of Ethics Policy* (or equivalent future policy) when engaged in the Supervisory relationship
- Establish a Supervision covenant with their Supervisee and maintain a record of their Supervision for the duration of the Supervisory relationship

- Provide their names and any CCVT Supervisory relationships they are engaged in to CCVT, so that CCVT can provide appropriate support and resources
- Provide feedback about the Supervision program to CCVT at review times

ACCREDITED SUPERVISION

Accredited Supervision is a specialist area of Supervision that applies to Supervisors that have been training through an accredited body. Stirling Theological College offers a postgraduate unit—The Art of Supervision—which seeks to equip practicing ministers to work as Supervisors for ordination candidates and ministers-in-formation and to develop further the capacity of a Supervisor to reflect theologically.

This approach is one that reflects more of a ‘professional’ nature, creating a pool of ‘experts’ in the area of Supervision, managed by Stirling. Supervisors who are trained through credited bodies such as Stirling may be eligible for payment their Supervision. To access this form of Supervision, contact Stirling directly or have a conversation with CCVT staff. CCVT will work with Stirling to connect People in Ministry with Accredited Supervisors and support those in Accredited Supervisory Relationships.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Supervision is supported and highlighted in several CCVT policies as a priority for providing care and accountability for People in Ministry. This includes the following policies (click for documents):

 [Safe Places Policy](#)

 [Recommended Terms and Conditions of Employment of People in Ministry](#)

 [The Practice of Ministry, Code of Ethics](#)

 [Ministry Accreditation and Endorsement Policy](#)

 [Affinity:2](#)

Supervision is a required practice within CCVT, with the implementation and accountability sitting with both the Minister and their Employer.

HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF SUPERVISION COVENANT

CCVT recommends that Supervisory relationships begin with a covenant document which includes specific items of agreement so that the Supervisor and Supervisee can feel sufficiently safe and have complete clarity around their roles, and the boundaries of the relationship. If there is a mismatch in expectations, the Supervisory relationship can become a token relationship with no real benefits.

Such a Covenant will include basic elements like meeting frequency, duration, and place, as well as agreed upon standards for the relationship.

We encourage Supervisors and Supervisees to use the sample document below as a draft for their Supervisory relationship and add any specifics they require.

Sample Covenant

SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

Supervisors have a complex and enriching role, and perform a variety of functions. They provide support and counsel, they guide the learning, development and reflective practise of their Supervisee, and oversee their Supervisee's ministry to provide additional support and safeguarding for communities.

The task of a Supervisor is to allow their Supervisee to feel held, valued, and understood so that they will be able to be open to review and challenge as well as able to value themselves and their own abilities.

An effective Supervisor has the knowledge, experience, integrity and skill to:

- Maintain 'professionalism' to assist in creating a safe space to work on the issues the Supervisee faces
- Help those in ministry identify things that are happening in their practice that they might not see or understand
- Recognise when the Supervisor does not have the level of skill to assist those in ministry appropriately, and so offer an appropriate referral to a person who has the needed skills
- Respect the processes and diversities of learning modes
- Recognise where cultural expectations may be affecting ministry practice
- Name under what circumstances a Supervision relationship needs to be ended

SUPERVISEE'S ROLE

It is important to remember to be proactive in the Supervisory relationship. It is all too easy to slide into dependency and just accept the type of Supervision you receive once a support system is set up. To ensure that Supervisees receive the Supervision they require, they need to take responsibility in an ongoing way for contracting and negotiating how their Supervision will operate, what it will focus on and how the process will be monitored and reviewed.

It is the responsibility of the Supervisee to include the following in the Supervision conversation:

- Identify ministry practice issues they need help with
- Become increasingly able to share freely
- Clarify the style of feedback they respond to best
- Be open to feedback

- Monitor tendencies to justify, explain, or defend
- Develop the ability to clarify what feedback is useful
- Remember that what happens in response to Supervision is their responsibility
- Remember that the purpose of the whole undertaking is to enhance the ministry they offer
- Discern God's presence and purpose

SUPERVISION RESOURCES

Davys, A. & Beddoe, L. (2010) *Best Practice in Professional Supervision: A Guide for the Helping Professions*, Jessica Kingsley, London.

Hawkins, P. & Shohet, R. (2012) *Supervision in the Helping Professions*, 4th Edition, Open Universities Press, Maidenhead.

Leach, J. & Peterson, M. (2001) *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook*, Hymns Ancient & Modern Ltd.

Lewis, R. (2009) *Mentoring Matters*, Monarch Books, Oxford.

Pohly, K. (2001) *Transforming the Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision*, 2nd Edition, Providence House Pub.