



## Bhutan Board for Certified Counsellors (BBCC)

**Phendey Oudpel Lam**  
**Phendey Gyatshel, Lower Motithang**  
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**Thimphu, Bhutan**

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### BBCC Definition on Supervision

“Supervision is a formal arrangement for therapists to discuss their work regularly with someone who is experienced in counselling and supervision. The task is to work together to ensure and develop the efficacy of the therapist-client relationship. The agenda will be the counselling work and feelings about that work, together with the supervisor’s reactions, comments and confrontations. Thus supervision is a process to maintain adequate standards of counselling and a method of consultancy to widen the horizons of an experienced practitioner. Though not concerned primarily with training, personal therapy or line management, supervisors will encourage and facilitate the ongoing self-development, continued learning and self- monitoring of the therapist” (Mearns, 2007)

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) defines a clinical supervisor as:

*An intervention that is provided by a senior member or members of that profession to a junior member or members of the same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior member(s), monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients she, he or they see(s) and service as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession’.*

ACA Supervision Policy (2019) defines a clinical supervisor as:

*A supervisor is responsible for challenging practices and informing supervisees of alternative theories and new practices, as well as changes in the industry. The supervisor is responsible for observing the mental health of their supervisee in turn protecting the public from poor practices. Counsellors can face issues such as transference and burn out without any recognition of the symptoms. A professional supervisor would notice the symptoms long before the counsellor.*

Clinical Supervision differs from line management/colleague supervision in so much as a clinical supervisor is responsible for the professional development of a supervisee, the safety of their work and ultimately the wellbeing of the client population they are working with. A line manager focuses on work performance and key indicators as per the individual’s job description. Collegiate supervision is a sharing of ideas and support with limited responsibility for the application of that knowledge by an individual.



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## **Importance of supervision for counselors in Bhutan**

The purpose of clinical supervision is to provide a tool for workforce development, a mechanism for quality assurance and clinical safety, and a means of providing professional support and debriefing. A Clinical Supervisor is responsible for ensuring the supervisee's clients are receiving appropriate therapeutic counselling as well as developing and extending a supervisee's skills, in accordance with the Guidelines for the National Certification of Counseling Professionals in Bhutan and legislative requirements.

Participation in clinical supervision is mandatory for all members of the BBCC.

It is expected the supervisor will continue to be engaged in regular supervision as a supervisee, as per BBCC guidelines. Developmentally, the supervisor will have at least the same or higher level of practice skills than the supervisee in the majority of specific competencies that are the primary focus for supervision.

Supervisors also need to take appropriate steps to safeguard themselves, the clinician and the organisation by ensuring that:

- they are appropriately trained to provide clinical supervision
- their clinical supervision practice remains within their level of competence and capabilities
- they operate with clear contractual arrangements in relation to their role and responsibilities within the organisation, and in relation to their work with clinicians
- they operate within the agreed parameters of confidentiality
- they do not develop inappropriate boundaries or relationships with their supervisees.

Counselling supervision is an essential safeguard for clients, a support for counsellors, and a process through which practitioners can develop their skill and competence. A trained clinical supervisor should be able to conduct supervision sessions using various supervision interventions, provide effective evaluation and feedback to supervisee's and address the ethical and legal considerations of supervision. A BBCC Supervisor Training Course will facilitate the development of supervisory knowledge and skills for experienced counsellors and equip practitioners with the specialist knowledge and skills necessary to be an effective supervisor.

Research on the effectiveness of supervisor training supports the notion that supervision specific training increases supervisor competency and generates improved supervisory outcomes.

A BBCC Supervisor Training Course will cover as a minimum competencies:

- An Introduction to Clinical Supervision
- An overview of Clinical Supervision
- Models of Supervision



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- The Supervisory Relationship
  - Types of Supervision
  - Practitioner development
  - Supervision methods and techniques
    - Applying Supervision Skills
    - Advanced Skills in Clinical Supervision
  - Evaluation and Feedback
  - Supervisor Administration Skills
  - Ethical and Legal Considerations
  - Final Assessment

Further the training course must:

- be delivered either face to face or a combination of face to face, online or distance training with a minimum 21 hours face to face.
- include a minimum of 30 hours theory based on a current clinical supervision text book or evidence base.
- include mandatory readings from a recognised clinical supervision text book or evidence base.
- have tutors/lecturers/assessors eligible for NCC(S) membership status with BBCC.

Final assessments as a minimum must include:

- two video-recorded 20 minute formally assessed Supervision sessions.
  - One video will consist of an initial session, where the supervisor supports the supervisee to develop goals for supervision,
  - The second video will be a follow up session where the supervisor supports the supervisee to examine a client issue using the taught supervision framework.

The successful submission and approval of these sessions is required to become a NCC(S) with the BBCC.

Seniority is not a qualification and on its own will not meet supervisor criteria.

### **Becoming a Supervisor**

In order to be considered as a supervisor by the BBCC, the candidate must fulfil the following criteria:

- a) Have a minimum of 6 years post qualification counselling experience; plus
- b) Have completed a minimum of 50 hours of post qualification Supervision undertaken at the NCC(M) level as a supervisee; plus
- c) Have completed a Supervisor training course that meets BBCC standards



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Following the successful completion of the supervisor training and approval of the final assessment, the counsellor will need to attach their certification to an Application to become a BBCC Supervisor, which will be submitted to the BBCC. The counsellor will have their name added to the list of supervisors for other BBCC members to access for clinical supervision.