

Fact sheet

September 2018

Important information for supervisors

This fact sheet covers the Paramedicine Board of Australia's (the Board) expectations of approved supervisors of registered health practitioners with supervised practice arrangements under the *Supervised practice framework for paramedics*.

You should read this fact sheet before agreeing to be a supervisor or a nominated secondary supervisor.

Who can be a supervisor?

A supervisor needs to have the qualifications, skills, knowledge, availability and experience required for the role. These will vary according to the purpose for supervised practice and the risk associated with this role. This will generally mean that the supervisor will have sufficient experience in the relevant clinical area and relevant qualifications, responsibilities and scope of practice.

A supervisor will usually be from the same profession as the supervisee, but the Board may consider approving practitioners from another profession to act as supervisor/s in some circumstances.

Your responsibilities as a supervisor

The Board relies on you to determine if the supervisee is practising safely, competently and ethically while being supervised.

As a supervisor, you:

- cannot have or have had a close personal relationship with the supervisee and cannot be or have been in a relationship as a client or patient with the supervisee
- must hold general registration and/or specialist registration (where applicable) which is not currently subjected to conditions or undertakings that may affect your ability to effectively supervise the supervisee
- cannot hold a position which is at a lower classification, lower remuneration level, or more junior than the supervisee, and
- must be able to dedicate the time required under the supervised practice arrangements.

What must I do before agreeing to be a supervisor?

You need to read the *Supervised practice framework for paramedics* so that you understand what you need to do.

If you are an employee, you need to make sure your employer agrees with you being a supervisor and undertaking the extra work required of a supervisor.

Professional indemnity insurance

Before you start as a supervisor you need to check that you have the required professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place.

You should refer to the Board's [Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard](#) and check with your insurance provider to make sure you meet the minimum requirements and to see if the supervised practice arrangements affect your coverage.

Indemnity under the National Law

A Board-approved supervisor is protected from liability in relation to providing a report to the National Board. In order to rely on this provision under section 237 of the National Law¹, formal supervised practice arrangements must be in place. This requires completion of the relevant Board-approved templates for the supervised practice agreement/supervised practice plan, and the supervised practice report.

How many practitioners can you supervise?

This depends on the purpose, and level of supervised practice required for the supervisee(s). It is critical that you have adequate time to undertake the role of supervisor. Ordinarily there will be a limit of two supervisees per supervisor unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Do I get paid to be a supervisor?

The supervisee is responsible for the costs of compliance with registration and notification matters, including supervised practice arrangements.

The Board does not provide remuneration and the Board will not intervene in financial arrangements between you and the supervisee.

What must I do once I am approved as a supervisor?

As a supervisor you need to:

- supervise at all times within the supervised practice arrangements set out in the supervised practice agreement/supervised practice plan approved by the Board
- use appropriate measures to ensure that the supervisee is practising safely, these need to be appropriate to the level of supervision (e.g. individual case reviews)
- provide clear direction and constructive feedback including ethical and legal considerations
- work with the supervisee to remediate identified problems
- provide the supervisee with your contact details so when practising they can contact you during working hours and outside of work hours when necessary
- provide clear direction to the supervisee on their legal responsibilities and the constraints within which they must operate, the ethical principles that apply to the profession, and the expectation that the supervisee will act in accordance with the directions of the supervisor and the consequences if they do not
- understand the significance of supervision as a professional undertaking and commit to this role including regular, protected, scheduled time with the supervisee which is free from interruptions as required by the supervised practice agreement/plan
- disclose to the Board any potential conflict of interest, for example a personal relationship or business partnership with the supervisee, either when the supervised practice agreement/plan is being developed or if circumstances change during the period of supervision
- be accountable to the Board and provide honest, accurate, objective and responsible reports in the approved form at agreed intervals determined by the supervised practice agreement/plan
- understand that the responsibility for determining the type and amount of supervision required within the framework of the supervised practice agreement/plan may be informed by your assessment of the supervisee
- only delegate tasks that are appropriate to the role of the supervisee and that are within the scope of training, competence and capability of the supervisee, and
- maintain adequate written records about the supervisee's practice to assist in transition if there is an unexpected need to change supervisors and/or if more than one supervisor is permitted under the supervised practice agreement/plan.

¹ Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (National Law), as in force in each state and territory.

When should I contact the Board?

You need to contact the Board through AHPRA as soon as possible or as stated in the condition/undertaking if:

- the relationship with the supervisee breaks down
- there are concerns that the supervisees' health, conduct or clinical performance is placing the public at risk
- the supervisee is not complying with conditions imposed or undertakings accepted by the Board, or is in breach of any requirements on registration, and/or
- the supervisee is not complying with the supervision requirements or there are any significant, changes to those requirements such as extended absences or periods of non-practice.

What if I can't perform my role as a supervisor?

We understand that circumstances change and you may not be able to comply with the approved supervised practice arrangements. You need to let the Board through AHPRA know within seven calendar days or as stated in the condition/undertaking. Also, advise the supervisee that your circumstances have changed. This will allow the supervisee to make alternate arrangements or as described in their supervision plan.

The supervision agreement/plan may describe arrangements for an alternate supervisor(s).

If your circumstances change so that you will no longer undertake the role of a supervisor then you need to notify the Board through AHPRA.

This may include if you are subject to a notification (complaint) that results in your own practice being subject to conditions or an undertaking.

Remember that a supervisees cannot practise without the agreed supervised practice arrangements in place at all times.

What if I don't comply with the framework?

If you don't practise in accordance with the approved supervised practice agreement/plan or if you fail to properly discharge your obligations, the Board may consider whether to take regulatory action under the National Law.

This applies to supervisees and supervisors.

What is the role of the second supervisor(s)?

When an alternate supervisor is approved by the Board, they are expected to fulfil the obligations of the primary supervisor when they are not available.

The alternate supervisor(s) is expected to provide feedback to the primary supervisor with regard to the supervisee's practice during the absence of the primary supervisor.

The alternate supervisor(s) will be required to complete the supervision report in the absence of the primary supervisor.