

Supervisions lead to better support and understanding

Lucy Knight is the Registered Manager of Valerie Manor, an Outstanding rated care home in Steyning, West Sussex. Here she explains the importance of providing supervision and support to her staff team.



Knowing staff preferences

Being a registered manager, you know that staff are key to running an outstanding home. Through close contact and regular supervisions, I know how things are with our staff team and how things are going with them and the home.

It's really important to get to know staff and their own preferences when it comes to supervisions, including when to schedule these. It's also important to book supervisions in advance and give your staff time to prepare.

Ensuring regular supervision

We schedule supervisions every 3-months officially, but we are more flexible than that and I make sure I see my staff every week. If I feel somebody could benefit from extra supervision, we will discuss and arrange that.

Having regular supervisions helps you as a manager to support your staff. It's been a very difficult and stressful period for many working in care and so having regular discussions and giving your staff the opportunity to voice their opinions is really important.

As a manager, you need to know where staff are at and discuss this with them. By having regular supervisions, you are ensuring that you are not allowing issues and concerns to escalate.

A flexible approach

We have a structure which allows us to have a number of different supervisors in the home, including our Deputy Manager who has clinical expertise and supervises our nurses and an Ancillary Manager who supervises our ancillary staff. As supervisors, we all have different areas of expertise and so we are equally flexible in sharing how we supervise. It helps us to support staff around our specialisms and gain a deeper insight into their roles and any help needed.

Better understanding, better working

Supervisions really do help us to better understand our staff wants and needs, as well as ideas for the home, areas of interest, and what they might wish to undertake in terms

of learning and development. The supervision also provides a great opportunity to better understand some of the quieter staff, providing them with an opportunity to tell you about their work and how they contribute to the running of the home.

We do discuss policy and procedure changes in supervisions, but this is often to check understanding. The sessions also can provide opportunities to refresh knowledge on important issues, such as changes to Infections, Prevention and Control. However, the most important thing to remember is that the supervision is an opportunity for our staff to “bring things to the table” and have their say.

Recording supervisions

We document key points from the supervision and scan this into our staff files on the computer system, but we also give a copy to our staff member too. The record is really useful for both the supervisor and the staff member in helping prepare for the next supervision. We can run through things together, check that we have actioned what was discussed etc. If things haven't been done, we can discuss progress and form an action plan together.

Supervisions are not appraisals and I think some providers mistake the process for something else. It's not about setting a series of tasks with an individual, it's about providing an opportunity to discuss how things are going with an individual. If you get supervisions right, it can be such a positive experience for both the supervisor and your staff member. We get so many incredible ideas from our supervisions that have helped our outstanding home.

Find out more about the guidance and resources available from Skills for Care on [Effective Supervision](#).