

## HEALTH PROFESSIONS LICENSING AUTHORITY

**TITLE:** Psychological Practice Provided via telecommunication Addendum to the Supervised Practice Policy – 3.0

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 22 November 2004

**REVIEWED:** February 2008

**BOARD:** Psychologists Board of the Northern Territory

### **PURPOSE**

This policy has been developed to:

1. Clarify the level of recognition for psychological services including counselling and otherwise provided via telecommunications accepted as contributing to hours of psychological practice within the conditional registrant's period of supervised practice.
2. Provide a guide to Supervisors for the assessment of a conditional registrant's competence in providing psychological services per se and in particular via telecommunication.
3. Provide a guide to conditional registrants of the conditions under which their practice of the profession can be assessed and recognised by the Board.

### **POSITION STATEMENT**

The Board holds the view that face-to-face psychological service is optimal. However, geographical and other circumstances of clients make it necessary for services to be provided via telecommunications. Therefore, the Board will recognise psychological services provided via 'telecommunications' as a component of professional practice hours. Up to, but not exceeding, 25% of the number of such hours required under the Supervised Practice Policy and Guidelines.

### **SUPPORTING POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

Psychological Services via Telecommunications Policy.

This policy is an addendum to the Supervised Practice Policy (refer 3.).

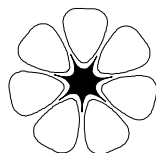
### **POLICY STATEMENT 1.**

The Board will recognise professional psychological practice provided by a conditionally registered psychologist via telecommunication as follows:

1. Up to a maximum of 25% of the total number of hours of psychological services provided via telecommunication may be recognised for the purpose of meeting the minimum total hours of psychological practice required to complete supervised practice ;
2. A maximum of 10% telephone Volunteer counselling of the total number of hours of psychological services provided via telecommunication may be recognised for the purpose of meeting the minimum total hours of psychological practice required to complete supervised practice;
3. The total hours of psychological services via telecommunication must not exceed 25% of the total number of professional practice hours;
4. A minimum of 10% of supervised phone contact hours are recorded by audio/video tape to assist the supervisor assess the nature of the psychological service provided in respect to supervision; and
4. Services provided in the written word and communicated electronically via email or chat room are not accepted for supervision of conditional registrants.

### **POLICY STATEMENT 2.**

Psychological services via telecommunications must be a bona fide component of the job/position responsibilities and recognised in the supervision plan.



### **POLICY STATEMENT 3.**

The Board requires that: services provided via telecommunication are of a psychological nature; supervisors have appropriate methods to assess the practice of the conditional registrant providing the service; accurate and professional records of all psychological services are maintained; and records are available to the supervisor.

1. The supervisor must be able to assess if the service provided via telecommunication constitutes a psychological service. This may be achieved by the supervisor reviewing a recording or having a presence at the teleconference or videoconference.
2. All parties must be aware that the service is being recorded and that the recording will be reviewed by the conditional registrant's supervisor only.
3. The conditional registrant must record the consent of all members of the telecommunication for the session to be observed or recorded prior to commencing the psychological service. If consent is not available then the service must not be audio or video recorded nor should the supervisor be present.
4. The Board can only recognise supervision hours for consultations that are recorded or directly observed by the supervisor (with consent of the client).
5. The conditional registrant or the service provider must ensure confidential storage and deletion of any recording after supervision has been completed.

### **Assessment of services provided via telecommunication**

The following points are designed to assist supervisor assess a conditional registrant's ability to provide appropriate psychological services via telecommunications:

1. A Conditionally Registered Psychologist must demonstrate a sound level of judgement, discretion and decision-making when communicating with each caller.
2. The Conditionally Registered Psychologist practises psychology in a manner that the supervisor determines to be culturally safe.
3. The Conditionally Registered Psychologist and his/her supervisor monitors and improves standards of psychological services via telecommunications through active involvement in quality improvement and risk management processes.

### **Definitions**

#### Supervisor

For the purposes of this policy a supervisor is the registered psychologist who is the conditional registrant's nominated supervisor during the period of supervised practice conducted as per the Board' Supervised Practice Policy.

#### Psychological Services

Are those services that can be assessed by the supervisor as valid psychological services that constitute professional psychological practice.

#### Volunteer Counselling Services

Are support and counselling services provided by trained (not necessarily as psychologists) volunteers.

#### Audio Recording / Video Recording (hereafter referred to as 'recording') of Psychological Services:

A audio recording of a psychological service provided by phone, teleconference or videoconference. A recording is conducted for the sole purpose of allowing supervisors to assess either an audio / video recording of a service provided by a conditional registrant, to assess if the service is of a psychological nature.