Peer Group Mentoring Framework for the Development of Student Supervisors

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING SUPERVISION PROJECT

FACULTY OF
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› Context and rationale for Framework development

› Peer Group Mentoring (PGM) - overview of the literature

› Development, implementation and evaluation of the Peer Group Mentoring Framework

› Potential application to other contexts

Context and rationale for Framework development

› Practicum placements are mandatory for most health and social care professional degree programs

› New innovative placement models are being developed, e.g. in community managed organisations (CMOs)

› Quality of learning on placement is largely dependent on quality of supervision

› Institutions offer supervision training workshops

› Ongoing day-to-day, week-to-week support for further growth and development is lacking

› A **voluntary professional** relationship based on **mutual respect** and **agreed expectations** that is **mutually valuable** to all involved and includes **personal** and **professional development**, **growth** and **support** (Fawcett, 2002; Heartfield et al., 2005). Mentors act as "critical friends" in encouraging **reflection** to achieve success (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

› A *more senior* and **experienced** person acts as a mentor to a more **junior mentee** or protégé in **enhancing mentee** personal and professional growth and development.

Challenges

› Personality differences   (Moss, Teshima, & Leszcz, 2008; White, Brannan, & Wilson, 2010; Wilson, Brannan, & White, 2010)

› Hierarchical relationship/ power differences   (Freeman, 2000)

› Different expectations of the mentoring role/relationship (Jacobson & Sherrod, 2012)

› Mentor experience with mentoring process   (Hubbard, Halcomb, Foley, & Roberts, 2010

› Time constraints   (Hubbard, Halcomb, Foley, & Roberts, 2010

› Where *three or more* **peers** or **colleagues** at **similar points** in their careers form a **collaborative** mentoring relationship. Peers actively contribute and interact as **co-mentors** for others within the group, **learning from each other** to enhance opportunities for personal and professional development **for all** within the group.

Peer Group Mentoring models

› Peer mentoring groups – run by peers;

› Peer mentoring groups – experienced facilitator/ advisor present (active role);

› Peer mentoring groups – run by peers, facilitator present (supportive role).

Participants:

- University early career researchers

- University employees; female physician academics;

- Academics from Education Faculty – school teachers

- Librarians

- New graduate nurses

	Element	Reference
Structural	Dedicated time to meet	(Files et al., 2008; Pololi et al., 2002)
	Frequent meetings	(Lord et al., 2012)
	Venue separate to work	(Pololi et al., 2002)
Relationships	Participants involved in planning stage	(Moss et al., 2008)
	Non-hierarchical relationships	(Lord et al., 2012; Pololi et al., 2002; McCormack & West, 2006)
	Role clarity	(Files et al., 2008)
	Commitment by all involved	(Darwin & Palmer, 2009)
	Diversity in group composition	McCormack & West, 2006)
	Informal socialisation – rapport building	Jackson-Bowers et al., 2001; Darwin & Palmer, 2009)

	Element	Reference
Learning environment	Safe and supportive learning environment	(McCormack & West, 2006; Pololi et al., 2002)
	Maintaining confidentiality	(Darwin & Palmer, 2009)
	Creating space for reflection	(Moss et al., 2008)
	Peer interaction and peer feedback	(Files et al., 2008; Pololi et al., 2002)
	Guidance by a more experienced member/ experienced facilitator	(Lord et al., 2012; McCormack & West, 2006; Moss et al., 2008)

Outcome	Reference
Ability to honestly share experiences and express emotions	(Scott & Smith, 2008)
Peer learning – learning from other participants	(Darwin & Palmer, 2009; Mullen, 2000; Scott & Smith, 2008)
Development of collaborative and collegial relationships with colleagues	(Darwin & Palmer, 2009; Lord et al., 2012; Moss et al., 2008; Mullen, 2000; Pololi et al., 2002; Scott & Smith, 2008)
Reduced professional isolation	(Darwin & Palmer, 2009; Moss et al., 2008)
A sense of being "cared for by the organisation"/ increased professional connection to organisation	(Lord et al., 2012; McCormack & West, 2006; Scott & Smith, 2008)
Networking	(Jackson-Bowers et al., 2001; McCormack & West, 2006)
Support	(Jackson-Bowers et al., 2001; Mullen, 2000)

Outcome	Reference
Career development	(Ritchie & Genoni, 2002; McCormack & West, 2006)
Increased professional productivity and involvement in professional activities	(Lord et al., 2012)
Increased accountability	(Lord et al., 2012)
Increased scholarly activity - publications, new positions and conference presentations	(Files et al., 2008; Lord et al., 2012)

Framework development

› Project reference group considered PGM a pedagogically sound, feasible and resource efficient approach to supporting student supervisors

› Framework developed from:

- A review of the literature

- Key stakeholder interviews

- Pilot of draft framework

Key aspects of Framework

› For (student) supervisors from CMOs and health settings

› Diversity in participant professional backgrounds, workplace experience and current place of work

› Voluntary participation

› Interprofessional

› Initial facilitator guidance to role model the PGM process

› Skill development in process of PGM and student supervision

› A scaffolded approach to empower participants in co-mentoring

› A structured approach to reflective practice

› A structured approach to evaluation of PGM process

Three components to Framework:

1. Learning the peer group mentoring approach

   3 X 2hr large group sessions with all participants

- Session 1: introduces concept of PGM; group process management; reflective practice approaches

- Session 2: establishes the peer mentoring groups (3-4 members). Mentoring agreements developed.

- Session 3: a "practice run" - small groups work through a student supervision situation they have experienced.

2. Implementing the PGM approach

- Smaller peer mentoring groups continue to meet independently to work through their own student supervision experiences

- Mentoring agreements regularly reviewed

- External facilitator available to offer support as needed

3. "Checking in" with larger group

- All small groups come together to reflect on small group mentoring process, review goals, discuss common issue that have arisen

- Large group decides how often "checking-in" sessions occur

- Opportunity for work-shopping common issues

- Small groups continue to meet between large group sessions

On-line survey

› Perceived improvements in:

- Student supervision skills - dealing with challenging student situations; understanding others' perspectives

- Co-mentoring skills – giving and receiving feedback; listening skills

Focus groups

› The added value of mixed disciplines – interprofessional learning; reflective practice; supportive nature of PGM process

› Positive impacts on supervision practice

› Application of Framework to other areas of practice

› Framework structure can be used broader than *student* supervision, e.g. mentoring new staff.

› Framework resources can be applied to other aspects of work life e.g. problem solving and conflict resolution within the workplace.

› Framework can be adapted for other work contexts:

- Support and development for staff taking on a mentoring role

- Cultivation of cross disciplinary collaborations (e.g. Education Faculty – School teacher PGM program)

› What aspects of the *Peer Group Mentoring Framework for the development of Student Supervisors* could be applicable to your mentoring program?

› Could the PGM Framework be utilised in your context?

  - If so, what changes would be necessary for this to happen?

› How could the PGM Framework work across multiple sites?

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