

Supervision Scenarios

Registrants of the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology are uniquely qualified to provide psychological services in the province.

From the NSBEP Standards of Professional Conduct “Psychological services refer to services provided by or under the direction of a psychologist or psychologist, candidate register.”

While supervision is one of the services provided by many registrants, not all persons receiving supervision from registrants are providing psychological services:

Interns & practicum students

Individuals completing an internship or practica as part of a psychology program may provide psychological services only under the direction of a registrant. In such circumstances, interns or practicum students would be in violation of the Psychologists Act (2000) if they did not use a title or description of services that clearly indicates their status.

Supervision of non-autonomous staff

Registrants, in the provision of professional services, often utilize the services of non-psychologists (e.g., psychometrists to complete test administration).

As per the NSBEP position on the Supervision of Psychometrists:

In such instances, the non-autonomous staff person is providing psychological services but may only do so under the direction of a registrant. In keeping with Principal III (40) of the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, the Psychologist assumes responsibility for the services of the non-psychologists. Psychologists need to be aware that any problems that might arise from the services provided by the psychometrist could therefore become the subject of a disciplinary matter for the Psychologist. In considering entering into such arrangements, psychologists are therefore encouraged to examine carefully their supervision of such individuals to limit any liability that may result from professional misconduct.

Supervision of practitioners from another occupation

Some areas of overlap exist in the services provided by some health professions. Psychologists might supervise individuals from another profession on a particular set of activities. However, as an autonomous professional, the person being supervised is not providing psychological services.

Requests to supervise non-autonomous practitioners from another occupation

Registrants might be approached by individuals working towards full registration in another occupation. For example, psychologists might provide supervision to persons who are training in another profession, e.g. psychiatric residents. In this instance, the psychologist should not be the person's primary supervisor; and the person being supervised is not providing psychological services. As stated, some areas of overlap exist between some health professions; however, a distinct occupation has a separate set of professional standards, training, legislation, and its own scope of practice. It is the position of the Board that unless a registrant is also registered with the regulatory body governing the other profession, he/she should not act as the primary supervisor of an individual working towards full registration in the separate profession. If a psychologist who is dually registered and competent to provide supervision in another profession provides such supervision, the services provided by the individual(s) being supervised do not constitute psychological services.

With regard to any settings in which psychological services are provided or a registrant is involved with the supervision of others:

Billing must not be underwritten in a way that gives the impression that a registrant provided the service when this is not the case (NSBEP Co-signing of Receipts Statement, 1993). Billing to insurance companies or third party payers must clearly state the qualifications of the provider and state the services being provided. Through the informed consent process, clients must be fully informed of the qualifications of the person(s) providing the services and the services being provided.

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