

Consumers Supervising Consumers

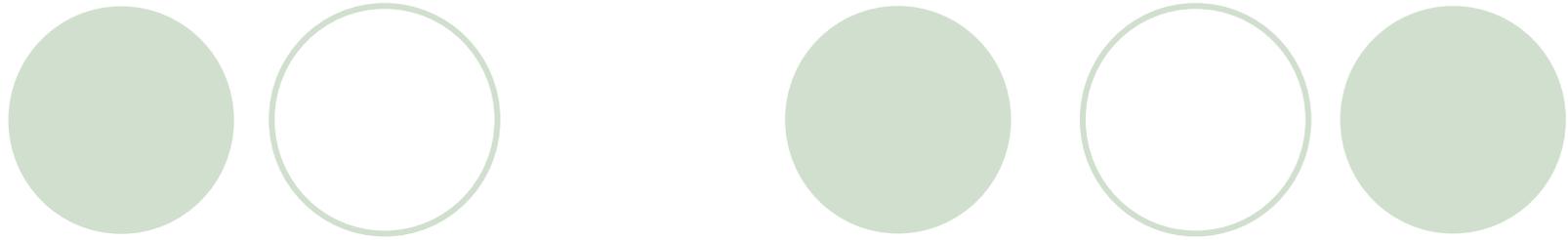
“The Authority of Experience”

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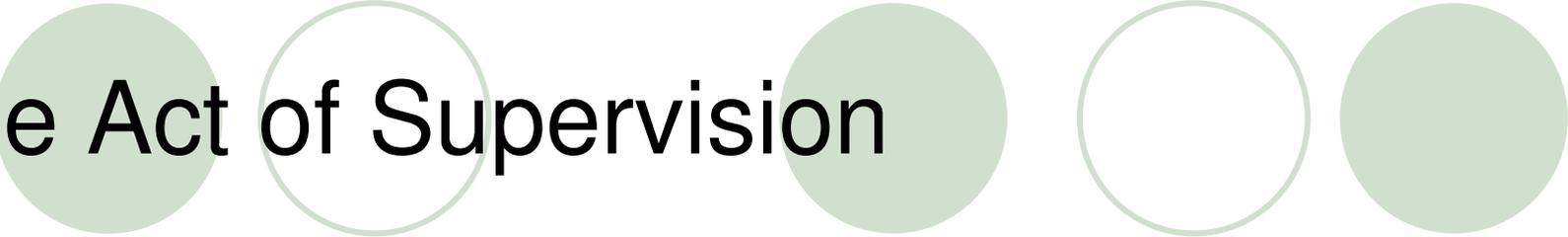
Note: Content may be used providing the authors are acknowledged





“Leaders are 'canny outlaws', system benders, creative and responsible rule benders. They have to succeed because... the deck is stacked against creative, imaginative and entrepreneurial teachers.”

Thomas Sergiovanni

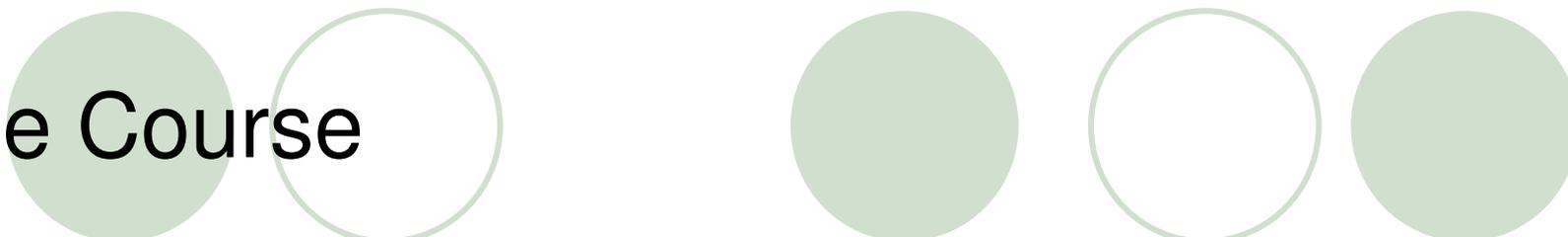


The Act of Supervision

- Background

Kites had several requests for how to find ‘peer’ supervisors from mental health consumer workers.

Kites decided to sponsor a course that could provide consumer workers with an equivalent qualification to other health professionals and to increase the number of consumer supervisors available to the mental health workforce.



The Course

- run by Unitec – Aly McNicol tutor
- held over a six week period
- initial three days
- a month to practice their learning and complete assignments.
- final two days and assessments



Purpose Focused Training

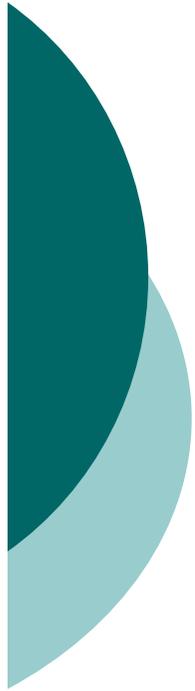
Training areas specific to consumer supervisors were identified.

- Supervisor responsibilities – safety, disclosure, boundaries.
- Code of Ethics for consumer workers – no specific code of ethics currently exist for consumer workers in New Zealand.

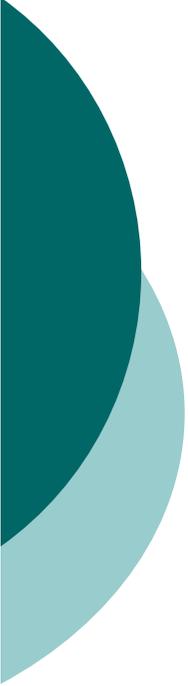


Participant's Feedback

- Participants found the course to be practicable and applicable to their work.
- They valued that the course was specially catered to the consumer workforce and that the qualification could be cross credited to the Diploma in not for Profit Management.
- They found the facilitation and course content to be excellent and stimulating. The focus on strengths and the use of real examples was seen as positive facilitation of learning.
- Areas for improvement related to the venues, ways of managing the written material and a support system for participants during the practical application phase.



The Position of Consumers



In Conclusion

- The consumer workforce is a professional group that needs access to professional practice and knowledge development.
- This course progressed development of the consumer workforce by increasing the number of trained consumer supervisors.
- It has increased the opportunities for consumer and non-consumer workers in the mental health sector to have increased access to trained and qualified consumer supervisors.



Suggestions for further work

- Organisations to progress and support the growth of the mental health consumer workforce and peer run services.
- Supervision and mentoring training specific to mental health consumer workers to be incorporated into the development of national and local consumer workforce plans.
- Development of a code of ethics and professional standards of practice for mental health consumer workers.
- Investigation into sponsorship opportunities to support mental health consumer workers to attend professional supervision and mentoring courses.
- Other organisations to explore the hosting of professional mentoring and supervision courses designed specifically for the consumer workforce.

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