

# Supportive Supervision

## Purpose

To equip experienced MHPSS providers and/or professionals with the knowledge and skills to deliver supportive supervision to other MHPSS providers, thereby ensuring quality in the support delivered to people and reducing the risk of burnout among helpers.

## Briefly about

Supportive Supervision is a structured training delivered to experienced mental health providers to ensure quality and sustainability of MHPSS interventions – usually in connection with training and/or implementation of specific interventions. Supportive supervision is essential for all MHPSS providers incl. low-intensity approaches and non-specialised MHPSS, as it supports helpers to deliver interventions safely, consistently, and in accordance with the approach.

The training introduces participants to key elements of supportive supervision, including supervisor skills, case discussion, and helper wellbeing support. It also highlights the organisational systems required to support service delivery, such as clear supervisor responsibilities, case referral pathways, and mechanisms to manage risk.

Supportive Supervision promotes a collaborative approach where supervisors guide and support helpers to improve their skills and maintain their own wellbeing.

## Target Groups

### Primary target group

The training targets experienced MHPSS providers and other relevant professionals who are responsible for supporting other MHPSS providers in implementation of MHPSS and service provision.

### Secondary target group

MHPSS providers, (i.e., lay counsellors), will benefit from guidance, skills development, and emotional support through structured supportive supervision.

## Outcomes

Trained MHPSS supervisors will experience the following change

- Strengthened knowledge and skills in supportive supervision, including conducting structured sessions, promoting helper wellbeing, and managing challenging dilemmas and case presentations
- Improved ability to provide constructive feedback and foster professional growth among MHPSS providers
- Increased confidence in upholding quality and safety standards within MHPSS services

MHPSS providers receiving supportive supervision from trained supervisors will experience the following change:

- Improved knowledge, skills, and confidence in delivering MHPSS interventions

- Increased emotional support and reduced risk of burnout
- Enhanced ability to maintain quality and safety in their work

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The outcomes of the training are measured through pre- and post-training assessments of supervisors' knowledge, confidence, and skills related to supportive supervision.

Follow-up assessments may explore how supervision practices are implemented in daily work, including supervisors' ability to provide structured guidance, maintain safety protocols, and support helper wellbeing.

Qualitative feedback from supervisors and helpers further informs improvements to the supervision model and its organisational integration.

### **Key considerations**

Implementing supportive supervision requires organisational commitment to ensure regular supervision sessions, protected time for both MHPSS supervisors and MHPSS providers, and clear procedures for handling risk and referrals.

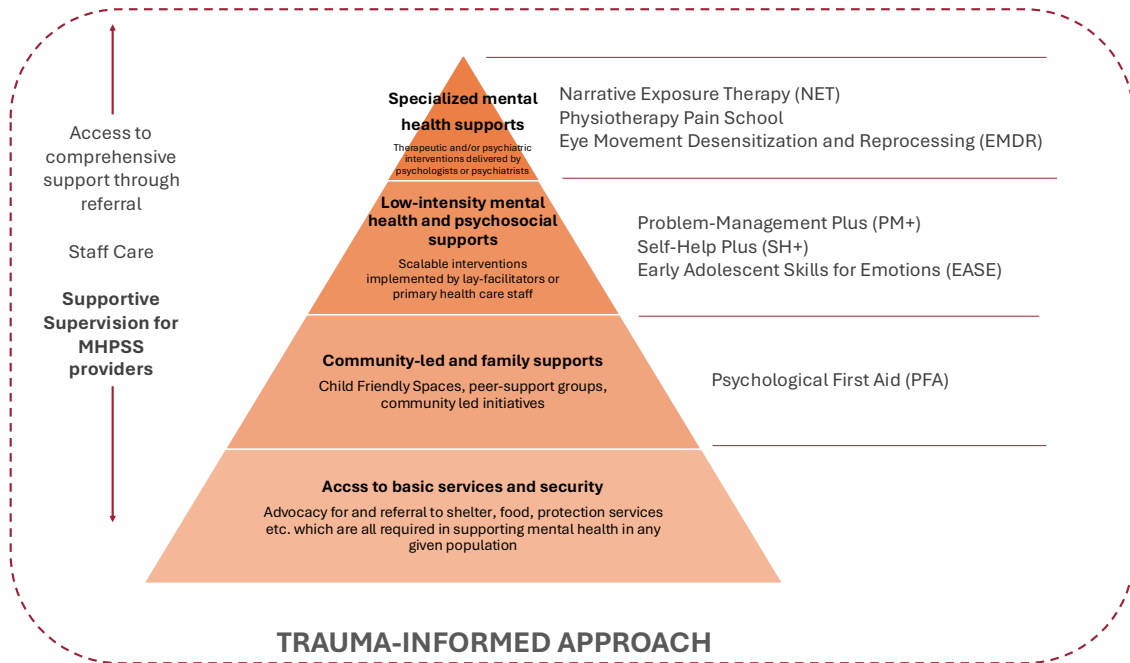
Supervisors should have appropriate experience, receive adequate training, and participate in ongoing supervision for supervisors or the Community of Practice if applicable.

### **Check questions**

- ☐ In my organisation, we need an effective system to support MHPSS providers and ensure quality of care delivered to service users.
- ☐ We can identify experienced MHPSS staff who can serve as supervisors for MHPSS providers.
- ☐ My organisation can ensure appropriate structures for safe and regular supervision, including time allocation and clear referral pathways.
- ☐ Our team is willing and able to follow supervision guidelines and protocol, use the materials provided, monitor progress, and participate in supervisors' supportive supervision and/or Community of Practice.
- ☐ My organisation is willing to implement supportive supervision with the goal of creating a sustainable supervision structure that can last beyond the ongoing project

## Type of intervention

Ensuring access to supportive supervision is an activity that should be integral to any trauma-informed MHPSS intervention



## Implementation overview: Supportive Supervision

### Partner actions

- Develop full implementation plan for establishing a supervision structure
- Identify and recruit experienced MHPSS professionals for training
- Organise training logistics

- Host 2-3 day in-person training workshop

- Ensure that trainees deliver supportive supervision to 5-6 MHPSS helpers
- Provide access to supervision for trained supervisors
- Institutionalise supportive supervision in organisation (systems, HR procedures)

- Recruit interested trainers with MHSPS background and experience in providing supportive supervision
- Organise training logistics
- Host ToT training
- Enable trained trainers to build capacity of new batches of supervisors (selection, training, supervising, institutionalization)

Preparation (1-3 months)

Training (2 months)

Implementation (3-6 months)

Scale-up capacity (6-12 months)

### DIGNITY actions

- Support identification of qualified training participants
- Adapt materials if implemented for the first time in context

- Deliver 2-hour online pre-training webinar (optional)
- Deliver 2-3-day in-person training workshop, incl. pre/post evaluation

- Deliver supportive supervision to trained supervisors and monitor skills progression
- Support developing institutional protocols for supervision

- Support establishment of sustainable supervision structure
- Deliver ToT training
- Supervise in-field training

**Phase I:** first cohort of 10 supervisors trained => capacity to reach supervise 50 helpers per year

**Phase II:** ToT cohort trained => Each trained trainer can educate 10-20 supervisors per year