

CHIROPRACTORS BOARD OF QUEENSLAND GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISED PRACTICE

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to supervisors and to registrants who are required to practice under supervision for other than health reasons.

Preamble:

Supervision requirements may apply to registrants in the following circumstances.

1. Graduates of Australian or New Zealand Chiropractic Programs who are registered with “new graduate” conditions in accordance with Section 57 of the *Chiropractors Registration Act 2001*. The nature of this supervision is described in “Level 3 – Broad Supervision” within these guidelines.
2. Registrants who have given an undertaking to the Board that they will only practice under supervision.
3. Registrants who are required as a condition of their registration to practice under supervision. This may occur in a number of circumstances:
 - a. Registrants other than under “Level 1 – Direct Supervision” who are subject to conditions prior to meeting the requirements of general registration.
 - b. Registrants who are required to work under supervision as a consequence of diminished competency or disciplinary action.

Levels of supervision:

Level 1 - Direct Supervision

With Level 1 supervision the supervisor takes direct and principal responsibility for the patient. The supervisor must be present and observe at all times when chiropractic treatment is being provided. This occurs mostly with students but may also be utilised to register an individual who has not completed all registration requirements but for whom supervised practice may still be appropriate, e.g. where the registrant has not demonstrated adequate command of the English language.

Level 2 - Contemporaneous supervision

With Level 2 supervision the supervisor shares responsibility for the individual patient with the registrant. The supervisor must be in the workplace at all times however is not required to directly observe. The supervised registrant is responsible for ensuring that practice is within the confines determined by the supervisor and that the supervisor is informed of the management of individual patients.

Level 2 supervision is most likely to occur in the circumstances of a registrant returning to practise after a break of more than 5 years.

This level of supervision does not include solo practice nor should it include on-call, weekend or home visit work unless on return to work a supervisor is present.

The supervisor should enter into an agreement with the registrant regarding the scope of practice and should ensure there are mechanisms in place in the workplace to monitor the work of the registrant.

The work environment must be such that there is at least general oversight of the registrant's practice by other registered chiropractors who can give guidance or recognise and initiate action if a threat to patient safety is emerging.

The Board accepts that on rare occasions there may be an exception to the requirement that another chiropractor be in the workplace at all times. For instance, where a registrant is permitted to work on weekends and the only other chiropractor is unable to work due to unexpected personal reasons such as illness. The Board does not expect the registrant to withhold treatment to patients. However the registrant must notify the principal supervisor as soon as possible of the circumstances which led to him/her practising unsupervised and also of the services provided.

Level 3 - Broad Supervision

With Level 3 supervision the supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the practice of the registrant is in accordance with acceptable standards and that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that the registrant is practising at a safe standard. The registrant takes responsibility for individual patient care. The supervisor maintains an indirect responsibility for the patient through ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place for monitoring performance and referral as required.

Level 3 supervision is most likely to occur in the circumstances of a registrant returning to practise after a break of less than 3 years.

The registrant is permitted to work alone. The registrant can undertake weekend, on-call, home visits and after hours work. The registrant however must have telephone access to his/her supervisor.

Upon commencing a new position the supervisor and registrant must formulate an agreement in regard to the scope and limits of practice and should meet regularly to monitor practice performance including workload and any significant clinical issues. This agreement may alter over time as the supervisor is satisfied with the progress and performance of the registrant. Thus the extent of supervision will vary over time as the registrant becomes more confident.

Level 4 - Distant Supervision

With Level 4 supervision the registrant takes full responsibility for individual patients. The role of the supervisor is to provide broad overview of the practice of the registrant (mentoring). The supervisor should put in place mechanisms whereby they may be consulted on an individual patient should the registrant require assistance. In addition the registrant and supervisor should put in place mechanisms whereby an overview of the registrant's practice may be conducted periodically.

This level of supervision may apply to physically remote supervision by telecommunication.

Selection of an appropriate position and supervisor:

Prior to accepting a position or changing circumstances it is important that the registrant who is subject to supervisory arrangements obtains the approval of the Board in regard to the appropriateness of the position. In addition, if there are any proposed changes to the approved work arrangements (e.g. hours of work, on-call, nature of practice) at his/her current or proposed place of practice, these also must be approved by the Board prior to the new arrangements being implemented.

The registrant will also need to advise the Board of their Principle Supervisor who will be responsible for providing supervision or for ensuring that appropriate supervisory arrangements are in place.

The Principle Supervisor and practice must be able to comply with the requirements of the level of supervision required.

The Principle Supervisor may delegate day to day supervision to another chiropractor provided that the other chiropractor is not subject to supervisory conditions.

The Role of the Board:

It is the responsibility of the Board to determine the level of supervisory requirements of the registrant and to approve the supervisory arrangements.

The Board will provide a Checklist which must be completed when considering a new position or a change in work arrangements, and returned to the Board for approval. The registrant should allow at least 25 days following the Board's receipt of the Checklist to arrange for any new position or change in work arrangements to be considered for approval. Failure to comply with this requirement may render the registrant in breach of their undertaking/condition.

Role and Responsibilities of the Supervisor:

The Principle Supervisor should be a chiropractor who has consented to act as a supervisor and should be approved by the Board. The Principle Supervisor should be able to comply with the requirements of the level of supervision required. The relationship between Principle Supervisor and registrant should be professional. Thus persons who are directly related to the individual will not be approved as Principle Supervisors. Principle Supervisors should not themselves be subject to supervisory arrangements.

The Principle Supervisor will be made aware of the reasons for supervision by the Board and provided with a list of undertakings/conditions.

The Principle Supervisor should take reasonable steps to ensure that the registrant is practising safely by such measures as direct observation (where it is relevant to the level of supervision), individual case review, periodic performance review and remediation of identified problems.

The Principle Supervisor should notify the Board immediately if there are concerns in relation to the registrant's clinical performance, health or non-compliance with conditions or undertakings. The Principle Supervisor must ensure that the registrant is practising in accordance with the approved work arrangements and must notify the Board of non-compliance with or of any proposed changes to those arrangements.

The Principle Supervisor should inform the Board if he/she is no longer able to provide the level of supervision that is required.

The Principle Supervisor should provide reports as required by the registrant's conditions or undertakings and comply with the Board's requirements as to format and frequency.¹ These reports should be timely, objective and as accurate as possible. They should identify both strengths and weaknesses including any problems (if applicable) and what has been done in terms of follow-up or remediation. Principle Supervisors have legal protection when reports are made to the Board.

A delegated Supervisor must immediately advise the registrant's Principle Supervisor of any concerns in relation to the above matters.

Role and Responsibilities of the Registrant:

The registrant must take reasonable steps to ensure safe practice by such measures as seeking assistance from other practitioners, cooperation in individual case review, periodic performance review with their Principle Supervisor and seeking remediation of identified problems.

The registrant must seek assistance if there are concerns in relation to the registrant's health, clinical performance or compliance with any conditions/undertakings.

The registrant must ensure that he/she is practising in accordance with the approved work arrangements.

Management of breaches of supervisory arrangements:

Should it be identified that the supervisory arrangements have not been complied with then the Board reserves the right to take appropriate action in regard to the registrant.

¹ The supervisor is provided with a report proforma which is individually tailored to the particular clinical setting and level of supervision. The purpose of the proforma is to provide meaningful information which will assist the Board make decisions with respect to monitoring.