

PASTORAL SUPERVISION

A HANDBOOK

SECOND EDITION

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Appendix I

APSE Definition of Pastoral Supervision¹

Agreed by members on 17 October 2008

Pastoral Supervision is ...

- *a regular, planned, intentional and bounded space* in which a practitioner skilled in supervision (the supervisor) meets with one or more other practitioners (the supervisees) to look together at the supervisees' practice;
- *a relationship* characterised by trust, confidentiality, support and openness that gives the supervisee freedom and safety to explore the issues arising in their work;
- *spiritually/theologically rich* – works within a framework of spiritual/theological understanding in dialogue with the supervisee's world view and work;
- *psychologically informed* – draws on relevant psychological theory and insight to illuminate intra-personal and inter-personal dynamics;
- *contextually sensitive* – pays attention to the particularities of setting, culture and world view;
- *praxis based* – focuses on a report of work and /or issues that arise in and from the supervisee's pastoral practice;
- *a way of growing in*
 - vocational identity
 - pastoral competence
 - self awareness
 - spiritual/theological reflection
 - pastoral interpretation
 - quality of presence
 - accountability
 - response to challenge
 - mutual learning

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- *attentive to* issues of fitness to practice, skill development, management of boundaries, professional identity and the impact of the work upon all concerned parties.

Pastoral Supervision is not ...

- *Spiritual accompaniment* – for the sole or primary purpose of exploring the spiritual life and development of the supervisee(s). Aspects of this may arise in Pastoral Supervision but are not the main focus.
- *Counselling* – for the purpose of helping the supervisee(s) gain insight into their personal dynamics, or helping the supervisee(s) to resolve or live more positively with their psycho-social limitations. Aspects of this may arise in Pastoral Supervision and, if necessary, the supervisee(s) may be encouraged to seek counselling support.
- *Line management* – for the purpose of addressing professional practice and development issues in relationship to the supervisee(s)'s performance and accountability (whether paid or voluntary) to her/his employer. Aspects of this may arise in Pastoral Supervision but are not the main focus.

Note

- 1 Included with the kind permission of the APSE executive committee.