

Towards the Development of ‘Good Practices’ for Recording Social Work Supervision

in Aotearoa New Zealand after the Introduction of
Registration

by

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ABSTRACT

Registration of social workers was introduced in 2003. The increased accountability expected of registered social workers, expectations of the role of supervision and the implications these have for record keeping in supervision stimulated the questions that led to this research. This study set out to learn from a small group of supervisors and supervisees how record keeping is practiced currently in supervision, and ask what 'best practice' should look like in future.

This qualitative study consisted of interviews of four social work supervisor/supervisee pairs, two external supervisors and one cultural advisor. Interviewees were contacted through the local ANZASW network and by approaching social welfare agencies in the local area seeking social work supervisors interested in participating in the research. Supervisors were asked to recruit a supervisee to participate. The interviewees were invited, along with other interested social workers to participate in a focus group for supervisors (nine attended) or a focus group for supervisees (three attended). Eight agencies (four statutory ones and four from the non government sector) were asked to provide policies for analysis of supervision record keeping practices. Three (two NGO and one statutory) agencies provided some policy information for this research.

The research found that participants were generally comfortable that supervision and current record keeping practice met the development needs of supervisees and legal and safety needs for clients. Some areas of practice that need clarification of expectations are:

- the purpose of record keeping for agencies
- expectations of external supervision and reporting on that supervision back to agencies and
- supervision record keeping for new graduates gaining practical experience for registration.

Both supervisors and supervisees wanted to retain a trusting supervision relationship.

Agency policies, other than supervision ones, were used to protect the safety of clients.

The limited scope of the data gathered means results are only indicative of future directions for research on this topic. It does indicate that multiple ‘good practices’ in recording social work supervision could be developed through consulting with the groups most involved in supervision: social work supervisors, supervisees, clients and employing agencies with involvement of ANZASW and the SWRB.

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PREFACE

The research reported here sets out to pilot the process of investigating current practice in social work supervision record keeping, the effects of changes in legislation and agency policies and to gather practitioners' views on the development of 'best practice' for the future.

Chapter One introduces the topic of social work supervision and record keeping. It takes an historical look at these two parts of the research firstly from international literature, then looks at the history of the development of social work supervision and record keeping in Aotearoa New Zealand. Finally, there is an overview of the current context in this country, which provides the setting for this research.

Chapter Two summarises the international and local literature on supervision and record keeping, up to the present. Theoretical influences on this research are also outlined and examined. This research is an investigation of practice, and a particular emphasis is placed on the search for findings from empirical research studies. The complexity of the activity of supervision is emphasised in the discussion of the literature. The power relations of the various groups involved in social work supervision is placed in the context of the various legislation governing different countries' social work, with a view to understanding how these could best be managed in the Aotearoa New Zealand environment.

Chapter Three describes the Methodology and tools planned for and those used in this research project. The original plan was to undertake an Action Research study, using Cooperative Inquiry. The final Qualitative design used in the research and data

collection methods retain some of the features of Action Research, which was abandoned due to pragmatic issues. The quality issues for the research are outlined, as are the ethical consents sought and gained for the research design. Finally data collection and analysis methods are explained.

Chapter Four is the first of two chapters reporting the results of the research. It presents findings from the Supervisor interviews and focus group. Four main themes were covered in interviews: current record keeping practice; what has changed over the last five to ten years? what theories are being used in supervision? and what would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like? The focus group concentrated on the first and the last themes. The chapter concludes with a comparison of the interview and focus group findings.

Chapter Five presents findings from the Supervisee interviews and focus group. The themes were the same as for the Supervisor chapter and include a comparison between interview and focus group findings. Further there is a comparison of the data collected from the Supervisors and the Supervisees. This chapter concludes by reporting on the collection of data about agency policies.

Chapter Six provides an analysis of the findings from the data. It describes the tools used in this analysis and applies them to the findings. As part of the analysis, power relations in supervision currently are explored. The findings from the participants suggest that a pluralistic approach should be taken to record keeping in supervision. 'Good practices' (rather than 'best practice') of record keeping in supervision in a projected future are summarised. This chapter finishes by drawing on the results of

the research in a strategy to create change, involving the people and organisations most concerned with social work.

Chapter Seven is a conclusion and summary of the research project. It highlights the main findings about current social work supervision record keeping, then points to what 'good practices' could become in the future and what strategies could be used to reach that future. Threaded through the summary is an analysis of power relations at present and in the vision of an ideal future. Finally, the implications of change for the safety of clients and the development of social work are discussed.

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT OF THIS RESEARCH

1.1 The Historical Context of Social Work Supervision

Social work arose as a voluntary service, out of societies' efforts to help their disadvantaged members. It has been professionalised since the 1920s (Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2005) when scientific methods were adopted (Tice, 1998). In an alternative reading of the origins of social work, Margolin (1997) says it has evolved out of an ethic of kindness, or caring. However, Margolin challenges the motives of social work, saying it works *Under the Cover of Kindness* to gain access to the homes of the poor and the powerless in order to judge their morals, and to uncover and change behaviour destructive to society. Social work and the deceptions it undertakes in order to teach and rehabilitate would not be so effective if it was not done with such sincere and benevolent intentions. Margolin's work drew on the earlier explanations of social power provided by Foucault (1980a) and Donzelot (1997).

Foucault (1980a:127) explored the dual role of professionals in society. He included in the professionals "magistrates and psychiatrists, doctors and social workers, laboratory technicians and sociologists" as groups of intellectuals who engage in political debate across disciplines. He proposed that an intellectual either supports the powerless ("proletariat") (p. 132) or alternatively submits to "the political and economic demands" (p, 132) of his specific workplace, for example the university or the hospital. A contemporary academic, Donzelot (1997:7), drew on Foucault's work, adopting the term 'policing' (used in 1768 by Von Justi), for the work that social workers and other agents of the post-feudal state undertake to prevent the demand for equality from the poor from overwhelming the capacity of the state to provide welfare

to all who seek it. The role of social workers was to discriminate real poverty from other attempts to receive funds, and to incorporate with the giving of state funding, advice aimed at eliminating future dependence. The complex power interplays that Foucault had described became the simpler concept of policing. A very early example of a standardised manual for visitors of the poor (De Gerando, 1820, cited by Donzelot, 1997:69) also regulated the records kept: being a record of the income of the family along with how the family spent the income and moral judgements “systematically linked to the economic factor”. Donzelot concludes that “this booklet corresponds- excepting a few details- to the present-day reports of welfare caseworkers” (Donzelot, 1997:69). Thus, the dual nature present from the beginning of social work: to both help and to monitor the disadvantaged members of society, carries through into the present and, at least potentially, into social work supervision and the records that are kept of that supervision.

It is important to acknowledge the power relations involved in supervision, both hidden and open. Foucault (Danaher, Schirato & Peile, 2000) outlined the evolution of power from the open expression present in a monarchy to the hidden coercion present in democracies in modern times, where social sciences have fostered the development of “institutions and administrative techniques for measuring, regulating and controlling people and behaviour in order to ensure that states got the most out of their human resources” (p. 80). Supervision and the records that are kept of supervision sessions could, and in some states do, form part of the state techniques for regulating social work. A major debate in social work has involved the tension between “interminable supervision and autonomous practice” (Tsui, 1997:195, cited in O’Donoghue, 2003), and equally importantly for this investigation, the battle for

social work to be recognised as a true profession. O'Connor, Wilson and Setterlund (1995:176) state that social work "has long been preoccupied with its professional status". In order to gain professional recognition social work has to overcome the real hurdles of being recognisably a 'woman's profession' involved in the area of family and child welfare, an area of expertise contested by other professionals and clients themselves and the conflicts between using an empowerment model (O'Connor *et. al.*, 1995) and also 'policing' clients (Donzelot, 1997). Some of the difficulties of social work arise from vested community interest and the dangers to society, which lie in the problems that are addressed in the work. This leads to control of agency policies by legislation and, inevitably, agency's control over the autonomy of social workers. The unpredictability of intervention methods and outcomes means that social workers have much to gain from sharing decision making with a supervisor. Client safeguards against poor practice by social workers are hard to introduce, except by supervision, as it is the nature of social work to be carried out in private to encourage client disclosure (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). However, supervision in social work is rarely conducted by direct observation and is therefore limited in its ability to challenge actual practice (O'Connor *et. al.*, 1995). In the USA the professional debate was resolved by adopting a period of supervised practice after graduation followed by autonomous practice on licensure. Clinical social workers there have tightly defined prescriptions for supervision and the records kept (American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work, 2004). In Aotearoa New Zealand the detail regarding supervised social work practice is currently evolving, and here, as anywhere in the world, social workers address a diverse range of social problems. Some of the client groups (e.g. older adults or people with disabilities) are not perceived as threatening to society in contrast to groups like criminal offenders or child abusers, who are.

1.2 The Historical Context of Social Work Record Keeping

Records can come in many different forms. In Maori society, before European colonisation, knowledge took an oral form, being recited from generation to generation, telling the stories, the whakapapa and the meanings of carvings and tuku tuku panels in meeting houses or the ways to prepare flax (Pewhairangi, 1992). This reliance on oral record persists in Maori culture today.

In social work, in line with its scientific professional roots, records have traditionally been paper documents forming written accounts of interactions with clients and supervisees. More recently, electronic records have had an increasing role, particularly audio or video copies of supervision sessions (Munson, 2002) or interactions of supervisees with their clients to enable the use of Freire's concept of action/reflection to analyse practice (Blake-Palmer & Connolly, 1989). These records do not form a problem in the 'keeping' part of the definition, as they are intended to be used in the analysis and then disposed of, but records that have an accountability function raise the issue of how long to keep them. Increasingly, electronic records and computer technology allowing remote supervision (Munson, 2002) raise new ways of recording and new issues for protecting confidentiality. Allen-Meares and DeRoos (1997) envisaged the use of computer technology in future social work to access client records and interact in decision-making. They asserted that as long as social workers controlled the technology it would be a tool to enhance performance. They did not speculate on what would happen if the technology and pressures of administration came to control social work practice.

From this brief historical look at records it is obvious that records come in different forms and supervisors from different cultural groups and age groups would see records very differently. In social work, case records started out being influenced by science and some of the tools it used to capture data, like questionnaires and standardised forms in order to overcome recorder bias (Tice, 1998). But the early literature did also report a wide range of other ways of recording, including using the voice of the client, assessing the impact of the social worker's presence, or using the techniques of drama or novels, as well as the detached scientific voice, drawing on the disciplines of psychology and sociology as well as social work itself. Legislation tends to take a narrow view of sources of power in supervision and therefore whose voice is dominant in records.

In traditional models of supervision, the supervisor-supervisee relationship is premised on the employing entity's sanction of the supervisor as taking legal and professional authority for the supervisee's performance.

American Board of Examiners
in Clinical Social Work,
2004:12

A supervision report form designed to comply with US legislation requires a signature, but only from the supervisor. The status of the form is explained as follows.

This form is designed to comply with state social work licensing board requirement for documenting and reporting supervisor contact for licensure.

Munson, 2002:587

Supervisors, representing the authority of their agency, hold the responsibility and the power to define the supervision record.

1.3 The New Zealand Context of Social Work Supervision

Social work in Aotearoa New Zealand is a recently established profession, beginning in the 1950s. Social work supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand has only made a significant impact in the literature since the 1970s according to O'Donoghue (2003), following work on supervision by the New Zealand Association of Social Workers (NZASW) started in the late 1960s. Supervision was dominated by the English language, culture, literature, education and processes (O'Donoghue, 2007). In the collection of writing on supervision published by the NZASW, a paper by Hermansson (1972) recognised that supervision had similar elements to those found in the worker/client relationship. He wrote that New Zealand supervisors were not recording their sessions with workers at that time, and recommended keeping very full records of supervision because:

...it too is important for the development of effective services, and for the development of the profession... as an aid to charting the progress of the contact; providing a purposeful structure to the process; giving continuity to sessions; enabling conceptualisation of the interaction; ... help[s] keep a check on learning difficulties and deficiencies of the worker as well.

Hermansson (1972:155)

In the 1980s along with the New Zealand Social Work Training Council, NZASW developed the *Supervision Resource Package* (O'Donoghue, 1998), which included bicultural and feminist models of supervision intended to educate a move away from the previous mono-cultural and male dominated climate (O'Donoghue, 2007).

The major shift in Aotearoa New Zealand political and economic life commencing in the 1980s tipped the balance towards management functions of supervision.

However, the social work profession responded in 1988 by moving to introduce

competency assessment independent of employers (Nash, 2009) and by using their professional journal *Social Work Review* to reinforce ethical and professional standards in practice rather than allow organisational efficiencies to dominate the debate (O'Donoghue, 2007). Nash (2009) noted that the Association always retained an inclusive definition of social work, which necessitates a complex understanding of all the possible forms of supervision used in the profession.

The next major step in the development of the social work profession was the debate on registration, the implications that would have for educating social workers and the potential to create a hierarchy of workplaces for social workers (Briggs & Cromie, 2001). This debate leads us into the current Aotearoa New Zealand context and the impetus for this research.

1.4 The Current Aotearoa New Zealand Context

This research was stimulated by the increasing drive for accountability in social work, first being debated in 1964 until the mid 1970s, then again from 1993 culminating in the recent adoption of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003 (Hutchings, 2008). The Act passed a voluntary system of registration for social workers. Discussion on the move to register social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand prior to the Act's adoption indicated a desire to adopt practice standards to protect clients from harm, professional misconduct and failure to access resources they are entitled to have. This is set out in the purpose of the Act,

...to protect the safety of members of the public, by prescribing or providing mechanisms to ensure social workers are i) competent to practice and ii) accountable for the way in which they practice

Social Workers Registration Act
(2003)

But Hutchings (2008) acknowledged that registration would also reverse the de-professionalisation of social work that had occurred under the managerialist regime of the 1990s.

One of the criteria the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW) proposed for registration was “that practice is competently supervised”, also, once registered that annual evidence is provided of supervision and of continuing professional education (Corrigan, 2000:5). The adoption of these recommendations could have put pressure on the supervision relationship to provide evidence of competent practice or concerns about incompetence through records kept. The purpose for collection, storage and disposal of records is defined in pre-existing Aotearoa New Zealand legislation by the Privacy Act 1993 and its several codes of practice for various settings where social work is practiced. However, the specific

purpose of supervision records has not been clarified in the legislation and regulations that followed the introduction of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003. The details of the registration process were to be determined by the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) established by this legislation. SWRB policies throw some light on the importance of supervision, but give little detail on supervision in general and keeping records of supervision in particular, leaving that to other bodies in the social work sector.

The professional body (ANZASW), most social service agencies employing social workers and educational providers arranging practicums have clearly stated policies regarding supervision

SWRB (2007a: 3)

Without specific reference to supervisors, social workers are required to keep records.

Maintain accurate and impartial records covering interactions with a client, and to manage those records based on a sound understanding of how relevant legislation governs the collection of information, access to information held, and the disclosure of records in a social work context.

SWRB (2005a: 7)

The requirement to maintain and manage accurate and objective records covering interactions with clients is expanded on in the Guidelines:

The accurate documentation of practice decisions and interventions provides a clear record of the nature of social work involvement with clients and progress in achieving established goals. Such records also support the continuity of services to the client in the event of transfer of services to another professional...

Social workers should also be aware of the part that accurate record-keeping plays in any complaints procedure

SWRB (2005b: 14-15)

While this statement could be applied to supervision records, it is not clear whether the supervisee becomes the equivalent of the client, or the supervision records would be about the supervisee's client practice. The SWRB (2007a), in its role of defining

provisions of the Act, has produced a Policy Statement on Supervision Expectations for Registered Social Workers, which contains no reference to record keeping in supervision.

As a means of gauging competency, the SWBRB has used two existing organisations that certify their members' competency: ANZASW and Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi. The professional body, ANZASW, has now developed a separate set of practice standards for supervisors in their revised *Competency Handbook* (ANZASW, 2008a). The only specific reference to record keeping occurs in reference to the written supervision agreement with the supervisee, where the agreement includes:

The purpose, process, storage and any disposal of the supervision records

ANZASW (2008a:19)

The ANZASW (2008b) Supervision Policy has no specific references to record keeping. It does, however, indicate that supervision is “mandated by agency policy” (3.4) and “is a shared responsibility between the supervisee, supervisor and agency” (3.6).

The ANZASW (2008c) Code of Ethics – March 2008 has only one reference to written records.

Supervisors have a responsibility to...negotiate a written contract for service with each supervisee, which must include reciprocal roles and responsibilities, specify accountability and reporting lines to agencies or third parties and methods for resolution of disputes

ANZASW (2008c:13)

The content of supervision could be guided in part by the following list.

Supervision takes different forms in different settings, but is generally directed towards competent practice, client well-being, the development and well-being of the social worker and towards organisational learning.

ANZASW (2008c:12)

Clearly there are gaps in the definition of the purpose and methods of keeping supervision records. The research design for this study therefore needs to be responsive to the many variables present in the area of supervision by social workers: authority, relationship of the supervisor with the supervisee, and to the agency, evolving legislation and gaps in policies of key organisations. As a result, the methodology of action research is particularly appropriate for this topic in order to draw widely on a range of different people and in order to take action to change what are likely to be outdated processes in record keeping that served our previous models of supervision, but are unlikely to serve as well the expectations of the future.

1.5 Where to in this research?

There is considerable academic writing on the topic of supervision of social workers (Brown & Bourne, 1996; Munson, 2002; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Morrison, 2005; Reamer 2005; Tsui,2005). The international literature has much detail on recording contracts for supervision and some guidelines as to the content of records of supervision, the most specific being from authors in the US (Munson, 2002; Falvey, Caldwell & Cohen, 2002; Reamer, 2005) where there is a risk of being sued for negligence. As discussed in Section 1.4, publications in Aotearoa New Zealand since registration stress the importance of supervision for maintaining the quality of social work. The SWRB (2005b) Guidelines state that social workers should be recording some detail about client issues. However, when a social worker is supervised there is a silence from the SWRB and the Aotearoa New Zealand literature about what is expected of the records of the supervision sessions. Future debate about recording of social work supervision needs to be around how much to record, and what to record, in the light of the legislation of this country.

The questions for this research were refined from the broader questions asked above. I am interested, as a supervisor in practice, to find out:

1. What are social workers doing with supervision record keeping now?
2. What has changed over the last five to ten years and what (including legislation and agency policies) has influenced any changes?
3. Which theories are being used in supervision?
4. What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

These became the four research questions for this study that I will explore in detail in this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Choosing to research record keeping in social work supervision is like opening Russian nesting dolls: social life, social institutions, social work, supervision and record keeping. As you uncover each layer, the task of investigation and explanation becomes smaller and looks more manageable, but on further acquaintance, the complexity is as great, embedded in, and taking its shape from the whole. The theoretical underpinning of this research has to take into account that complexity. It needs to include views of society, social work and supervision. It needs to provide an understanding of power and control. It also needs to include ideas that shape research.

Many questions provided the genesis of the research. How can a social work supervisor keep records that accurately represent the interactions that occur in supervision? Who needs to read and use records? What effect do agency policies and legislation have on the way records are written? Does theory or perspective influence what is recorded? Would someone who had not been present at supervision have the same understanding of those records as someone who had been present? The major texts and review papers on supervision should provide answers, you would think.

The starting point for this enquiry is a power analysis, followed by an extensive examination of supervision in relation to social work. The literature on record keeping in supervision is examined next. The review looks at the legislation and agency policies impacting on the supervision of social workers internationally and in Aotearoa New Zealand. Theories and perspectives that influence me, and therefore the research, are briefly outlined. Finally the research questions, which the data from this study address, are refined.

Having chosen to do a small qualitative study I hope that this research will do justice to the diversity alluded to earlier by not claiming to provide definitive answers to these questions but will stimulate debate over its findings and offer a method for other groups of supervision practitioners to investigate how 'best practice' in supervision record keeping could be developed in their own setting.

2.2 Power analysis

Foucault was a French theorist who is still widely acknowledged for his critiques of social institutions and the relationships between power, knowledge and discourse (Danaher *et. al.*, 2000). Foucault (1980b) discussed the essence of power in industrialised society as lying in a hierarchy of positions, where each person is inspected by others ('the gaze'), and constant records kept of their behaviour. This sounds familiar to anyone who has worked with or in a bureaucracy. The knowledge of that observation meant that it was internalised as a desire to conform to expected behaviour. Power works on the dominant and the dominated (Danaher *et. al.*, 2000). People in higher levels of the hierarchy become transformed into the oppressor by being part of 'the gaze'. The whole machinery of 'the gaze' takes on a power of its own, not entirely in control of those at the apex of the system. Conversely, resistance to 'the gaze' by those in the lower levels was underestimated by its original proponents (Foucault, 1980b). In social work this resistance to 'the gaze' by frontline workers is termed "street-level bureaucracy" by Jones and May (1992:271-5) and is an indication of power held by the lowest workers in the hierarchy of the agency. They are responsible for work with clients, carrying out agency policies and meeting its goals, and they control the flow of information to the agency about clients.

Supervision, according to O'Donoghue (2003), began alongside social work practice in the USA, as administrative oversight and teaching of the friendly volunteers who undertook the charity work in the 1880s. The emphasis towards accountability began when the movement started to recruit volunteers from the middle and lower classes, as opposed to the original recruits from the upper classes. Traditional social work

supervision literature, influenced by modernism, sees the power as being held by the supervisors, driven by their role as experts who hold professional knowledge (O'Donoghue, 2002).

Gardiner (1989, cited in Cooper, 2000) takes the point of view that supervision and the supervision literature represents a dated and hierarchical form of teaching which values the professional knowledge of the teacher over knowledge of the learner.

Cooper says this view of supervisors as authoritative, contrasts with a constructivist approach, which recognises that no one group involved has the exclusive right to interpret social work supervision practice. The rise of post modern influence has led the social work profession to value contextual knowledge, subjectivity and clients as co-creators of knowledge (O'Donoghue, 2002). An example from fieldwork supervision is Maidment's (2001:5) research finding that although the formal power in student fieldwork placements lies with the educator, "educators were quick to acknowledge that they learnt a great deal from students, and at times floundered in their educator role".

There is no doubt that supervisors, at least those that provide administrative supervision, have authority vested in them. Kadushin and Harkness (2002) distinguish between authority and power.

Authority is the right to issue directives, exercise control, and require compliance... Authority is the right that legitimizes the use of power: power is the ability to implement authority

Kadushin and Harkness (2002:84-5)

These authors state that the sources that provide supervisors' authority are: the agency in appointing the supervisor, the profession, which in the USA involves licensure for

independent social work practice, and informed consent from clients to engage in supervised practice. Then the authors ask: “What prompts supervisees to actually comply with the supervisors’ directives?” (Kadushin and Harkness, 2002:85).

An answer to the above question has been borrowed from the management literature. French and Raven’s sources of leader power have been used to explain sources of power in supervision. Kadushin (1992, cited in Brown & Bourne, 1996) added power over work-related resources to the five sources originally proposed by French and Raven. Three of their sources derive from the power designated by the agency to the supervisor: legitimate or position power, coercive power and reward power. The other two sources relate to personal characteristics of the supervisor: expert (knowledge/skills) power and referent (personality) power. Empirical studies conducted in the USA by Kadushin (1974, cited in Kadushin & Harkness, 2002) and Munson (1997, *ibid*) found that supervisors and supervisees both thought professional competence (expert power) was the main source of supervisor power. A high proportion of supervisors said the only source of their power was expertise, but for supervisees legitimate or positional power was also a factor. Only very small numbers named referent power, reward or coercion as important. Kadushin thought that these results indicated that supervisors were reluctant to acknowledge the power of their position. He asserted: “...the supervisor must accept, without defensiveness, or apology, the authority and related power inherent in his [sic] position” (Kadushin, 1992, cited in Brown and Bourne, 1996:35). But Munson (1997, cited in Kadushin & Harkness, 2002) argued that social work values are incompatible with exercising positional power, hence supervisors’ reluctance to influence their supervisees by coercion or use of rewards. How to exercise this authority is, according to Tsui

(2005), a balance between two aspects of supervision: monitoring whether workers fulfil the requirements of the job, and if they do not censuring them, and in contrast, forming a supportive more equal relationship which will lead to the worker being motivated to develop to their potential. In addition, the reluctance to acknowledge power in the supervisor position may have as much to do with the introduction of post modernism and the recognition of multiple perspectives in professional training as it does with any personal attribute of the supervisors.

O'Donoghue (2002) proposes that the traditionalist view of supervision, based on a psychodynamic discourse, represents a form of male, western imperialism which excludes the values of people of different gender or culture, or other worldview. Supervision, in paralleling western casework, has become a private activity between supervisor and supervisee, effectively silencing the voices of others involved in the work: the clients, the profession, and the agency. Although the advent of legislation regulating the profession of social work has placed a monitoring role on supervision, not just for the agency, but also for the profession, he questions the degree to which this has changed the privacy of the supervision. As an example of the silencing of interested parties, he considers that "...it remains questionable that clients are either informed or aware of the existence and purpose [of supervision]" (O'Donoghue, 2002:4).

The debate about power in supervision is, either by implication or overtly, linked to the administrative function of supervision (the functions of supervision will be explained in the next section). In terms of challenges to the traditionalist view of supervision, O'Donoghue (2002) states that new right and new managerialist political forces of the 1990s have separated management or administration from clinical and

educational functions of supervision, leading to more extensive use of external supervision and peer supervision. The active participation of clients in social constructionist practice approaches: solution focused, strengths based or narrative therapy, has changed the power balance in supervision. Supervision now recognises the power of supervisees and clients and the influence of political discourses on social work supervision. Stringer (1999:199) suggests that Derrida's concept of "[i]nterweaving of discourses" explains the tension between authority figures and their staff and clients. This is why he supports including clients in developing the programmes that they use.

Supervision records form a mechanism by which supervisors' accounts of supervision could come to be taken as the official or only version of the encounter. This happens because supervisors are placed in the position of possessing "the eye of power", which Foucault (1980:146) attributes to many social groups who hold power over others. But is this true for all types of supervision? The supervision literature does not overtly seem like a narrative of dominance, but subtle pressure may nonetheless still be present. In a parallel situation, Margolin (1997) noted case recording in social work became a form of dominance by the social worker over the client.

Describing someone in a case record is not usually recognized as a mode of dominance. This dominance is almost invisible.

Margolin (1997:44)

If we are to fully understand the place of supervision and the records kept of supervision in social work, social organisations and social life in general, we need to be clear about who holds power and when it is being used in record keeping.

2.3 Supervision in Social Work

2.3.1 Introduction

What is this activity called supervision? Firstly definitions of supervision are examined to arrive at an understanding of the complexity of meaning hidden in that term. A brief outline is given of the empirical research studies that have been undertaken on supervision. Then some of the findings about different elements of supervision, including the functions of supervision and the different forms it takes are examined, including an in depth look at cultural supervision. A review of major theories and perspectives influential in supervision follows.

Supervision is a relationship between two or more people in the roles of supervisor and supervisee, and a relationship with a purpose. In social work that purpose is to improve the service that a worker in a social service provides to their clients and to be accountable through an experienced practitioner for their practice (Tsui, 2005; O'Donoghue, 2003; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997; Brown & Bourne, 1996). O'Donoghue (2002) spells out the complexity of supervision by listing the many forms it takes: fieldwork, managerial, clinical or professional, peer and cultural supervision. In addition, the size of the supervisee group can vary from individual to a group of individuals or a work team, and the supervision can be internal (where the supervisor and supervisee/s are employed by the same agency) or external. Which of these many combinations are we talking about when legislation regulating social work includes supervision? I will use the literature to throw more light on the possible interpretations of supervision.

2.3.2 Definitions of Supervision

How is social work supervision viewed by writers of the literature? There are many and various attempts at defining supervision. In a supervision manual, O'Donoghue (1998) uses the NZASW definition of supervision.

Supervision is a process in which one worker guides, enables, and facilitates another worker or a group of workers to meet certain organisational, professional, and personal objectives. These objectives are competent, accountable practice, continuing professional development and education and personal support

O'Donoghue, 1998:3 (NZASW, 1997 and adapted from Morrison, 1993:13)

From the international literature Kadushin (1992, cited in Brown & Bourne, 1996) has had a strong influence on many authors, who use his terms for three major functions of supervision: administration, education and support. Kadushin and Harkness (2002:18-19) in their definition, emphasise the administrative aspect of supervision: "A supervisor is defined as an overseer, one who watches over the work of another with responsibility for its quality". Tsui (2005:144), on the other hand also includes a developmental function for supervision. "Social work supervision is one of the major mechanisms of monitoring the quality of service and a tool for the development of professional social workers." He sees supervision as a unique feature of social work practice. The functions of supervision have been listed more simply by Crocket (2004, cited in Hanna, 2007) as examination (monitoring and development of the work) and confession (the support for the worker).

Clinical supervision arose in the USA in the teaching profession and then was used by psychotherapists and eventually other mental health professionals. It describes a process of a senior practitioner using clinical methods to teach and professionalise a junior practitioner. Over time a number of models and methods have developed across the different professions of psychotherapy, psychology, counselling, nursing and social work. Clinical supervision in social work has been used interchangeably with the traditional function of educational supervision and is often provided by professionals external to the agency employing the supervisee. Recently in Aotearoa New Zealand, the term has been used interchangeably with professional supervision, which covers accountability in practice, professional development, as well as support and mediation (O'Donoghue, 2007). O'Donoghue (2003:14) says what definitions of supervision have in common is that "they describe social work supervision as a process, activity and relationship(s)". The tension between the dual forces within supervision, of social work professional interests and managerial/purchaser interests arising from social service organisations is highlighted in a later publication (O'Donoghue, 2007).

Definitions of supervision have the dual foci of quality control and worker development: or in organisational terms, focus on the concerns of the employing agency or the social work profession. Something missing from these definitions is the relationship of supervision to outcomes for clients of social services. Clinical supervision forms a part of the whole: concentrating on professional practice issues and therefore is concerned with the service to clients. In the next section some of these issues will be elucidated further in examining the research on supervision.

2.3.3. Empirical studies on supervision

Although there is a substantial literature on supervision, with debate on its many aspects, empirical studies of supervision are harder to find. Perhaps this is a reflection of the move away from empiricism, occasioned by the thinking of Nietzsche, Beckett and Foucault that “[e]mpirical reality does not exist as a universal truth” (Irving 1999:32). This leads to “Nietzsche’s celebrated notion of perspectivism – that every view is only one among the many interpretations possible.” (Irving 1999:34). So empirical studies offer only one perspective, couched in the scientific paradigm of a dominant western culture, but it is one worth considering because of the dominance it is given, particularly by powerful groups in society, like politicians and service funders.

Another possible reason for the dearth of non-student studies on supervision could be the ease or difficulty of collecting the data. Tsui (2005) undertook a survey of the literature for empirical studies of supervision of workers in human service organisations between 1950 and 2002 and found few published studies, except for those about students in fieldwork settings. He notes (Tsui, 1997; Tsui, 2005) how difficult it is to gather information on staff supervision because of the power differential between supervisor and supervisee, and (Tsui, 1997) pressure to keep information about the performance of both supervisor and supervisee confidential to their organisation. In the 34 studies Tsui (2005) found researching staff supervision, a number had a descriptive focus, some focused on supervisory issues but only one

focused on client outcomes. Documentation of supervision did not appear amongst the eight supervisory issues listed below that were seen as significant to researchers:

1. Supervisory functions fall into three separate domains: administrative, educational and supportive functions. Administrative supervision focuses on the accountability of the employee for the quality and efficiency of the service they deliver. Educational supervision helps the supervisee develop professional knowledge, skills and values. Supportive supervision seeks to improve morale and motivation of supervisees.
2. Supervisory context ranges from physical comfort, a good relationship between supervisor and supervisee and the organisational and cultural influences in supervision.
3. Structure and authority is the extent to which supervisors use the authority of their position to make decisions.
4. The supervisory relationship is influenced by psychodynamic theory. The supervisor and supervisee form a dyad. In many cases a 'parallel process' is drawn between the supervision relationship and relationship between the supervisee and the client.
5. Supervisory style and skills and the effect on outcomes of supervision.
6. Job satisfaction studies show that supervision is one of the most significant factors for front line workers
7. Training for supervisors to meet their needs.
8. Gender issues showing that female and male supervisors were equally competent with female and male supervisees and equally good at administrative aspects of supervision. However, females were more intuitive and relationship oriented than males.

Although a half of the studies Tsui found concentrated on gathering data from both supervisors and supervisees, only one, by Munson (1981, cited in Tsui, 2005) studied the supervisor/supervisee dyad to look at the interactions in the relationship. A single study (Harkness & Hensley, 1991) researched client outcomes, an extraordinary gap, when it is widely acknowledged that the goal of supervision is to protect client interests and wellbeing and thereby improve the service social work clients receive (Brown & Bourne, 1996; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2003; Tsui, 2005). This study had an experimental design where focus of supervision was varied and client satisfaction tested. Clients were most satisfied when workers had supervision that was client focused, rather than having a mixed focus on administration, training and clinical consultation.

In a literature review from a medical education perspective, Kilminster and Jolly (2000) included social work in the multiple clinical disciplines whose literature they searched. They lamented how little empirical literature and theory existed to support clinical supervision practice. Their review cited a British empirical study by Burk (1997, cited in Kilminster & Jolly, 2000) on the effects of supervision on client outcomes, as well as the Harkness and Hensley (1991) study. Burk's work showed that social worker qualifications and experience improved client outcomes and more high-risk cases were resolved with additional supervision, than when it was not present. The review concluded that the supervisory relationship was more important in predicting client outcomes than supervisor skills and helpfulness (Harkness, 1995, and five other studies from allied professional groups cited in Kilminster & Jolly, 2000).

Kadushin and Harkness (2002:324) discuss factors contributing to “the good supervisor” and include outcome research for supervisees and clients drawn from a range of professions: psychology, psychotherapy, social services, and social work in their list of empirical studies on this topic. Their detailed analysis of the composite findings organises the characteristics of the “good supervisor” into the three functions: administrative, educational and supportive supervision. A selection of the items they note follows:

- shows an ability to balance support with clear performance standards
- able to give constructive, critical feedback that supports supervisee’s growth and independence, administratively as well as educationally
- communicates up the hierarchy as well as down
- is culturally sensitive, non-sexist and non-racist
- is competent in supervisee practice issues and interpersonal relationships with supervisees
- accepts failures as a consequence of learning yet confronts inadequate work
- celebrates achievements
- conveys acceptance and trust,
- enhances supervisee’s autonomy
- aware of stress and adjusts the workload accordingly
- supportive without being emotionally intruding.

This research shows that the characteristics of the supervisor are important but other research Kadushin and Harkness (2002) cite shows the supervisor characteristics interact with those of the supervisee. Research results suggest that matching

supervisor/supervisee characteristics produces good results and there is no particular model of supervision that equates with good supervision.

A number of authors, whose work has been drawn on elsewhere in this literature review, have included the results of their own empirical research in their papers: Masters, Trynes, Robertson and Waitoki (2002), and Autagavaia (2000), have researched cultural aspects of supervision, Kadushin (1974, cited in Kadushin & Harkness, 2002) and Munson (1997, cited in Kadushin & Harkness, 2002) have researched the sources of power in the supervision relationship. Munson (2002) describes several studies he undertook on supervision for social work students, and by fieldwork supervisors, and a study about the styles of administration of supervisors of practitioners (Munson, 1981). Kadushin and Harkness (2002) systematically investigated empirical studies on the following: validating the tasks of administrative supervisors, detailed process notes of supervisory sessions for students and their fieldwork instructors, the distinction between supervision and therapy for supervisees, many articles on burnout, the positive effects of supportive supervision, effects of gender on supervision, advantages and disadvantages of group supervision and lastly, the advantages of on-going or “interminable” supervision (p. 451).

O’Donoghue (2007) lists seven research studies on supervision in an Aotearoa New Zealand context.

In terms of research, studies have focused on: supervision in the Community Probation Service (O’Donoghue, 1999); middle managers (Hirst, 2001); good supervision amongst a small selection of external supervisors and supervisees (Davys, 2002); the Canterbury District Health Board’s Mental Health Service and two non-government providers (Cooper and Anglem, 2003); health sector supervisors in state, not for profit and private practice region (Shepherd,

2003); strength-based supervision within an organisational setting (Thomas, 2005) and Maori supervision (Eruera, 2005).

O'Donoghue, (2007:17)

The study by Cooper and Anglem (2003:46) in focus group sessions found most supervisors “were not line managers, they had no legal responsibility for the supervisee’s work... clinical supervisors believed they were responsible [only] for support, education and training of their supervisees, but not for clinical cases”. However, the authors expressed concerns that clinical supervisors in their study were aware of cases of negligent interventions by their supervisees. If they failed to report these, or noted that they needed additional training to undertake complex assessments or interventions, then the question of their legal liability arose and needed to be clarified urgently. Supervision contracts were not always present (4%), or open to others (66% were verbal). The personnel that had used written contracts most consistently were social workers. The feedback mechanism with line managers was sometimes confined to attendance at supervision, and sometimes non-existent. A small number of supervisees thought there should be no feedback to managers. Some thought this should only occur when there were safety issues. Only 15% of contracts mentioned recording of supervision sessions.

Some of the recommendations of the report arising from the research follow.

The roles and responsibilities of the line manager and clinical supervisors should be defined and differentiated.

Confidentiality between supervisor and supervisee should be maintained but contracts should include professional disclosure statements that inform participants about their rights and responsibilities, the parameters of supervision, desired outcomes and limitations to confidentiality.

Documentation of issues covered in the session and actions taken form part of the requirements of good practice. Both supervisor and supervisee should sign this documentation. Such a practice can only enhance accountability for, and the quality of supervision.

Cooper and Anglem,
(2003:49)

A survey conducted amongst full members of ANZASW (O'Donoghue, Munford & Trlin., 2005) gives a more recent picture of supervision in this country. Amongst the findings reported in a later article from this study was the following insight into the content of supervision sessions:

The most commonly discussed content in sessions was complex or challenging cases with the supervisee's concerns or matters and ethical issues next, followed by workload, problems with colleagues/management /organisation, boundaries, professional development, success stories, caseload review, stress, team issues, and cultural matters, with personal matters, the supervisor's concerns, performance management and the supervision relationship being the items least commonly discussed in sessions.

O'Donoghue (2007:20)

In a third article of the series describing the same research study, O'Donoghue (2008) outlined the areas for improvement in supervision as described by supervisors and supervisees. These led to recommendations to review supervision practice both for sessions and annually, having a development plan for supervisors that goes from entry to the role to an advanced level of practice and researching the influence of the supervision environment (office, organisational and professional cultures) on supervision. This article includes in its result a mention of written supervision records: "Some supervisors also commented about improving their administrative practice in supervision through keeping better records and having written contracts." (O'Donoghue, 2008:14).

The international and local empirical research has delivered some insights in a limited range of supervision issues. It is notable that so few studies chose to research the outcomes of supervision and how it works with supervisees to improve the service for clients. No research studies were found on the topic of record keeping in supervision.

2.3.4 Different functions of supervision

Authors of recent books on social work supervision (Munson, 2002; Tsui, 2005) cite the influence today of Kadushin's (1976) model of the three functions of supervision: administrative, educational and supportive. Other authors (Richards, Payne & Shepperd, 1990, cited in Brown & Bourne, 1996; and Morrison, 2005) include a fourth function for supervision: mediation, whereby the supervisor supports the supervisee to mediate organisational difficulties within their employing agency. Another model by Hughes and Pengelly (1997) makes a distinction between an administrative function and a professional one, the latter with two strands: facilitating professional development and focusing on the practitioner's work. Davys (2005) adds a fourth function of recognising the practitioner's culture. Morrison (2005) also differentiates supervision based on contrasting professional/clinical supervision from administrative supervision. The former, he considers, is responsible for achieving the best outcomes for service users. This finding is in line with the Harkness and Hensley (1991) research about client satisfaction. The agency or organisation employing the worker influences the supervision relationship through its policies, especially if the supervision is by a manager, involving an administrative function. Tsui (2005) points out that most social workers are employed by an organisation and that involves bureaucratic rules and meeting organisational aims. Where supervisors

are employed by the same organisation as the supervisee, they share the same organisational constraints in addition to their individual professional and personal constraints.

The relationship between supervisor and supervisee, and the role of developing the worker are as important in supervision as the administrative functions of regulation and control of the worker (Browne & Bourne, 1996). When all of the functions of supervision are undertaken by the same supervisor there is a problem with an imbalance towards administration (Morrison, 2005). Line-management supervision is likely to reduce honesty in the supervision relationship, because of the manager's involvement in performance measures and decisions (Morrell, 2001).

In some social services, administrative supervision of workers is provided by a manager who is not a social worker. Professional social work supervision is then provided by a supervisor who is a social worker, either internal or external to the employing organisation. In this case the organisational constraints Tsui (2005) noted, are not present. So what difference does this make to supervision? Morrison (2005) provides some insight.

Where the supervisory functions are separated, it is vital that there is clarity about the different roles, and on how issues of accountability and performance feedback will be addressed between supervisors.

Morrison (2005:35)

Morrell (2001) sees a potential conflict between confidentiality and accountability in external supervision. She acknowledges the benefits of supervisor separation from the employing organisation in creating a forum for honest examination of the supervisee's work. But she proposes that there is the potential for isolation of

supervision from the organisation, which presents problems. Using the process of establishing the supervision to involve the agency management in a three-way contract increases supervisors' understanding of the organisational context of their supervisees' work and agencies' confidence that supervision will fit in with their values and policies. In a more recent publication she notes the incidence of organisational contracts has increased and applauds their role.

[This] suggests that agencies are now recognising supervision as a serious professional activity with clear expectations and responsibilities for all parties. It also suggests that they are recognising the organisation's role in ensuring supervision is productive, beneficial to both staff and clients, and conducted within their code of practice, policies and professional guidelines.

Morrell (2008:22)

She does, however, want to see the individual negotiated contract retained rather than being replaced by the standard organisational one, so that the supervisor can gauge an appropriate balance for each supervisee, between support and challenge in order to see actions they have taken in a different way. The organisational contract brings the link back to administrative supervision and accountability into sharper focus right at the beginning of the supervision relationship. What do these contracts have to say about record keeping in supervision? This question will be examined in the section on record keeping.

It is clear from the discussion on supervision functions that the word supervision encompasses a range of possible relationships with supervisees and organisations. Different combinations of functions have different implications for accountability and therefore for record keeping in supervision.

2.3.5 Different forms of supervision

I will expand here on the different forms of supervision listed by O'Donoghue (2002) as they involve different power relationships and therefore have different implications for record keeping.

1. Fieldwork supervision takes place within agencies, and is provided by their staff. However, it takes place in a power hierarchy with the staff of educational institutions at the top, agency supervisors in the middle and students and clients at the bottom (Gardiner, 1989, cited in Cooper, 2000). Fieldwork supervision, along with the next two forms of supervision discussed, is most likely to be a two-person activity. According to research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand (Maidment, 2001) some student placements are undertaken without a formal contract involving the agency of the fieldwork supervisor. Perhaps these fieldwork supervisors are fulfilling a professional responsibility while keeping quiet about it because they are afraid the implications of having a student to supervise are in conflict with their agency's need to be efficient in today's economic climate. The supervision contract between fieldwork supervisor and student is the norm with clear lines of responsibility. Fieldwork supervisors are often learning their supervision role while the student is learning to be a social worker. In terms of French and Raven's sources of power (1959, cited in Bartol, Tein, Matthews & Martin, 2001; Brown & Bourne, 1996) the supervisor has responsibility vested in them by the school of social work, giving them legitimate power and have expert power as a result of their experience and reward power as they are involved in the examination meeting, evaluating student learning.

2. Managerial supervision and some of the conflicts arising from the legitimate and reward, or coercive power (French & Raven, *ibid*) vested by the agency in the supervisor have been discussed in the section on the administrative supervision function.

In a book discussing supervision for mental health professionals, including social workers, Falvey (2002) lists the administrative tasks of supervisors as:

- Selection of supervisees and assignment of cases
- Liaison with training programmes
- Orienting supervisees to agency policies and emergency procedures
- Monitoring ethical, and state and federal statute compliance of supervisees clinical practice
- Undertaking evaluations of supervisees
- Undertaking documentation of clinical and supervisory sessions, and ensuring treatment decisions are documented.

The latter task makes managers responsible for the supervision record keeping of supervisors, and also of supervisee's client records.

3. Clinical or professional supervision may still be a two person activity (supervisor/supervisee) or group supervision with a supervisor and several supervisees, with a focus on the non-administrative functions of supervision.

Falvey (2002) listed the following tasks involved in clinical supervision.

- monitoring supervisor and supervisee competence

- assuring informed consent in treatment and supervision
- maintaining confidentiality and adhering to its limits
- protecting client welfare
- promoting the supervisee's professional development
- avoiding dual relationships in treatment and supervision
- implementing legal mandates to warn, protect and/or report

Falvey (2002:12)

The clinical or professional supervisor holds expert power and referent power according to French and Raven (*ibid*). Where the managerial supervisor is not a social worker, clinical and professional supervision, with a focus on casework, ethics, education and development, are provided by other social workers. As discussed above this separation of the functions of supervision creates problems with accountability.

4. Peer supervision is different from the previous three forms of supervision because there is no legitimate power difference between the members of the peer supervision, whether there are two or more it is a reciprocal relationship. The expert power may differ with differing years of experience in the profession and/or the agency. Practitioners rotate the roles of supervisor and supervisee, usually within the same session. Polaschek (2007) says the reciprocal relationship means that the worker in the supervisee role may be less afraid to share examples that may be poor practice. The incidence of peer supervision, along with external supervision has increased as a result of new managerialism (O'Donoghue, 2002).

5. Cultural supervision is too complex a concept to explain briefly, combining as it does two hard to define terms: ‘culture’ and ‘supervision’. To understand supervision it is necessary to consider the cultural context that it operates in, with multiple cultures influencing social work practitioners.

Irving (1999) talks about the influence of Nietzsche’s writing on Foucault and hence the shift from modernist theories and the implications for multicultural practice of today’s social workers.

Nietzsche believed that no one mode of life is proper, desirable, or even possible for everyone; therefore no set of views can command universal assent... Social work has not yet fully absorbed this Nietzschean news and the impacts for a truly universal multicultural practice.

Irving (1999:35)

A search on Google Scholar using the phrase “cultural supervision” but excluding “cross-cultural” and “multicultural supervision” gave a predominance of articles written about cultural supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand, involving Maori supervisors (Masters *et. al.*, 2002; O’Donoghue, 2002; McKinney, 2006; Love, 2002; Byers, 2002; McKenna, Thom, Howard & Williams, 2008). This is a specialised form of supervision offering advice to supervisees on working appropriately with Maori. Most of the other articles were about other indigenous cultures (Samu & Suaalii-Sanui, 2009; Eley, Hunter, Young, Baker, Hunter & Hannah, 2006). It is important to discuss the difference between the cultural supervision performed in this country and the international literature on cross cultural or multi cultural supervision. The discussion in the international papers and books is about supervisors of the dominant culture working with culturally diverse supervisees or supervisees with culturally diverse clients, and/or a supervisor of a different culture from

the supervisee they work with. This definition is in contrast with that of Maori author, Eruera (2007: 145), who points to one of various definitions of cultural supervision as “supervision between people of the same culture. This definition recognises the importance of culture within the supervision relationship”. Tsui (2005) takes a similar approach to the importance of culture in supervision and applies the concept of culture to the four components of supervision: the supervisor, the supervisee, the client and the agency, and gives examples of how each responds to culture.

The difference between the international and the New Zealand model, is that internationally, cultural supervision is not conceived of as a specialised activity, the supervisor is expected to add this skill base to the other skills they bring to supervision.

In clinical social work, the importance of cultural competency cuts across all other competencies required for clinical supervision practice in the United States.

American Board of
Examiners in Clinical Social
Work (2004)

De Souza (2007) makes the case for a similar development of cross cultural supervision skills in Aotearoa New Zealand because of the increase in cultural diversity in the country since changes in the Immigration Act of 1987 lead to increased immigration from Asia, Africa and the Middle East. In order to overcome social pressures in supervision, power issues and racism must be addressed. Cultural safety, she states, has been applied to Maori/Pakeha relations and needs to be extended to all cultures. Kilminster and Jolly (2000) provide support from non-social work literature sources for mentoring

minority workers (eg. blacks and women) in the way that cultural supervision works in Aotearoa New Zealand. What makes the New Zealand situation unique, is the recognition of the partnership between the Crown and Maori (tangata whenua), the Crown being represented by the government, government organisations and other social service organisations that receive government funding. Maori, as tangata whenua (literally ‘people of the land’), have the right through Article Two of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) to govern their own people (Ruwhiu, 2001). O’Donoghue (2003:54) states: “Te Tiriti o Waitangi could also form the basis for a model of supervision in which both parties would work in partnership to protect Tangata Whenua’s rights to self-determination in regard to tangata whenua matters”. Eruera (2007), based on research completed in Te Taitokerau, suggested tangata whenua use the concepts in her paper as a guide to develop their own supervision processes. She stressed the unique nature of tangata whenua models of supervision (kaupapa Maori supervision) “with specific obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi” (p.143) and more specifically than cultural supervision as: “an agreed supervision relationship by Maori for Maori with the purpose of enabling the supervisee to achieve safe and accountable professional practice, cultural development and self-care according to the philosophy, principles and practices derived from a Maori worldview” (p.144).

The Treaty is important, O’Donoghue asserts, to all social workers, not just Maori or those working with them, because the Treaty is the basis for the formation of this country, and it reminds us that the relationship and

responsibilities between Maori and Tauwiwi exist even when not actively engaged with each other. It has been the acceptance of these Treaty principles and the challenges that Maori have posed using them in the report Puaa-Te-Ata-Tu (Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Maori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare, 1986), that have led to affirmative action for Maori and later Pacific Island students in professional training, including social work. According to Nash *et. al.* (2005) this report caused a shift in thinking in Aotearoa New Zealand, meaning that overseas material came to be examined for its cultural relevance and safety to apply in this country. This is in stark contrast to Munson's (2002) passive statement on cultural diversity affecting supervision.

During the next fifty years, projections are that racial and ethnic minorities will become the majority of U.S. citizens... At the same time, no trends exist to indicate that members of minority groups are increasingly entering the social work profession...if... trends... continue at the current levels, dominant culture professionals will be serving clients with varying cultural backgrounds in the short run... Supervisors will... have to monitor practitioner's sensitivity to the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and needs of clients who are different from the practitioners.

Munson (2002: 414-5)

Bradley, Jacob and Bradley (1999) and Webber-Dreadon (1999) discuss the difficulty of achieving culturally sensitive supervision for tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand when the environment and management are dominated by Pakeha culture. Webber-Dreadon includes in her indigenous model of supervision, accountability of the social worker to the whanau/hapu/iwi of their clients, as well as their own whanau/hapu/iwi and thirdly to the organisation, as a means of addressing the power imbalance.

In the Masters *et. al* (2002) research evaluating the effectiveness of a Department of Corrections programme to reduce re-offending by Maori in Aotearoa, formal cultural supervision was one of the factors discussed. It was supplied to about a third of Department of Corrections staff, both Maori and Non-Maori workers, often in the form of group supervision. Another type of cultural support was received informally from Maori colleagues. Non-Maori staff found the formal cultural supervision was a useful source of information on Maori cultural practices. Some Maori staff used cultural supervision to ensure their own safety and manage their stress levels in the work-place, others found it did not have much to offer them, as they already had good knowledge of their culture. The authors give the Department's definition of cultural supervision.

[A] formal process in which staff meet with a cultural consultant who provides cultural support and knowledge to ensure the client's cultural needs are met.

Masters *et. al.* (2002:50)

The culture being referred to is Maori, the culture of the descendants of the signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi in this country. Our progress to address the needs of other cultures in supervision has so far followed the Treaty model, outlined by Henrickson (2005) for social work practice.

How we learn and work across cultures is focused for us in Aotearoa New Zealand by the Treaty of Waitangi, of course, which has come to serve as a synonym for 'working biculturally' or what passes for cultural competence. We require all competent social workers to demonstrate their familiarity with the Treaty, yet in most public and tauwiwi agencies now there are designated Maori teams or 'cultural workers' who are tasked with the (often exclusive)

responsibility of working with tangata whenua
whaiora.

Henrickson (2005:1)

A challenge to this model was issued by Henrickson to bring New Zealand cultural supervision in line with an international model of individual competency. But it has the enrichment of Treaty knowledge behind it.

When working across cultures, social workers inevitably impose our rudimentary knowledge of what we know about, say, 'Maori' or 'Pasifika' or 'Asian' or 'gay' cultures onto the client. We expect them to fit our knowledge and preconceptions...I propose that we must move beyond defining this issue in terms of culture, and reframe it in terms of competence. To frame the issue this way is not in any way to discount the historical oppression of affected groups... Social work is the only profession that encourages its practitioners to be changed by our clients. By approaching clients with sufficient literacy and an open ear we have an opportunity to be educated by them, to begin to understand their world the way they understand it.

Henrickson (2005:2)

However, Autagavaia (2000), in researching supervision from the point of view of Pacific Island supervisors and supervisees from statutory and non-statutory organisations, calls into question the ease with which Palagi (people of European descent) can provide supervision to Pacific Island people. One of her interviewees points out that it may be difficult for Palagi to hear anything with an 'open ear' if the supervisee can't spare the energy to educate them. "Experience has taught me that it takes too much energy to try and educate them about Pacific Islands' values and what makes me the person I am..." (Autagavaia, 2000:50).

The Aotearoa New Zealand model of cultural supervision based on Article Two of the Treaty of Waitangi and the place of Maori as tangata whenua is a specialised form of cultural supervision different from the multicultural and cross-cultural supervision concerns expressed in the international literature. Each form of cultural supervision has something to offer in this country. It would be a great loss to submerge the gains from the former to attend to the increase in immigrant groups in our society. Continuing the extension of cultural supervision to other ethnic groups and encouraging the training of social workers from ethnic communities who contribute to the clients of social work is important. It is also important to continue to train all social workers in cross-cultural differences and anti-racism.

2.3.6 Theory influential in supervision

There are two sets of theories relevant to the practice of supervision. Firstly there is the set of theories that social workers use in working with their clients, secondly there is the set of theories that relate to the practice of supervision itself. Supervisors will have used the first group of theories in their own social work practice. Munson (2002:215) says: “[a] clinical theory of practice is a highly individualized set of propositions aimed at communicating how change is produced in relation to clients”. He believes that theory in isolation from its ability to explain behaviour in case work practice should not be discussed in supervision, as it doesn’t develop an ability in the supervisee to apply theory to practice.

The second set of theories relate to the practice of supervision itself. Because there are no theories about social work supervision grounded in empirical research (Tsui,

2005; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002) social work has borrowed from other disciplines such as psychology: drawing on psychodynamic models, humanism, cognitive behavioural, constructivist models like narrative and solution focused, developmental models and social role models; like Bernard's well researched discrimination model, Hawkins and Shohet's seven-eyed model and systems models (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004).

Tsui (2005) has identified eleven models of social work supervision under five headings:

- Practice theory as a model is described by a variety of authors and is applied to supervision.
- Structural- Functional models
 - The supervisory function model whereby Kadushin spells out the tasks of the administrative, educational and supportive supervision functions (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002)
 - The integrative model combines the organisation-oriented focus on client outcomes with the worker-centred focus on job satisfaction and professional development (Gitterman, 1972, cited in Tsui, 2005)
 - Models of authority are two theories of the way that authority is used in supervision: the sanction model where authority is conferred on supervisors by their organisation; and the competence model, where the skills and knowledge of the supervisor are responsible for the effectiveness of supervisors' leadership (Munson, 2002).
- Agency models refer to the degree of agency control on the type of supervision, forming a continuum of high to low control.

- The casework model is the most popular model, using a one to one supervision relationship with a supervisee (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002)
- The group supervision model is often used in addition to the above. There is less power imbalance between the supervisor and the several supervisees and uses peer pressure to change practice, but has the disadvantages of peer competition and lack of responsiveness to crises (Brown & Bourne, 1996).
- The peer supervision model has no designated supervisor. All participants are equal and take responsibility for their own work. To be effective it relies on some participants being experienced. It does not take care of client vulnerability or organisational liability in a critical situation (Hardcastle, 1991, cited in Tsui, 2005).
- The team service delivery model has no regular supervision sessions. The supervisor is the team leader, and the team contribute to the decisions needed to carry out the work (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002).
- The autonomous practice model argues that professionally trained and experienced practitioners have no need for on-going one to one supervision and become responsible for their own professional development and practice after a number of years of supervised practice (Rock, 1990, cited in Tsui, 2005).

Baretta-Herman (1993, cited in Tsui, 2005) suggested group supervision for experienced practitioners where the supervisor is a facilitator rather than having any authority. However, Veeder (1990, cited in Tsui, 2005)

believed that this removes some of the personal responsibility of the practitioner and presents professional and legal problems for supervisors.

- The interactional process model looks at how the supervisor interacts with supervisees. There are two types of interactional models: the developmental model, which focuses on acquiring skills and autonomy over time, and the growth-oriented model which is focused on expressing feelings and developing personalities (Tsui, 2005).
- The feminist partnership model reconstructs supervision into a shared relationship between equals, monitoring is replaced by group norms and peer approval (Tsui, 2005).

From this existing literature cited above, Tsui (2005) has constructed a comprehensive model of social work supervision, which he sets in a context of multiple cultures: the organisational culture, and the cultures of all the participants.

The seven principles he identifies are:

1. Supervision is an interpersonal exchange between an experienced supervisor and one or more supervisees to ensure the quality of service to clients.
2. Through the supervisor, the supervisee's work is related to agency goals.
3. The supervision transaction has three functions: administrative, using authority, professional/educational development and the emotional/supportive function.
4. Supervision expresses professional social work values.
5. The supervisor monitors work performance, passes on professional skills, knowledge and values and provides support to supervisees.

6. Effective supervision can be measured by: supervisee satisfaction with supervision, how supervisees perform their work, and outcomes for clients.
7. Supervision involves four groups: the agency, the supervisor, the supervisee and the client.

At a relatively early stage in the development of supervision literature in Aotearoa New Zealand the New Zealand Social Work Training Council (1985) included in their *Supervision Resource Package* a substantial section where they apply their standard supervision format to thirteen different settings, equating to different styles and client groups: eg. radical social work, feminist supervision or family therapy. For each type of practice they give a description of the types of supervision and the major theoretical influences on them.

Strength-based supervision is one of the post modern ideas originating from practice that provides a clear example of theory explicitly used in the supervision process. Cohen (1999) describes how this theory shapes the content of supervision sessions shifting the focus from problems to achievements. Other post modern theories used in supervision are narrative therapy and solution-focused practice. Another theoretical base of increasing importance in supervision is reflective practice with “Kolb’s adult learning theory and Donald Schon’s work in regard to how practitioners think in practice” (O’Donoghue, 2003:50) being important. O’Donoghue *et.al.* (2005) found that there was a preference for practice models such as strengths-based and task-centred to be used in supervision rather than supervision-based models, with many research respondents using an eclectic range of supervision approaches.

All theories have the potential to provide a filter to supervision, meaning that parts of the interaction are attended to while others are not, with the result that records can be shaped by the theories used. How much does theory shape what we record of supervision? How clear is that shaping to anyone reading the record? These are questions that remain to be answered.

2.4 Record keeping

2.4.1 Introduction

What place does record keeping play in supervision? The literature review will discuss the variation in advice on record keeping and discuss the implications of those differences for different forms of supervision. The search of the literature on supervision for advice on record keeping will also be contrasted with the debate on case-records in social work.

2.4.2 Advice on record keeping in supervision

Social work supervision texts offer only brief references to keeping records of supervision. Usually this occurs in the context of discussion on developing a written supervision contract. The specifics refer to the importance of documenting an agreement between supervisor and supervisee on: record keeping and storage of records (O'Donoghue, 2003), recording of sessions, who can see them and what uses they may be put to (Morrison, 1999), recording notes of supervision, their purpose, who has access to them and how disagreements are recorded (Hughes & Pengelly, 1997). As well as providing a benefit to the supervisee they point out the benefits to supervisors, especially new ones, as a means to reflecting on and improving their skills. The role of the supervisor in the contracting process is a powerful one.

...however well-defined the supervisee's responsibility for using supervision, many aspects of the contract are not fully open to negotiation and it is not a contract between two equal parties. Ultimately, maintaining the appropriate boundaries around and within supervision is the responsibility of the supervisor not the supervisee.

Hughes and Pengleey
(1997:39)

Agency requirements for supervisory records vary, and individual supervisors' preferences vary. Munson (2002) says supervisory records should include, at least:

- The supervision contract, if used
- Supervisee experience and training/learning needs
- A summary of performance evaluations
- Notes from all supervision sessions
- Details of cancelled or missed sessions
- Notes on cases discussed with significant decisions and
- Significant problems occurring in supervision, how they were resolved, if not, why.

Reamer (2005), another US practitioner, includes a list of things social work supervisors should record from supervision sessions. These include: the date, time and content of supervision sessions, recommendations, critical incidents, and consultations. Managers should record: key discussions, consultations and meetings that relate to ethical and legal issues e.g. disclosure of client information without their consent to prevent harm or efforts to address a worker's unethical conduct or impairment.

Brown and Bourne (1996:58) state that it is "good practice to agree to keep an open supervision record of topics covered and any decisions made". As well as providing a benefit to the supervisee they point out the benefits to supervisors, especially new ones, as a means to reflecting on and improving their skills. Records are important for a number of reasons. According to Hirst (2004), they ensure: the continuity of supervision, provide an evidence base for reporting, an agreed interpretation of

content, and form a safety and legal back up for the supervisor and supervisee. If, as Margolin (1997) stated, the keeping of records is a form of exercising power over the subject of the records, not keeping records and what is chosen not to be part of the record is also a form of asserting power on the part of the record keeper.

Another example of discussion on record keeping is the use of templates for supervision records. Stanners (1995) produced a template heavily influenced by terminology derived from behavioural psychology for recording of supervision sessions. The terms used (tasks, performance targets, standards and outcomes) link to a format for recording, which consists of: name of worker, name of supervisor, date, topic, issues arising, action, when by, who by and done (when). The New Zealand Social Work Training Council (1985) supervision resource included practice models of supervision in the form of questions to guide supervisors through supervision interactions. Use of such tools, in themselves, shape the record kept to fit within the parameters of the format, possibly with no room for other records. But Tice (1998) points out that the debate on case recording included a call by Sheffield (1920, cited in Tice, 1998) to go beyond reporting of factual information to recording interpretive material.

Atherton (1986) devotes a chapter of his book on supervision to recording and monitoring. He sees recording as a useful aid to promote reflection on practice and provide continuity of sessions, also to evaluate the supervision. As well as advocating setting in place a contract and proposing the use of an evaluation questionnaire to be completed by supervisees, he turns his attention to the more difficult matter of gathering from individual supervision, evidence of the progress of the staff member

being supervised. He says there are many ways of satisfying the criteria of recording complex material in the context of a simple format for staff to use, in order to report back in supervision on items raised earlier. As an example, he offers the following.

- (1) Contract item.
- (2) Work on the item planned at the last session.
- (3) Steps towards (2) achieved.
- (4) Obstacles to the completion of (2).
- (5) Matters arising for discussion at next session.

Atherton (1986:78)

He advises that steps 1 and 2 are written within the supervision session (supervision records are kept by the supervisee) then supervisees write up steps 3-5 a day or two before the next session and give them to the supervisor in preparation. Despite this seemingly prescriptive approach, he does not ignore the aspect of supportive supervision, or that the supervisee may be waiting for others to complete part of the work that needs to be done (possibly the supervisor). This can be recorded in steps (3) and (4). Atherton (1986) raises the concerns that supervisees have about using supervision records in appraisals. He proposes that it is what staff members do that is important, not how they arrived at it or why. He uses this argument to justify staff members, rather than their supervisors, keeping their own records. The value of interpretation and formulating “alternative accounts” in supervision are also discussed by Atherton (1986:88) elsewhere in his book.

Another author touched on record keeping of clinical mental health professional supervision in the USA (Falvey, 2002). She then went on with others to devote an entire book to a system of record keeping, which was called FORMSS and was designed to minimise risk of supervisors being sued for negligence (Falvey, Caldwell & Cohen 2002). The book consists of a series of templates developed to record supervision by psychologists in a high-risk work situation (clinical psychology for

people with mental health and substance abuse issues) in the US legal and legislative context. Included in the book are templates for supervisee profiles and client case overviews. The *FORMSS Supervision Record* (p. 32) has one section that is used as a separate record for each client, and records: date, supervisee, client ID, review method, a summary of the updated case review, interventions and client progress and supervisee concerns. In another section there is a supervision session summary covering: discussion (theoretical bases, case conceptualisation, clinical judgement etc.), treatment recommendations, referrals to other agencies, observations and training recommendations and a checklist of current risk management issues. The FORMSS templates assume that the supervisor has open access to all client records.

The ANZASW's (2008a) Supervisor Practice Standards includes a statement on supervision contracts. It has limited detail about what should be included in supervision session records.

The supervisor relationship is based on a written agreement between the supervisor and the supervisee and where the supervisee is employed in an agency, the supervisee's line manager. The agreement includes:

- An understanding of the nature and purpose of supervision
- Expectations and accountabilities to each other and to the agency where applicable
- An acknowledgement of how this supervision links with any other supervision arrangements
- Appropriate agreement about confidentiality and its limits
- The structure of supervision – frequency, duration and location
- A plan for resolving any disagreements or addressing issues about professional safety
- The purpose, process and storage and any disposal of the supervision records
- A process for regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of supervision and the supervision contract.

ANZASW (2008a:19)

The first draft of this document included more specific detail about record keeping of supervision sessions than appears in the final version.

The supervisor(s) will maintain a supervision record for the purposes of supervision. The record should include date of session, content areas discussed, any planned actions and responsibilities and any identified developmental needs. ... Records are to be kept in a secure place. Records are to be available to the supervisee.

Hirst (2004)

The writing on supervision record keeping already discussed assumes a one to one relationship between supervisor and supervisee, and has no reference to other forms of supervision. The detail implies the power of the supervisor to determine the nature of the record.

There has been no discussion in the Aotearoa New Zealand literature of record keeping in Maori models of supervision. The question is, how would the approaches Bradley *et. al.* (1999), Webber-Dreadon (1999) and Eruera ((2007) propose, influence the ways that records are kept of tangata whenua supervision? Given that Pakeha accountability systems are imposed on Maori practitioners in addition to their own culture's accountability back to their client whanau, hapu, iwi and their own whanau, hapu,iwi, should any indigenous approach to record keeping be modified to incorporate organisational requirements, or should there be parallel records for parallel supervision processes like Webber-Dreadon's (1999:8) "three dimensional" approach?

There is considerable discussion and detail on recording supervision contracts, but less detail on the content of supervision session records. The exception to this is the recommendations from USA writers, which do include some considerable detail in an effort to address the legal implications of overseeing supervisee's work. The legal situation in the USA will be discussed in two later sections on Legislation and supervision (2.5.2) and Legislation, policies, and record keeping (2.5.3). The records are kept for accountability, to assist the supervisee and are also an aid for the reflection of the supervisor.

2.5 Legislation as power and control

2.5.1 Introduction

Much of the supervision literature that has shaped social work supervision practice in this country has been generated in other countries, chiefly the USA (Brown & Bourne, 1996; Munson, 2002; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Falvey, 2002; Tsui, 2005) and the UK (Atherton, 1986; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997; Morrison, 2005; Hawkins & Shoheit, 2006). Clinical supervision literature has often arisen out of the supervision of allied health professional groups including social workers. Books on supervision written for Aotearoa (O'Donoghue, 1998, 2003) have been quite recent phenomena. Hence much of the writing on supervision does not readily fit the local context.

The ultimate source of control in any country is its legislation. This literature review will next consider how the legislation shapes social work supervision practice, and how that will affect record keeping. Legislation differs from country to country and therefore it is important to put advice on supervision practice into the context of the legislation impacting on the writers of the relevant literature and the practitioners who are their audience. What follows is a brief look at some of the international literature on the impact of legislation on supervision, and secondly what that means for supervision record keeping and finally a comparison of the Aotearoa New Zealand legislative context with the international situation.

2.5.2 Legislation and supervision

This section will consider the two largest influences in the international literature, writing from practitioners in the USA and the UK. Clinical supervision practice in the USA is mandated by state and federal laws. Society expects, in legislation, that

groups of professionals in similar practice areas will reference off each other to arrive at a 'standard of practice' (Falvey, 2002; Munson, 2002).

This essentially means that our professional activities must be consistent with what other similarly trained professionals would do under similar circumstances. This standard is continually evolving and is influenced by many sources: professional association ethical standards; certifying body ethical codes; state licensing laws, rules and interpretation; institutional and organizational policies; insurance industry and other reimbursing or funding expectations; federal, state and local statutes; and case law... As we shall see, clinical supervisors need to maintain regularly updated working knowledge of these standards as they are implemented in their particular state or jurisdiction.

Falvey (2002:15)

A text on supervision for clinical professionals, written by US psychologists Bernard and Goodyear (2004), points out the similarity of supervision for clinical professionals like psychologists and social workers. There are three ways which mental health professionals are regulated.

1. state regulatory boards,
2. professional credentialing groups, and
3. accreditation.

The most important of these is the state regulatory boards. They have emphasised the importance of supervision by regulating its practice through three provisions.

- * amounts of supervision that licensure candidates are to accrue;
- * conditions under which this supervision is to occur (e.g., the ratio of supervision to hours of professional service; what proportion of the supervision can be in a group format; who can do the supervising); and
- * qualifications of those who supervise

Bernard and Goodyear (2004:2)

These regulations give basic numerical bottom lines for supervision, but do not

stipulate within that how quality supervision will be delivered. Recent work on ethics audits (Kirkpatrick, Reamer & Sykulski, 2006) found that lack of clear policy on supervision, including format, frequency and documentation, presented a high risk.

Falvey (2002) concludes that there are some guidelines as to what constitutes competent practice for supervisors.

A number of disciplines have promulgated standards or guidelines for supervisors... These suggest that coursework or other formal training in supervision theory and methods, as well as a period of supervised supervision of others, should be prerequisites for supervisory practice

Falvey (2002:27)

She lists a series of questions that provide a check on supervisory competence. These include reminding supervisees to adhere to the guidelines of their profession and work within the boundaries that they are qualified to perform legally and ethically through their licensure or certification. Also that the supervisor maintains an up to date knowledge of ethical codes of their own and the supervisee's professions and state licensing law and case law. There is considerable discussion about the fact that most supervision relies on self-reporting by supervisees. The legal implications of supervising clinical practice according to Bernard and Goodyear (2004) include deliberately suggesting procedures to supervisees that would cause harm (malpractice), overseeing the duty to warn intended victims of a supervisee's client and more commonly, the issue of vicarious liability where the supervisor is held liable for the negligent acts of supervisees. Determining vicarious liability is a complex issue. There are three points that determine this in the USA (Falvey, 2002; Bernard & Goodyear, 2004).

1. The agreement to work under the direction of the supervisor must be

voluntary and to the benefit of the supervisor

2. The supervisee must be at the time performing tasks permitted by the supervisor
3. The supervisor must have the authority to direct the work of the supervisee.

Clearly supervisees are subject to intensive oversight in this situation.

A better understanding of the necessity to produce extensive supervision records as recommended by Falvey *et. al.* (2002) can be gained by examining the US legislation which relates to clinical social work supervision. The American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (2004) outlines the three levels of clinical social work.

Extensive records are kept for the supervision of practitioners in the first level. These are in a two-year period after graduating from the Masters in Clinical Social Work programme, where the supervisor has legal responsibility to the state licensing board and legal liability for the work of the supervisee, should a malpractice suit eventuate.

At the end of this two-year period the supervisee becomes an independent practitioner, with no requirement to receive supervision until and unless they take on a supervision role themselves. Even for supervisors who are outside the agency of the supervisee, vicarious liability means that supervisors may be legally liable for actions or omissions of their supervisees. The fact that these legal concerns are so complex makes the formal written contract between the supervisor, supervisee and agency very important for clarifying the extent and the limits of the supervision relationship, according to Munson (2002).

The stringent oversight of supervisees recommended in the USA literature needs to be put into perspective as occurring during the two-year period of supervised practice,

post graduation, of mental health professionals, before they become autonomous practitioners. It is in this context that vicarious liability of the supervisor is appropriate as they do have the ability to direct the work of the supervisee whether the supervisor is internal or external.

2.5.3 Legislation, policies and record keeping

There is much more discussion on the writing of client records in relation to the law, than there is over supervision record keeping. The legal use of the agency's record of the contact clients have with the service is important according to Munson (2002) and Bernard and Goodyear (2004). These latter authors cite Falvey and Cohen's statement: "from a legal perspective "if it isn't documented it didn't occur"." (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004:202).

Munson gives an extensive list of the documentation required for case notes.

In situations in which the allegations involve failure of professionals to take action or intervene, often the only proof of what took place is the written record.

Munson (2002:254)

Munson (2002) states that supervisory records are often integrated with the client record and the legal status of a separate supervisor record is unclear.

Reamer (2005) notes that writing too much or too little in the case record can be dangerous. Too little detail can compromise further treatment when someone is at risk, too much detail could be subpoenaed and used against a client in another context, e.g. a child custody dispute when the person was being treated for mental health issues. Over-documenting a crisis can serve as a 'red flag' during litigation hearings and challenge the worker's statement that they were handling the case in the

standard way, if they go into undue detail. He cites Berner (1998) stating it is better to “write smarter, not longer... Writing smarter means being succinct” (Reamer, 2005:54).

An Australian author writing about social work practice in relation to the law (Swain, 2002:29-30) goes into depth on the topic of confidentiality for clients of social workers. He states that agency workers and even private practitioners cannot give guarantees of absolute confidentiality to their clients. “If subpoenaed to give evidence the social worker cannot refuse to disclose information unless empowered by legislation, even if the relevant information has never been recorded at all” as they are subject to the legal “requirement to produce records or documents in response to a validly executed subpoena.” In contrast to Falvey and Cohen (cited in Bernard and Goodyear, 2004) he stated that the option of not recording relevant information to avoid being forced to disclose it by law would be unethical and show a lack of commitment to professional accountability. He does not take any of this discussion and apply it to supervision records, however.

There is very little written, even in the USA literature, about legislation and the supervision record. However, some templates that have been developed in reference to the legislation include risk assessment sections. Falvey’s (2002) FORMSS system contains a supervision record template with a risk assessment section containing twenty tick box items with room to record actions taken. It covers all the areas of risk from informed consent and confidentiality through expertise of the supervisee and the supervisor to institutional conflict. There is also a separate template for managing the supervisee’s client caseload. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) also include a heading for

a risk management review of the supervisee's entire caseload in their supervision record form, but with the focus on interventions with the clients (tracked by using a first name or case number. It lacks the memory prompts that the Falvey (2002) template provides.

The British author, Morrison (2005) states that agencies and disciplines should set out a clear policy for recording at least the following three things.

- case material discussed in supervision,
- the supervision session and
- information that belongs in the personnel file.

This is one of the few statements that locates the responsibility for record keeping policy within the organisations that employ social workers. Morrison doesn't state how record keeping should differ if the supervisor is not the line manager for the supervisee.

2.5.4 A comparison of the Aotearoa New Zealand legislation with international legislation.

The legislative context in this country has been described in Chapter One (1.4). The introduction of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003 has increased the drive for formal systems in supervision, because of the role supervision plays in protecting clients and ensuring a quality service is provided by agencies. Aotearoa New Zealand has a similar requirement to the USA for new social work graduates to undertake a period of supervised practice in order to gain full registration. This period is 2000 hours of supervised practice, or two years of practical experience if gained prior to 2004 (SWRB, 2007b). The Board has chosen not to define

supervision, but instead recognises definitions accepted by educators, agencies and the professional body of social workers. They make a statement about who should provide the supervision.

The Board expects that persons providing social work supervision will preferably be registered social workers who practice in accord with accepted professional standards of experience and qualifications

SWRB (2007a:4)

If a suitable supervisor is not available within the agency then social workers seeking registration or who are registered are enjoined to comply with agency accountability, but also to seek peer or external supervision from a suitable social work professional. Unlike the expectations in the USA of autonomous practice after certification which is not required to be supervised, the SWRB (2007a) makes clear an expectation of regular on-going supervision for all registered social workers, in the public interest.

Other legislation has impact on social work supervision. O'Donoghue (2003) has included in his book on supervision, a useful legislation self-inventory for supervisors. It lists legislation, which applies to supervision in different practice areas. The part of the inventory universal to all supervision is on information, privacy, confidentiality and evidence. This legislation consists of:

Official Information Act 1982, Privacy Act 1993, Protected Disclosures Act 2000, common law on evidence, Evidence Amendment Act (No 2) 1980, specific provisions in legislation governing confidentiality in reports to courts, committees and statutory agencies, agency codes of conduct, codes of practice issued by the Privacy Commissioner

O'Donoghue (2003:26)

It is clear from the Evidence Act 2006 No 69 (as at 29 June 2009) that social workers, unlike medical practitioners and clinical psychologists, do not have privileged

communications with their clients, and therefore one could conclude that their records could be subpoenaed in evidence by a court. However, a search of NZ Case Law Digest Archives 1986 to 2004, and Briefcase (via Brookers) 1997 to 2009 for the term 'subpoena' revealed only two cases involving professionals (one was a psychiatrist, and one a pathologist), and in both cases the judges denied permission to subpoena the records, so calling for professionals' records by subpoena seems to be uncommon in Aotearoa New Zealand. The purpose for collection, storage and disposal of records is defined in Aotearoa New Zealand by the Privacy Act 1993 and also the various codes of practice, for instance for the health sector or other settings where social work is practiced. Amongst other things that differ is the length of time records are stored.

One important piece of legislation that is missing from the above discussion is the Accident Compensation (ACC) legislation. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (2008) it provides government funded, no fault, universal accident coverage, paying for treatment and income compensation for earners. It is currently managed under the provisions of the Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Compensation Act 2001. The provision of no-fault universal schemes, internationally and in New Zealand, have two results.

1. They removed the mechanism of resorting to taking legal action to gain compensation and
2. They reduced medical costs through lowering the use of defensive medicine

Although O'Donoghue (2003) states that social work practice has become increasingly litigious recently, the source he cites is the American, Reamer. There is no discussion in his book of the difference between American society, where medical negligence compensation cases are common, as opposed to this country where ACC

provides some of the broadest coverage of any international scheme

(PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008) and has removed the incentive to take such cases.

The ACC legislation introduces differences between Aotearoa New Zealand and the USA.

Because of the consultative nature of external supervision, which precludes the supervisor from having detailed knowledge of all the supervisee's cases...it would be the employing agency, not the external supervisor who would be held responsible for the worker's practice.

Morrell (2001:39)

As mentioned in Section 1.4 there is an assumption that professional and agency policies on supervision will provide guidance to practitioners which not included in the law. O'Donoghue (1998) noted that the NZASW, Community Corrections and Child Youth and Family (CYF) were all at that time revising their supervision policies and that the NZASW policy would form a benchmark for organisational policies. But as already mentioned, the latest version of the ANZASW (2008a) Supervisor Practice Standards has very little detail about supervision session record keeping. With respect to record keeping in supervision the Cooper and Anglem (2003) research showed that change still needed to happen to provide legal accountability within the District Health Board and non-government agencies in the study.

In order to gauge current progress on supervision policy definition in this country, a search of the two major social work journals was undertaken. A scan of all *Social Work Now* journals of CYF between 2003 and mid 2009 showed one issue (No. 40, 2008) devoted to the topic of supervision but it contained no discussion of supervision policy or record keeping. A similar scan of *Social Work Review*, the journal of the ANZASW from 2000 to the present found a handful of articles referring to agency

policies as a very minor part of their discussion on supervision. O'Donoghue (2001) discussed research he conducted on supervision in the Community Probation Service in the late 1990s. He reported that its supervision policy was developed without reference or consultation with the profession (ANZASW) and reflected management interests in efficiency rather than best supervision practice. Research conducted on supervision, this time in a large mental health service, was reported on by Cooper (2006).

From the late 1990s, the organisation developed its supervision policy to ensure that clinical supervision became part of health care practice. Professional supervision is now a requirement for clinical psychologists, occupational therapists and social workers.

Cooper (2006:23)

A discussion of the effects of registration on social work supervision details how ACC policy specifies a minimum of one hour per fortnight supervision for a full caseload in contrast with ANZASW expectations of a graded frequency of supervision (from weekly to monthly) depending on the level of experience of the supervisee (Hutchings, 2008). In only one case was there any reference to supervision record keeping and agency policies. This occurred in the context of a discussion on culturally appropriate supervision for kaimahi Maori (Walsh-Tapiata & Webster, 2004). Without specifying any examples of agencies, the authors state that: “while most organisations would appear to have a policy/statement on supervision, there is a need to ensure the effectiveness of this policy in practice” (p. 17). They made recommendations on a range of aspects of supervision, including recording.

The policy should have a statement indicating that recording of supervision occurs at each session. It should state what gets recorded between the supervisor and supervisee and may include a framework for negotiating a contract. A number of service contracts now expect an audit trail of supervision sessions.

Walsh-Tapiata and Webster
(2004:17)

There is no discussion in this paper, or elsewhere, of what is actually present in existing agencies' policies that represents effective supervision policy. So the area of supervision record keeping policy in the environment of Aotearoa New Zealand social worker registration remains both ill-defined and un-debated.

2.6 Theoretical influences

Social workers include “use of self “ as part of their toolkit (Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2005: 203) where they consciously apply their knowledge, skills and values to their interactions with clients. For social worker researchers that degree of self-knowledge is just as important, and vital in qualitative research. It is important to recognise which theoretical perspectives fit with our own life experiences and with the approach that we take to the participants in our inquiry, to the data that we attend to and the way we analyse it.

This research study is influenced by qualitative approaches specifically the post modern paradigms of critical theory like feminist, constructivist, and participatory perspectives, that have something to say about the use of power, the power of language and social transformation (Lincoln & Guba, 2003). Qualitative research methods recognise that people are looking for meaning in what they do, and that meaning shapes their realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research will be covered in depth in Chapter Three (Methodology). Some ideas from critical incident analysis as originally described by Flanagan (1954) have been incorporated in the design of the research and those will also be expanded on in Chapter Three.

A method of examining theory developed by the feminist, Bunch (1983), will be used in the analysis to examine the research findings and will be expanded on briefly here. Firmly based in feminism, and therefore with activism as a major aim, her model has four interconnected, but non-linear parts: description, analysis, vision and strategy.

This model moves beyond the exploratory stage (Tsui, 2005) of description and analysis, where most empirical research on supervision has remained, to seek to change the world by visioning what should be, but being careful to check out our assumptions. Then it moves into strategising for action to create change. Judgments about what will lead to change are based on the other three parts of the model: description, analysis and vision. The other part of strategy is choosing the most effective tools for change: legislative, military, spiritual and which parts of society are best suited for which actions. This activism sits very comfortably with social work practice and training so is a very apt method of analysis for supervision research.

2.7 The Research Questions

Despite the SWRB (2005b) Guidelines stating that social workers should be recording some detail about client issues the silence from the SWRB and the Aotearoa New Zealand literature about what is expected of the records of the supervision sessions mean there is a gap in current knowledge. Future debate about recording of social work supervision needs to be around how much to record, and what to record, particularly of supervision sessions, in the light of the legislation of this country.

The questions for this research were refined from the broader questions asked above.

1. What are social workers doing with supervision record keeping now?
2. What has changed over the last five to ten years and what (including legislation and agency policies) has influenced any changes?
3. Which theories are being used in supervision?
4. What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

These became the four research questions for this study that I developed in the methodology and explore in detail in the rest of this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

I am a social worker. I came to identify as a social worker after being active in making changes in the communities that I lived in over the years before I would have given myself this title. Not surprisingly, given this history, I hope that some change in the practice of social work supervision will result from this research project. The desired outcome I have for this research is to stimulate debate amongst the social work profession, in particular the people most actively involved in the practice of supervision: the supervisors and supervisees, about how best to keep records of supervision.

To reiterate, the questions this research seeks to answer are:

- How records are being kept now?
- Whether that has been influenced by the introduction of registration of social workers in Aotearoa and by agency policy?
- What influence theory has had on the way records are written?
- How to develop standards of ‘best practice’ for record keeping in supervision that will serve the needs of clients and the multiplicity of work situations that social workers supervise in this country?

This chapter will explain the reasons for the choice of methodology, both technically and personally. It will also outline the plan for the research and the adjustments that were made in order to achieve a large and diverse enough group of participants to gather data that would be transferable into other settings.

3.2 Insider or outsider? The qualitative research choice

We come to decisions in life influenced by everything that has come before. The decisions around research are no different. Much of the influence is determined by the extent that we feel a sense of belonging and affiliation with the subject of the research. Some is determined by the extent to which we can view the subject as an outsider and see it with fresh eyes. The importance of understanding the insider perspective is put well by Haber.

There is no view from nowhere. We can never leave all our prejudices behind and operate from a wholly disinterested standpoint, but our prejudices become dangerous only when they are dogmatic, kept hidden from view and not open to discussion

Haber (1994:1)

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:13), prominent exponents of qualitative research methodology, explain how the frameworks referred to below, that underpin research: “ontology (What kind of being is the human being? What is the nature of reality?), epistemology (What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?) and methodology (How do we know the world, or gain knowledge of it?)” form the paradigm that guides the researcher’s beliefs and actions about the world and how it should be studied. With this in mind it is my aim to reflect here on some issues that have influenced and continue to shape my approach to this research. The use of the term “reflect”, itself comes from the critical reflection process developed by Schon and others (Fook, 1999; Ixer, 1999) and which has become very influential in social work practice, education and research.

My choice of the focus for this research arose from my experience as a supervisor of

social service staff. This role came in my capacity as a manager and also as a fieldwork supervisor for social work students and later as an external supervisor. As a result, I share with the research participants the experience of providing and receiving supervision. I believe this adds to my understanding of the practice experience that research participants bring and allows them to trust that I can understand their views on the research topic. I identify as a social worker and have a commitment to the ethical standards of my profession. In particular to the multiple responsibilities which social workers have to balance in their practice, to: Te Tiriti o Waitangi based society, to the wider community, to clients, agencies and organisations, to colleagues and to supervisory relationships (ANZASW, 2008c). These factors provide me with an insider perspective.

Haber's writing on the insider perspective leads me to reflect on the parts of my background and experience that I may not share with many of the research participants. One is my research experience: I had a short career as a research scientist in the 1970s and later studied psychology research, now I am finishing my studies for my Master in Social Welfare and have tutored in the research paper for undergraduate social work students for two years. Consequently I have a broad knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative research. From my starting position as a quantitative researcher, I came to believe after working in the social services that all research, including quantitative research, is influenced by the prejudices researchers carry. Therefore qualitative research, which openly discusses the history that researchers bring to their work, can add great value to the knowledge base. That is why I chose a purely qualitative approach for this research.

Qualitative researchers have been described by Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) as “bricoleurs”. The practical nature of this method of working, as a “jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person” is congruent with my own values and life-style choices. My parents were raised on farms during the 1930s depression and it was from them I learned to recycle materials. I have always enjoyed the discovery aspect of creating things from materials to hand: the satisfaction of crafting something useful or beautiful, using a range of skills, from things that might have otherwise been ignored or discarded. So it is no surprise that I would take these same values into the research work and chose a paradigm that fits.

In addition to my practitioner and researcher roles I have a range of factors that will provide a match with some participants, but not others: my gender, ethnicity, and class being the most obvious ones.

Having both insider and outsider perspectives in this research makes my position complex. But whatever connections I may feel I am making with participants I will still play the role of “naïve enquirer”. As McCracken (1988:19) phrases it: “the investigator’s experience is merely a bundle of possibilities, pointers and suggestions.” I have learned through my years of experience in social services that similarities are only an indicator of possibilities, not an answer in themselves.

3.3 Participatory action research

Action research is defined as: “the study of a social situation carried out by those involved in that situation in order to improve both their practice and the quality of their understanding” (Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2001:8). One of the key features of action research is the cycle of action and reflection, another is the key part non-specialist researchers play in the process. Collaboration between researchers and participants is active in all stages of action research, with the aim of defining and finding solutions for the practice that is under examination with the intention of creating change (Gibbs, 2000).

Stringer (2007) maintains that one of the advantages of action research is its ability to bring disparate groups of people together.

It links groups that potentially are in conflict so that they may attain viable, sustainable, and effective solutions to problems that affect their work...through dialogue and negotiation... they also build a supportive network of collaborative relationships that provides them with an on-going resource. Solutions that emerge from the research process therefore become much more sustainable, enabling people to maintain the momentum of their activity over extended periods of time.

Stringer (2007:21)

This feature of sustainable change was an attractive reason for choosing this methodology to research the professional and political canvas of social work supervision. One of my hopes at the outset for this research was that the process would be a collective and reflective engagement with the research questions. When I started reading the methodology literature I identified with the reciprocal nature of action research. I hoped to offer the participants some tangible application of knowledge to their own practice in return for sharing their practice wisdom. There

was also an element of wanting to share the power of the research findings equally with the participants. The researcher's role is to be a resource person, facilitator or consultant, not an expert, chief or head. Not to impose solutions, but to stimulate people to change when "new meanings emerge as divergent views are compared and contrasted" (Stringer, 2007:42).

3.3.1 Co-operative inquiry

In a discussion on different types of participative inquiry, Reason (1988) explains three related but different approaches: co-operative inquiry, participatory action research and action inquiry. He considers that the political question: "Who owns the knowledge, and thus who can define reality?" (Reason 1988:263) is key when choosing an approach to use in research.

I chose co-operative inquiry because the topic for this thesis involves professional development, and I would hope it keeps the power to define 'best practice' in the realm of supervisors and supervisees, as they are most involved. It is based on the humanist principle of self-determination. It includes as part of the aims of the research the personal development of co-inquirers (myself included) toward a position of critical reflexivity (Reason, 1988; Fook, 1999). Since this fitted so closely with my earlier hopes for the research, I focused on this method as the ideal one for the study I had in mind.

3.4 Research design

Before commencing the research, an ideal design was arrived at for good reasons: both technical and personal. Action Research was chosen as the option most likely to give power to the participants over the process of the research. Inkson and Kolb's (2002) ideas, from the management literature, of organisational development as an evolutionary activity with the emphasis on teamwork, internal change agents, the use of collaboration and management of culture have guided the approach taken in this research. This study attempts to use practitioners to anticipate and contribute to future change rather than be faced with reacting to change imposed from the government level. This was important to me because the research itself involves developing professional practice, so the professional participants are in a more or less equal position to myself with regards to experience. The particular form of action research chosen was co-operative inquiry, which also gives power over decisions about the research to participants.

One can do research on persons in the full and proper sense of the term only if one addresses them as self-determining, which means that what they do and what they experience as part of the research must be to some significant degree determined by them. So in co-operative inquiry all those involved in the research are both co-researchers, whose thinking and decision making contribute to generating ideas, designing and managing the project, and drawing conclusions from the experience, and *also* co-subjects, participating in the activity being researched.

Reason (1998:264)

This approach seems to me to be very appropriate when a group of professionals are engaged in examining and reflecting on their practice in order to develop standards in a changing environment.

[T]he practice of co-operative inquiry requires skills which are in short supply in our world today- particularly the skills of working in genuine collaboration on a complex task with a group of peers Reason (1988:19)

I am a middle child in my family of origin, which, in my case goes along with an enjoyment of working with other people, rather than achieving for myself alone. So I have usually asked more of myself in a group situation than I ever would alone. Co-operative inquiry, unlike quantitative research, is holistic and incorporates the perspective of the researcher into the data gathering and analysis in the research process.

With co-operative inquiry research, the time commitment for participants is considerably greater than with most other methods of collecting data. In my original co-operative inquiry research design, the time commitment for participants was about one to one and a half hours per meeting for five meetings over about a six-month period, with a few hours of work outside the meetings. (See the planned outline of the sessions in Appendix C). The research required pairs to remain together over that time. I asked pairs of supervisors and supervisees to take part to get a broader perspective and add to the quality of the data. Two or three different groups of supervision pairs were to be formed: a group where the supervisor was also the line manager of the supervisee, and one or two (internal or external supervisors) groups where they were not.

The intention in choosing a design that is a variation of action research was for participants to be involved in making decisions that shape the way the research developed. In a later section of this chapter (3.6) I will explain how this design led to difficulties recruiting participants.

3.5 Gathering participants

An effort was made to recruit participants for this research from diverse supervisory relationships. The method of contacting participants was to advertise through the ANZASW Dunedin email network, for supervisors willing to recruit one of their supervisees, and also through the ANZASW newsletters and through contacting social service organisations. People indicating an interest in the research project were given a copy of the Information Sheet for Participants (see Appendix A). Although I specified that I was contacting social workers in the Dunedin area, I was contacted by a private practitioner from another city in the South Island, and at one stage hoped to have a group of three supervision pairs from that city willing to take part. This person contacted me very early in the recruitment process and remained highly committed to participating throughout. In addition I used a snowballing technique, approaching social workers in a variety of organisations and asking contacts for further suggestions. In total I contacted approximately 30 individuals or organisations seeking social work supervisors willing to participate. After an initial positive response from several supervisors who were able to recruit a supervisee, and some positive feedback from other supervisors showing an interest in the topic, over the next six months many possible participants eventually declined to take part. The reason given most often was the time required by the research, though in some cases it was identified as difficult for supervisors to recruit a supervisee. The experience with a statutory agency described below illustrates what Tsui (1997:40) describes as the “extremely delicate and difficult task to elicit information about the supervisory performance of the supervisor and the job performance of the supervisee, within the organizational setting.”

In an effort to recruit from both statutory and voluntary agencies, as well as private practitioners, I was willing and undertook to meet the organisational requirements for information about the project. Considerable time was spent meeting the ethics committee standards for one of the statutory agencies (see Appendix F), in order to allow a prospective supervisor to participate, but despite gaining ethical approval and advertising within that agency, the original person did not take part in the study and no participants were recruited who were currently working in that agency. However, one participant now working in another agency did contribute information from their time there in the recent past.

People who decided to take part in the study signed the Consent Form (see Appendix B), before giving information in interviews or focus groups. It is likely that the people who finally participated in this study, both supervisors and supervisees responded to the research topic and were willing to participate because they were open about their social work and supervision practice and wanted to learn more about the topic. Some said during the recruitment process that they wanted to know how their practice compared with that of other social workers. The group of participants in the interviews consisted of two supervision pairs who were in a management relationship, both from non-government organisations, one professional supervision pair from a government organisation and one external supervision pair and two further external supervisors and one cultural advisor.

3.6 Why action research proved inappropriate for this research

It became obvious to me throughout this drawn-out effort to engage practitioners, that the social work profession is not a community in the usual sense. It lacks strong bonds that forge common goals that could take precedence over organisational or economic pressures. In order to gain some success in forming the basis of an action research project in the future, a smaller group of participants might be chosen from one organisation, which would be able to tailor the research objectives to fit with their organisational development. Interestingly it was mainly the voluntary sector social workers in the Dunedin area and the out-of-Dunedin private practitioner who showed the greatest willingness to commit time to the research, because they identified that participation in the research was professional development.

Munford and Sanders (2003) based their action research in an urban Maori community.

In our experience, relationships are critical to the completion of action research projects. All social research is embedded in relationships and in many ways the quality of the data gained is directly related to the quality of relationships the researchers can build with the participants and others who generate research data.

Munford and Sanders (2003:273)

But that research had started with a community that had existing relationships. In this research design, in addition to the relationship with the researcher being important, achieving the planned outcomes of the research depended on the relationships between supervisor and supervisee being retained. A sudden, unexpected change in the supervision relationships of the remote group of supervision pairs brought home the reality that supervision relationships are subject to changes, sometimes unforeseen, because of pressure people's private lives or because of restructuring in

the organisations they work for. In fact organisational change proved to be a factor for another committed pair of supervision participants and would have meant they would have had to withdraw if the research had gone ahead in this form. The design I had chosen meant that I had restricted the participants I could recruit to those few supervisors who were able to find an equally committed supervisee, who were willing to engage in on-going meetings for about six months, and put time into research over and above their already busy professional lives.

The instability of the supervision relationship, along with the time commitment being too great for most people, meant I had to consider redesigning the research to address these two problem areas.

3.7 The new research design

The new design was a semi-structured individual interview followed up by focus groups. Supervisors and supervisees were interviewed separately. The same broad questions were addressed as had been planned in the action research (see Appendix D for the Interview Questionnaire).

After analysis of the data from the interviews, two focus groups, one for supervisors and one for supervisees were used to comment on the analysis to date (See Questions for Focus Groups in Appendix E). The focus groups were open to all the people interviewed and were also advertised through ANZASW and agencies to other interested social workers willing to participate. These changes removed the two previous barriers to participation: the amount of time required of each person was now reduced to one to three hours as compared to seven to ten hours, and the requirement for an existing supervision relationship where both people were willing to and able participate and continue in the supervision relationship for a six month period was no longer required. What was lost was the action aspect of trying out methods of record keeping and refining them. Instead, suggestions for 'best practice' were gathered at the interview stage and discussed in the focus groups with further suggestions sought at that stage.

The interviews gathered much of the information that would have come from an action research process. The focus group phase of the research, as well as providing another means of arriving at the research data (triangulation) (D'Cruz & Jones, 2004), retained the critical reflexivity from the original action research design (Fook, 1999), the personal development aspects and a degree of democratic decision-making.

Another chance was presented for input from participants when the relevant results section of the thesis was circulated by email with an invitation to comment further on the findings of the research.

While a pure action research design was not possible in this research, many of the features of the original design were retained in the combination of in-depth interviews and focus groups.

3.8 In depth individual interviews

The interview is a method of collecting data that is well established in every field of research involving people. It has a wide range of forms, the most common being the face-to-face individual verbal exchange (Fontana & Frey, 1998). I used a semi-structured questionnaire where standard questions were asked of all participants, but the questions used to probe for depth were different in different interviews. This allowed me, as the researcher, to seek more information depending on what interviewees said in their first response. The investigator is seen as an instrument of the data collection. “The investigator cannot fulfil qualitative research objectives without using a broad range of his or her own experience, imagination, and intellect in ways that are various and unpredictable” (McCracken, 1988:18). This use of oneself in a flexible way in the interview process, and for that matter in any qualitative data gathering process, is both a powerful tool to tap data that would not be uncovered in a quantitative method, and potentially, and more problematically, produces messy and abundant data that can be difficult to analyse. The fixed questions of the semi-structured interview, accordingly provide “the context in which these ideas occur” (McCracken, 1988:25). This mixture of broad areas of certainty, and flexibility within them, appeal to both my practical and my creative sides.

The unexpressed assumptions and the “controlling role of the interviewer” (Fontana & Frey, 1998:51) have been noted in qualitative research. More attention has been paid in the last 20 years to the feelings and voices of interviewees and to factors such as the researcher’s gender and how these shape research findings.

An effort was made to recruit people from a range of supervisory situations in order to strengthen the transferability of the results (D’Cruz & Jones, 2004). Seven interviewees were participating as supervisors and four as supervisees. The participants comprised four supervisor/supervisee pairs plus two additional external supervisors and a cultural advisor. Of the supervision pairs, one comprised a professional supervisor from within the same public sector agency and their supervisee, two were the in-line managers of their supervisees and one was an external professional supervisor and their supervisee. One of the in-line managers also contributed recent experience of providing professional supervision within a government agency. One of the supervisees interviewed has recently begun to provide supervision, and another one is considering doing so.

Ten of the interviewee participants were from the Dunedin area, one from another South Island area. The participants were eight women (five supervisors and three supervisees) and three men (two supervisors and one supervisee). Ten identified as New Zealand European, Pakeha or New Zealander and one as Ngai Tahu/European. Ten participants were social workers with experience in the profession ranging from twelve to thirty nine years. The cultural advisor was not a social worker, but works closely with the profession in an advisory role and has had more than nineteen years experience as a supervisor. The other supervisors’ experience in the role ranged from just over one year to more than thirty five years.

Individual in-depth interviews were undertaken with seven supervisors and four supervisees. The interview protocol was guided by some questions that were asked of all participants, but there was considerable room in this qualitative inquiry to probe responses in depth meaning that not every theme was covered by every participant.

3.9 Focus groups

I am interested in stories. That interest is what attracted me to qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups. In addition to my interest in peoples' stories, moderating focus groups would make use of a group of my existing skills. Kreuger (1998b) lists moderator's personal qualities and skills I have from that list are: understanding of group process, communication skills and listening skills, characteristics like: curiosity, friendliness, sense of humour, interest in people and openness to new ideas, right down to "a slight dose of introversion" (Kreuger, 1998b:44), and genuinely believing that respondents have valuable wisdom to contribute. Kreuger (1994) includes as well: background on the topic, good written and oral communication, the ability to suspend their own opinions on the subject, and not be perceived as being more powerful than participants. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) add further skills: being open to differences in attitudes and behaviour, drawing out opposite views, being aware of the emotional content of responses and remaining alert to one's own biases. All of these are attributes that I believe are important in working with people and that I show an ability to demonstrate.

One of the advantages of using focus groups is that they provide more information than interviews or surveys (Fern, 2001). They reduce the influence of the researcher on the data produced and they are potentially a more democratic process. In line with my desire to share control of the research process with the participants, focus groups have the potential to shift the balance of power from researcher to participants, but do not entirely remove power imbalance, (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999), so it is up to the researcher to be sensitive to where control lies (Kreuger, 1994). It also enables

connections to be made that are outside the researchers experience and expectations (Kreuger, 1994; Myers & Macnaghten, 1999). Morgan (1988) provides insight into the reflexivity they provide when he writes, “[f]ocus groups are useful when it comes to investigating what participants think, but they excel at uncovering *why* participants think as they do.” (Morgan, 1988:25).

Understanding why participants offer particular solutions to record keeping in supervision is also important in order to increase the transferability of the research, a factor that will be discussed in the section on quality (3.12).

I decided to have two focus groups: one for supervisors and one for supervisees. Both groups commented on the results from the analysis of the interviews, which they were provided in writing the week before the focus groups. The reason for choosing separate groups for supervisors and supervisees was to allow participants to make comments without having to take account of the feelings of their supervisor or supervisee. It removed any power imbalance between participants and encouraged open sharing of experiences. Some, but not all of the participants had been interviewed. Others had responded to an invitation issued to any social worker interested to attend the groups.

Most of the literature on focus groups agrees that developing a set of questions including ice- breakers is a good way of encouraging the flow of the discussion (Morgan, 1997; Kreuger, 1998a; Greenbaum, 2000). An attempt to cover the analysis of the interviews with the supervisors’ focus group in some detail (see Planned Research Questions for Supervisors’ Focus Group, Appendix E, part 1) proved to be impossible to complete in the time and did not meet the needs of the supervisors to

shape the information exchange for themselves. Therefore the Questions for Supervisee Focus Group were reworked and the resulting questions appear in Appendix E, part 2. They were shaped by critical incident ideas of Flanagan (1954), which have been used more recently in a social work context by Askeland and Bradley (2007), exploring the most effective and ineffective examples of achieving the aims of the item under scrutiny. Example questions for focus groups developed by Krueger (1998a) also tapped into the idea of reflecting on “the best” and “the worst” in order to define an activity.

Describe exceptionally good service
Describe poor service

Krueger (1998a:10)

The two questions in the current research on developing ‘best practice’ in supervision record keeping that derived from these two influences are:

- How can record keeping in supervision contribute to excellent social work practice?
- Do any of these issues discussed throw light on how to improve poor practice?

These questions provided productive discussion in the supervisee focus group.

The supervisor focus group was attended by nine participants, two of them linked by audio-conference. The group consisted of two men and seven women. The supervisee focus group was attended by three female participants.

Separate focus groups were facilitated for supervisors and supervisees. Lessons learnt from the first group for supervisors were used to reshape the questions used in the supervisee focus group. The groups were undertaken to provide another perspective on the data from the interviews.

3.10 Ethics approvals

In order to protect the safety of the research participants, I developed an informed consent protocol (See appendices A and B) that addressed voluntary participation and privacy concerns as well (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Approval for the planned research, revised research and the protocols had been asked for and was given by the Otago University Human Ethics Committee, and the Ngai Tahu Research Consultation Committee (see Appendix F). In order to recruit social workers from the widest possible range of workplaces I also undertook the process of gaining ethics approval from a statutory organisation, the Ministry of Social Development (also in Appendix F). The University Ethics Committee standards of confidentiality are designed to protect the personal information of the individuals taking part in the research, and to protect their identity so that they can respond openly, without fear that their disclosures during participation would be traced back to them, or put them at some disadvantage. The ethics standards of the statutory agency included my signing a confidentiality agreement, guarding what they defined as ‘confidential information’. In contrast to the University ethics standards, this document took an all-encompassing definition of confidential information, which included protecting the staff that might participate but also seemed to be aimed at protecting the organisation from scrutiny. Permission was given to approach staff in the statutory organisation, but none of them chose to participate in the research.

Ethics approval was gained from the Otago University Human Ethics Committee and the Ngai Tahu Research Consultation Committee and from one statutory agency.

3.11 Gathering data on agency social work supervision policies

The policies of the SWRB (2007a) and the ANZASW (2008b) to leave agencies to guide social work supervision, is something that needs further investigation. In order to gauge how far agencies have come since Cooper and Anglem (2003) found the roles and responsibilities of people providing clinical supervision poorly described, in their research sample of health provider agencies, I have written to eight agencies: four of them in the government sector and four of them in the not for profit sector; asking them to provide copies of their supervision policy and any templates they use to record supervision in order to analyse the amount of guidance currently provided by agencies. The agencies were chosen on the basis of representing significant contributions to social and social work services. This was done independently of gathering the research participants so no link can be made between agency policy contribution and the employment of the individual research participants.

Five agencies replied to my request and three of them supplied some policy material. The policies provided were read and references to recording supervision were highlighted for analysis and the presence or absence of the use of a template noted. Agencies were invited to comment further on extracts from my thesis referring to their policies.

3.12 Attending to research quality

Qualitative research has been criticised from a positivist perspective for not providing reliability, validity, generalisability and objectivity. But Guba and Lincoln (1982, cited in D’Cruz & Jones, 2004) proposed four equivalent ways of ensuring qualitative research is trustworthy:

- **Credibility** is attended to, by documenting the context of the research and being careful about the extent of claims arising from the research findings. Checking with participants that the research data represents their realities is a way of ensuring credibility
- **Transferability** of research findings is possible when the context of the research shares enough features with the context being compared
- **Dependability** relates to the features of the research that are not altered by context
- **Confirmability** is arrived at by consultation with participants in order to separate the researcher’s positioning from the results.

Having the participants give feedback on the interview transcripts, and the written thesis provided credibility. Confirmability was used in having the focus groups comment on the analysis of the interviews, and the design using pairs of supervisors and supervisees.

Research conclusions need to be consistent with each other.

consistent, interdependent and mutually illuminating...[with] the inquirers ... in agreement about these conclusions

Heron (1988:43)

This does not imply total unanimity, but “the illumination of a common area of inquiry by differing individual perspectives” (Heron 1988:44).

Qualitative research uses multiple methods to confirm data, forming a triangulation as an alternative to validity to overcome the fact that observation is not objective (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Fern, 2001). This research study has gathered data from supervisors, and for four of them, independently from the supervisee that they work with, giving a different observer’s view of the same relationship, an example of triangulation as explained by D’Cruz and Jones (2004). The findings from all the interviews were presented to focus groups for comments, giving another chance to confirm or contradict the data presented by the researcher adding to the trustworthiness of the results.

In terms of adding to the trustworthiness of this research by looking for transferability of the results, the research questions (Appendix D, Interview Questionnaire, and Appendix E, Focus Group Questions) cover many of the strategies suggested by Schofield (1993, cited in D’Cruz and Jones, 2004: 77), with the exception of the multi-site studies.

Table 3.1 [Schofield’s] Strategies for increasing generalisability [transferability] in qualitative research

Studying what is	Studying what may be	Studying what could be
Studying the typical	Studying the ‘leading edge’ of change	Selecting a site that sheds light on what could be
Performing multisite Studies	Probing factors likely to differentiate the present from the future	Generalizing from an unusual site to more typical ones
	Considering the lifecycle Of a phenomenon	

In choosing a range of different supervision situations I gathered data from both the typical and the unusual. Multiple geographic sites were not a feature of this study, but one interviewee and two focus group members were from remote locations. This research subject is itself at the leading edge of change. Policies have been in constant review and change during the course of the study, for example the ANZASW Supervision Policy was released in its final form in late June 2009. Questions in the interviews directly addressed the change from the past and asked the participants to think about what ‘best practice’ in supervision record keeping would look like in future.

Several different methods were used to ensure that this research was trustworthy within the qualitative paradigm employed in the research design.

3.13 Data collection

There are many ways of capturing information: memory, field notes, audiotape, videotape, and real time hand written notes (Kreuger, 1998c). Interviews were recorded on audiotape and transcribed by myself. This activity gave good feedback on my interviewing and moderating skills (Kreuger, 1998c). The transcriptions were returned to the participants for correction and/or clarification before analysis giving participants a chance to verify and sometimes amend the content of their interviews after reflection. The quality of the tapes was generally good with minimal loss of information because of unclear sound.

Focus groups were also recorded on audiotape as this is less intrusive than videotape and less complicated and more effective (Morgan, 1997). There was an experienced focus group moderator present as a recorder at each focus group providing support, coaching and mentoring (Kreuger, 1998c). This enabled further information to be gathered at debriefing, as well as having the notes as back up to the sound record. The quality of the sound of the supervisor focus group was not good because of the technical challenge of including the remote participants with a tape recorder in the room and some information was lost as a result. If attempting a similar mix of in-room and remote participation in research in future I would recommend using a dedicated audio suite facility, which would have given even sound levels for all participants. In retrospect it was not a good idea to mix a remote group with an in-room group for the focus group. The reason for attempting to do this in the first place was to prevent the remote group from being too small (two members) to provide the feedback participants wanted from other supervisors. The supervisee focus group was

a small group, all in one room. The sound recording for this group was of good quality. Transcripts were made of the audio-tapes and the hand written notes were used for clarification and filling gaps in information gathered. The transcripts of the focus groups were not returned to the participants for verification, but they were able to comment on this phase later, when the results sections of the thesis were circulated for comment.

Data was collected on audiotape and transcribed. For the focus groups there was also an experienced facilitator acting as recorder in real time, offering the chance to use their memory of events to add to the data collection.

3.14 Data analysis

It was not easy to avoid analysing the interview data before completing them all.

Seidman (1998) believes it is important not to do any in depth analysis during the process of interviewing, but you can use early interviews to shape probes in later interviews. A common way of analysing interviews is to find themes in common across different interviews (Seidman, 1998). The information from the transcripts was analysed using themes which derived from the research questions and prompts developed in the interview guide, and some which emerged from the analysis itself. Dissimilarities as well as similarities are looked for (Rubin & Babbie, 2001) and all data is used systematically using analytic induction (Frankland & Bloor, 1999).

Numbers are not reported, because this might imply that results could be generalised (Kreuger, 1998c) to all supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand. Further interpretation of the material in the analysis phase includes teasing out confirmations and confounding of initial impressions, how consistent the interviews have been with the literature and how they have gone beyond it (Seidman, 1998). The method of data collection and analysis is discussed in more detail in the results sections in Chapters Four and Five.

Focus group data were analysed using the same themes as the interview material. It provided insight into what emphasis the participants put on the results of the interview analysis.

3.15 Conclusion

I came to this research topic with some insider knowledge gained from experience as a social worker and a supervisor. Because the research topic involved an aspect of professional work and because of a personal inclination to enjoy working collaboratively, a form of action research called co-operative inquiry was chosen as the methodology. Action research requires power sharing and the involvement of research participants as equal partners in the inquiry. Unfortunately, the time required of participants for this method in its pure form proved a barrier to gaining sufficient people for the study. The methodology was modified to collect data from participants by individual in-depth interviews followed by focus groups to provide some of the element of power sharing in the final research design,

Quality of the research data was attended to by two main methods:

1. triangulation and
2. careful documentation of the details of the methodology

Triangulation was provided in several ways:

- using supervisee/supervisor pairs in the interviews
- providing interview transcripts for confirmation
- having focus groups comment on results
- using both usual and less usual supervision situations in the study
- seeking information directly from agencies on their supervision policies

- inviting participants to comment on the completed results sections of the thesis

Ethics approvals were given by the Otago University Human Ethics Committee, the Ngai Tahu Research Consultation Committee and the Research Committee of the Ministry of Social Development.

This research was conducted in a limited geographic setting and without attracting any statutory social work supervisors as participants. Data was collected by audio-tape and transcribed. In focus groups an additional method of data collection was by having an experienced focus group moderator present as a recorder. Data was analysed using themes from the questions and arising from the responses of participants.

The action reflection cycle is very much a part of action research. With this in mind the results of this study may provide some indications about practice in the non-Government and private sectors with some indication of difference for cultural supervision. It is just a starting point for professional action and reflection on establishing 'best practice' for record keeping in supervision. It is hoped that disseminating the results of the research will simulated other practitioners to reflect on their record keeping, take action to develop it further and to add to the professional debate, so that over time many voices influence the development of this aspect of professional social work supervision.

CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS: DATA GATHERED FROM SUPERVISORS

I'm not the expert here, this is an interpretation of what I have heard about a supervisee's perception of their world and their practice.

Quote from an external supervisor about their record of supervision).

4.1 Introduction

I have divided the research data into two chapters: data gathered from supervisors and data gathered from supervisees. I made this choice in order to best highlight any consequences of the differences in power vested in their different positions. This chapter is focused on the data gathered from supervisors.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, raw data presented in this chapter was collected from the seven supervisors who participated in the interview phase of this study and from the nine who participated in the focus group. I have identified the types of supervision (internal/management, internal/professional, cultural advice and external) because the context of the supervision as well as the role in the supervision appears to influence the responses made by participants. As became obvious in the interviews, few participants were confined to the role that they were originally chosen for: supervisors are also supervisees in some part of their working life. Participants' quotes have been marked with a two-part code that will help the reader understand the supervision context of the quote and link different statements from the same participant. The number at the beginning of the code is simply the order of the interviews. The last section indicates whether the supervision was an internal management (IM), internal professional (IP), cultural advisor (CA), or an external (E)

supervisor. In the sections quoted from interviews and focus groups I have added some explanations in [brackets] of the topic that interviewees were responding to.

The data in these next two chapters has been organised into the four major themes identified as the basis of this study from the literature review and used to structure the interviews (see Appendix D for the broad outline of the interview questions):

1. What are you doing in supervision record keeping now?
2. What has changed and why?
3. Which theories are used in supervision and how do they affect record keeping?
4. What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

The words of the supervisors in this chapter follow the headings arising from these themes. Themes one and four provided complex data: in order to deal with the material systematically sub-themes that related to the prompts developed for the question guide and some sub-themes that were identified as common concerns arising in the information given by participants were used to present the material from interviews. The last section in each chapter includes data that relates to the influence of different types of supervision on record keeping. This data did not comfortably fit into the other sections.

4.2 Interviews with supervisors

4.2.1 What you are doing with supervision record keeping now?

4.2.1.1 Contracts

The importance of having supervision contracts between supervisors and supervisees was a prominent area of agreement in the supervision relationship. All supervisors interviewed had written contracts with their supervisees, and these gave guidance for future supervision as is evident in the example below.

It's a written contract. Do you want to know what it includes? ... the contract period and how we want to renew and our arrangement for reviewing the contract, a bit of a statement about the purpose of our time together, what will be discussed, and that's under the headings of: administrative, educational and supportive. There's a clause on confidentiality and accountability.

8-IM

In many cases of external supervision, the supervisee's manager would also sign that contract.

In very few cases do agencies have an external supervision contract with me, an agency contract. I've got probably two or three national organisations who have that template, but the majority of those agencies don't have an agency contract with me, the only contract I have is the contract that I make with the supervisee, and I have within that contract that the contract is signed by either the manager or the employer. So, that for me, gives me an element of that triangle of communication and responsibility between the agency, the supervisee, and myself.

9-E

But for the cultural advisor that link with the management is left up to the supervisee.

I either have a group contract or an individual contract with the rights and where they can complain to, what's expected of me, what's expected of them... I presume all of them would be [known] to their supervisors or their managers or whatever. They have to get permission to be able to do supervision, and with a couple of agencies, they've got their own contract, so obviously their managers know about it and they would be a party to that.

5-CA

Although contracts between supervisors and supervisees were a feature of all supervision, the degree of involvement of agencies in the detail of the contracts, apart from a requirement that there be a contract, was often low.

4.2.1.2 Agency policies

The policy about contracts varied. As discussed by some supervisors in the previous section, agencies do not always have their own supervision contract format.

The [agency] policy is to have a contract, and (within the agency) they take various shapes and forms as people have done training and that sort of thing ...

8-IM

The role of agency policy in determining record keeping in supervision was minimal and not monitored.

I think the guidelines say that the broad themes of supervision and the attendance at supervision should be recorded. But hello, it's kind of like lots of the "should bes" in a large organisation, nobody ever checks and there's no consequences for doing it or not doing it.

1-IP

Agency policy guiding supervision record keeping is lacking in many agencies' interactions with external supervisors. Supervisors either didn't identify any influence of agency policies on their own record keeping or initiated those discussions with agencies themselves.

What agency policies?... Again, with the government departments I provide supervision for, they've got a policy, and yet it's not a policy because it's still in draft. The two voluntary sector groups have policies, both of them are great, absolutely spot on, but the majority of them don't have policies. From time to time I put on an educative sort of hat and offer them sample agency contracts, sample feedback forms, sample policies to take and do with as they wish, and I take my standards again from ANZASW turning that around, in order to educate them into actually requiring this for my accountability for practice.

9-E

Even for internal management supervision, agency policy is generally silent when it comes to what to record from supervision sessions.

I guess I'll just take down what needs to be recorded and it's mainly for me to be clear about what the issues are and so that things are followed up... We don't have a specific one [policy] for keeping supervision records so it just comes down to the individual supervisor.

3-IM

The same supervisor in a previous position in a statutory agency commented that its supervision policy was more detailed.

And that's because there's a supervision policy for the organisation that set out what was required to be covered in supervision... the organisation also required that records were kept... we had to record that the supervision had occurred, when, as a requirement for their audits... that was on a template. And there was a lot of effort put in, a lot of cost and a lot of emphasis put on supervision in that organisation from about 2000 on, and a lot of training of supervisors, and a supervision policy, a lot of good things actually happened around it.

3-IP

Although statutory agencies and some voluntary agencies had supervision contract formats of their own, they left the detail of keeping records of supervision to the individuals involved. Many organisations are satisfied with the supervision contracts supervisors offer and negotiate with their supervisees.

4.2.1.3 Confidentiality and accountability

These two themes raised some contradictions in practice. Confidentiality of the supervision relationship is regarded as very important. Most supervisors mentioned that they had a statement about confidentiality in contracts with supervisees.

...all of the contracts I have say about the same thing, that issues raised in supervision are confidential between the two of us, unless we agree for matters to go outside supervision.

8-IM

But there are exceptions to that confidentiality. If there is a serious safety concern that comes up in supervision, supervisors, whether internal or external, have an agreement in their contract with supervisees that they will take that concern outside of the supervision relationship, usually to the manager.

Yes. It's written in: safety and ethical issues that are not addressed by the supervisee will be raised with the manager. All other discussion remains confidential between the supervisee and myself. The supervisee knows - as it is discussed at the beginning of the contract - that if they will not, for whatever reason, address an issue, then I will... Fortunately, I can say that when these issues have arisen the supervisee has acted on them after supervision.

10-E

Accountability for safety issues (critical incidents) raised in supervision is covered by other agency policies.

We have other policies and things that we have in the agency to actually manage critical incidents, like I guess, issues that may come up with cases that are serious, like care and protection issues. So we have other ways of recording that other than the supervision notes... on the client file.

3-IM

External supervisors outlined the delicacy of making a decision in a risky situation.

You're liable for how you work. And I am not saying that I do not want to be responsible. If you offer a lot of advice, or you do not understand the supervisee's role well, that is unsafe practice. The relationship is a confidential one, one that needs to be safeguarded unless there are very good reasons for doing otherwise... the only areas for breaking that are unsafe, unethical practice.

10-E

Confidentiality is regarded as very important by supervisors and they are mindful of this when there is a conflict between retaining confidentiality and reporting safety issues on to the supervisee's manager.

4.2.1.4 Who are supervision records for?

The records for many supervisors, share the mixed purposes of accountability and for the supervisor to keep track of issues in supervision.

[I keep records] For me, for my association in terms of accountability, very much for the client - the supervisee, and also for any clients whoever they may be, whether the client of the agency, the direct client or colleagues. I guess the majority of the purpose of the record is as a working tool and at any time they can be lifted up and looked at in the context of review, evaluation, looking at patterns, clarifying things –

9-E

I believe the records were for both parties and the organisation also required that records were kept.

3-IM

The purpose of record keeping for the different interested parties was unclear to supervisors.

For me it's always been a bit of an unknown. Like I've often taken notes in supervision and thought to myself, what is the purpose of writing this down? ... But to be really honest, when I'm doing supervision, I don't have a systematic way of thinking, what am I writing this down for

8-IM

There are the layers of the bottom line, in being clear about who the records are for, and the purpose for the agency, and the client, and the supervisee, and the supervisor. There's also a dimension in there around the supervisor's learning ... and a dimension that is around what do I as a supervisor need to recall at the next session with the supervisee around these records.

9-E

But the accountability back to agencies employing the supervisees is not necessarily required by agencies. Once contracts are signed, reviews of supervision do not necessarily engage the agency.

Again, quite a surprise to me, in terms of agencies requesting external providers for supervision, that they don't have more accountability for external providers. ...From time to time I get asked to give some feedback into the performance appraisal and that's usually within the government sector

9-E

The level of experience of the supervisee made a difference in the supervision records for some supervisors, especially for student supervisees.

My initial response is no. The flavour and the detail and the style wouldn't change. No. I 'm just thinking, I supervise students who are doing the Diploma in Social Work, and when I'm thinking about it, I'm not sure that I would keep the notes differently. Hard one, that one. I know they're in a different developmental stage, and when I think of those students and when I think of some of the senior practitioners that I supervise, the language would be different... On reflection I would give more detail – that connects theory to practice and associate those details to the supervisee's development and their learning approach.

9-E

But other supervisors (one of whom routinely keeps very brief notes) didn't believe that there would be a difference based on the level of experience of the supervisee.

No, the process I use is the same, the level of knowledge and/or experience might be different, or the focus of the supervision might be different, but the notes would follow – you know sometimes it would be in theory; sometimes it would be safety or ethical issues.

10-E

Many supervisors include clients in the group that benefits from supervision records.

At core of supervision are the clients. It is why we have supervision. Recording is a way of tracking issues, looking for patterns, for reflecting back, for noting red flags, for looking at practice issues, for looking at topics for discussion, for setting the agenda, so the client's well being is always at the heart of the session.

10-E

But they were not seen as important to clients by one supervisor.

Not my records as such. Because the records are really records for myself and the supervisee, they're not directly

related to clients. Does the supervision process benefit clients? The answer to that is, I certainly would hope so. But your question was “Does the record directly benefit the client?” and I’d have to say no to that.

1-IP

Supervisors regarded supervision records as primarily for the benefit of supervisors and supervisees. They provide accountability to agencies for the supervision, and indirectly to benefit clients. Most supervisors said they would keep more detailed records for students. However, the purpose of record keeping to all these interested parties is not clear to supervisors.

4.2.1.5 Do records differ for critical incidents versus routine topics in supervision?

Supervisors had different responses to the question of whether record keeping would differ if a critical incident in the supervisee’s practice involving safety or a difficult ethical decision were being discussed, as compared to supervision on routine matters.

Most supervisors opted for taking more detailed notes when that happened.

I keep very brief notes...It’s about what’s going to jog memories to come back to bring back memories of the session... Yes, if anything controversial and ethical dilemmas that may have further reaching implications, I think it’s really important to be specific, more specific.

6-E

But one supervisor didn’t think they would keep records differently.

I don’t think so. I mean it’s just recorded. I sort of try to record what the issue is, what the options are around dealing with the issue and what the outcome is, whatever the issue is.

3-IM

Importantly, supervisors reported that they had never had their supervision records viewed by someone other than a supervisee even when asked to report either to the management of their agency or to a court on a critical issue of safety or a complaint.

I've never actually had to pass over supervision records at any stage to anybody, and that's probably because if we had discussed anything crucial in supervision it would have been written, a record would have gone from supervision and written in their case notes as a consultation. ... They may have come back to me to check, but not through my records.

8-IM

No I wouldn't expect it to happen, I don't know why. ... The closest that it got was when I was asked to come to an employment tribunal where a manager was being brought to mediation with the employer and I was asked to go along and in that case I had a sense in the final months of working with the manager that things were going to be taken externally and the scope and purpose of my records became so much more specific because of the possibility of being asked questions, but never was I asked to bring my records or show my records or talk about the records

9-E

Both the management supervisors said that critical incidents would result in records being kept on the client or personnel files and the external supervisors were asked to make a report which was based on their records of supervision, but not asked to provide the notes as evidence. Generally supervisors said they would keep more detailed records if a critical incident came up in supervision. They also said their records had never been viewed by an outside person.

4.2.1.6 How long are supervision records kept?

There were widely varied responses to the question of how long to keep supervision records and this reflected a lack of detail in agency policies on supervision record keeping.

I just keep those records while the person is an employee of the organisation. Or if I was to leave the organisation I would have a clean out and destruction of that record. You see I regard that record as mine rather than the agency's.

1-IP

I've never thrown any out, so yeh. We have a policy on how long to keep things in the agency and it's actually quite

a long time. We actually keep stuff for ten years. Probably is a bit too long. We don't have a specific one for keeping supervision records so it just comes down to the individual supervisor, I think.

3-IM

I shred them or burn them after five years... I didn't use to keep them five years, I used to get rid of them, but I figure it's better practice.

10-E

Another external supervisor, who kept records for seven years, had also thought to secure the supervision records in the event of their death. Because of the lack of detail in agency policies and lack of clarity about whose records they were, practice varies with individual supervisors.

4.2.2 What changed over the last five to ten years and what has influenced change?

Most participants agreed that methods of record keeping have changed over the last ten years. One supervisor hadn't experienced changes because of their brief experience of being a supervisor, another was a cultural advisor and didn't routinely keep supervision records except for reports or letters of support. For internal supervisors the changes were more likely to be attributed to organisational changes.

I think that they have, because historically the organisation has tolerated people doing their own informal supervision and the organisation has become more focused on supervision contracts and that supervision really is happening. . One of the obvious ways is that when it comes to annual performance appraisals now, supervision is regarded as a mandatory thing that should be happening and I know that in performance appraisals I would usually invite my supervisor to come and be part of that performance appraisal and there is a formalising of that sort of process around performance appraisal

1-IP

When managers were expected to do supervision with a whole range of other major tasks, they were never going to

be able to focus on supervision properly, they were never going to have the time to even get trained to do it properly, so that's when it changed. When the focus became on practice and supervision as a major part of that without the financial and other management stuff.

3-IM

Two of the external supervisors changed to more structured methods of recording supervision and the changes were attributed to their own professional development.

They have changed they have evolved to be much more purposeful. The more that I read about supervision practice, looking at mentors like Michael Carrol [supervision trainer and author] around preparation, looking at post reflection, looking at review, evaluation all of those systems provide me with a framework for doing the preparation and the post reflection, so the records become more comprehensive ...

9-E

For another supervisor the main changes were found in the contracts, and they flowed through to the records of supervision sessions.

Yes, they have. The contract has changed: it's very clearly a three-way relationship, because I'm employed to work with the supervisees, to support them to do the best possible work. There's far more focus, the contract is far clearer. They've changed in that they are more purposeful. I know that I keep clearer notes now.

10-E

The reasons given for the change to make supervision a more accountable process included the agency's attempts to manage risk.

Because the organisation wants to say we've covered our butt, and it's about managing risks so that if they were called to account they would say well that this person is having supervision and therefore that's trying to minimise the organisation's exposure to risk.

1-IP

Other reasons given were education and the impact of registration of social workers.

One supervisor saw the push for change initially coming from the public pressure on statutory child protection.

I think they [changes] were influenced in the previous organisation by the sheer enormity of the issues the organisation was facing. High profile child abuse cases and the need to actually look at supporting front-line workers better. So I think that's where that push really came from. And so with that it became a wider emphasis on supervision and to cover the whole social service sector with NGOs as well... so some of the training that was designed for statutory work in supervision has flowed on where they've opened up training for supervisors in NGOs... also there has been training in supervision for supervisees, so they are much more aware of what supervision is about. So they know what they should expect... The Social worker Registration Act that has also reinforced it. And a lot more people are members of ANZASW and supervision has a very prominent part in that. So all those things have come together I think, so that ten years on... it has certainly come a long way.

3-IM

Changes that have happened over the last five to ten years in supervision have been towards more formal systems and accountability, with a focus on supervision as distinct from administrative management matters. Training, along with an organisational emphasis on supervision has lead the way for supervisors. Registration was seen as part of the push towards change, with that being a response to public pressure on statutory social work.

4.2.3 Which theories and models are used in supervision and how do they influence the recording of supervision sessions?

Supervisors reported that a range of theories was influential in their supervision. The theories most commonly mentioned by supervisors were: reflective practice and adult learning theory.

Kolb and Proctor... they fit with adult learning and reflective practices

6-E

This includes opening the agenda up to supervisees at the beginning of a session.

It's really just "What do you want to bring? What have you brought to supervision today?" So it's over to them really.

3-IM

A number of other theories were combined by some of the supervisors. One combined adult learning and reflective practice with their major theoretical influence.

I'm highly influenced by narrative practice... what I put into a narrative framework and define in a narrative way.

6-E

The external supervisors for whom supervision was the largest part of their professional work, reported a complex mixture of theories and theoretical tools as influencing their supervision, including: strengths-based, solution-focused, a Maori model (Te Whare Tapa Wha), feminist, antidiscrimination and empowerment theories, humanist theory and the TAPES model [Theory, Assessment and intervention planning, Parallel processes, Ethics and professional practice, Strategies and intervention techniques (O'Donoghue, 1998)].

As well as theories, supervisors discussed a range of related influences: trainers (like Margaret Morrell and Michael Carrol), trust and relationship building, the cultural component, issues of power, and a range of practice theory and models used in supervision sessions and in their own post supervision reflection.

Many supervisors saw theory as influential in structuring the information recorded from supervision sessions.

...certainly in narrative it's considered respectful to be recording in process, and mostly I do that ... what I record to some degree can be verbatim... I'm using her words. That would be a narrative method of recording... yes it's highly influenced by narrative.

6-E

Kolb's experiential... I do use that because it's a really good structure if you follow the process: what's happening and what did you observe, or what now?

8-IM

But a minority of supervisors did not see theory as particularly important in their record keeping.

I don't think I would say that my recording is really influenced by a particular theory, my recording is more influenced by, is this a professional dilemma for the person and is this a risk in terms of quality or safety?

1-IP

Theories are explicitly named in supervision records routinely by some supervisors.

We work on what the supervisee is bringing and the TAPES model is clear here: it encourages the supervisor to ask questions such as: What theories were you using with that client? What did you include in your assessment? What intervention strategies have you used, and why or why not, or what stopped you? My notes reflect these questions. I will use headings such as "Issue", "Contract for that issue".

10-E

For others, naming theories is confined to circumstances like student supervision or working on competency evidence.

I think that if I was working with a student the notes are more likely to make quite specific mention of a theory of intervention because supervision in that context would be more about - would have more of an educative content to it ... I can think of a couple of examples where the supervisee was talking about presenting a case for ANZASW competency and we really got into talk about the theoretical underpinning that was occurring there. But that's not an everyday occurrence

1-IP

Otherwise theoretical influences are woven into records and influence the language used by the supervisor.

I suppose my theory that I use is embedded in my conversation... The theoretical frameworks that I use are woven into what is said and recorded.

1-IP

A variety of theories were seen as influential by supervisors. Theories in use may be named in supervision sessions, especially if working with students or preparing for competency assessment. Otherwise theories are present in the sessions and influence records, but are not made explicit.

4.2.4 What would best practice in supervision record keeping look like?

4.2.4.1 'Best practice' is/is not

Arriving at a definition of what 'best practice' in record keeping would look like was not easy for practitioners and there was a great deal of variation in the responses.

In the end it comes down to practitioners in supervision, how they want to record things. I mean it is an important part of supervision and everyone will probably do it differently. But it needs to accurately reflect what has been said and what the outcomes of the discussion were, so that's critical isn't it, I think and whether, I imagine that would be the most important thing. And it needs to be an open process so that both parties actually, I mean, obviously both are aware that notes have been taken but should actually see them.

3-IM

If I was a manager, I would look at it from a worst-case scenario. What would I need as a manager from you as the social worker, because we are going to go to court because of some issue? That doesn't mean you have to write screeds of stuff, actually, you can still condense things down but I would want to know relevant details. Unless a person discloses the standard that they are going to do harm to themselves or harm to somebody else, from a manager's point of view I maybe would want to know the issues, not the content of the issues.

5-CA

Enough [recording] to get you by. You won't need heavy details. Enough to be useful for your own reflective practice and for the supervisee... Primarily, if you're doing something and the purpose that you're doing it is to be useful, I mean that's my goal really

6-E

[best practice]. In terms of just recording supervision? I do like the fact that I have a copy and the worker takes a copy away. I like that. If I had a template that works through a process, rather than just writing down ad hoc notes, I think that would work even better, and if it was a process that was consistent across the agency... I think what's recorded matters, because and that comes back to: what are you going to use that for? ... so it's about having a mechanism for reviewing what you've written or for having a purpose for writing it.

8-IM

Some supervisors commented on guidelines they believed could be developed to shape 'best practice' in record keeping.

Guidelines [could be developed] around what needs to be in there, rather than what you want put in there, the bottom line that needs to be in records that are kept, for the supervisor, the supervisee, the client and the agency.

9-E

That they were uniform, that they were part of the social workers' competency standards, that courses at university would teach also about them, that the Association would write about them and inform members, that it would be an expectation that organisations would know about it, that it was to support the supervisee to do the best possible work for the client. So what would need to happen for that to happen? ... Having a framework. Knowing the job description, knowing the agency's expectations of me, having a written contract, evaluating it ... The guidelines would be about what needs to be in a contract, what discussions need to be had, how the relationship will be reviewed/evaluated and when, what is recorded, and why and how. Who has access to the notes and where are they stored? How long will they be kept for? What are the reporting requirements and who is involved in this, and how frequently will reports be written... The Association's [ANZASW] policy will be part of this. As will the standards.

10-E

Supervisors believed that supervision record keeping should be kept to a useful minimum, with the purpose of the record being made clear. Suggestions for guidelines included involving ANZASW policy, including record keeping in

competency standards and involving social service agencies and social work training programmes.

4.2.4.2 What works well now?

The ability to continue to choose a supervisor was seen as very important to some.

Trust developed in the supervision relationship was seen as very important to many supervisors.

I think in supervision that the whole element of trust and connection is really important and very often there are times when supervisees come in and say there's not much on the agenda, but it's absolutely surprising where we go and what actually comes out, and being perceptive beyond what's been spoken is quite important sometimes.

6-E

I think a lot of discussion needs to go into that beginning talk. Yes, I think that setting up the contract is important.

10-E

The question of whether present record keeping practice is sufficient to protect against legal liability for social work supervisee's actions was canvassed, and supervisors generally thought their practice would protect them sufficiently.

I guess with a lot of that recording we fly by the seat of our pants really, and like I said, if we are discussing something where there is a potential safety issue, there would be a more detailed file note written, or if we're discussing something about the worker's welfare and well-being within the workplace, there's a more formal process around recording that... In a different place, but I guess it is as a result of supervision and it's an agreement to record it. So from that point of view, I probably feel that I'm doing OK [With the legal liability]... I'm thinking in terms of personal grievance and that sort of thing. In the event of a child death, if someone wanted to come back and see how this agency provided the support and safety for a worker, and who consulted with who and - yeah... To me it's satisfactory at the moment, but I would really appreciate feedback on it.

8-IM

A bit of dilemma, too much, too little, if it becomes too fixed, too rigid there are dangers, and if there's an absence

there are dangers. But to have something that is templated and required, regulatory - I have some anxiety around that, as much as I have some anxieties around there not being enough. It relies on competent practitioners to do the best that they can with the standards that are there and to question all of those and to seek advice, guidance, support to unravel, least harm and protection.

9-E

The major element of present 'best practice' was identified by supervisors as having developed a trusting relationship with supervisees, with a lot of discussion going into the setting up of the contract. Most supervisors were satisfied that their current practice of record keeping would satisfy legal liability requirements.

4.2.4.3 What needs to change?

One of the things that troubled some supervisors, both internal and external, was the lack of clarity about how to keep records and what the purpose of those records was. A lack of importance put on supervision by the organisations in the social services sector, alluded to earlier, was seen as a contributing factor.

I think there is a need to be much clearer about what record keeping should be and what it is. What's the purpose of it, who's it for, what should be recorded. There's not much in the supervision literature that actually talks about it, probably why you're doing this. I just don't recall hearing much about it at all, apart from supervision contracts, which is talked about a lot.

3-IM

There were a number of other suggestions to improve record keeping in supervision offered.

In terms of recording, I think, for me personally, is an improved process, that's why I quite like this template that I've got.

8-IM

There's probably more that can be done around educating new staff in NGOs because sometimes, they don't always

have social work training... I'm not aware of training on record keeping... I know there's training for record keeping of case notes but not for supervision. I don't recall ever seeing any. It seems to me to be to be passed over in quite a cursory way, you know. It's just said that this should happen, but no detail about it at all...

3-IM

We need to have a policy that sets this out really clearly. I know that our competency, our ten practice standards, address confidentiality, so there is that there, but if we had a supervision policy, like a record keeping policy, that could be really clear and that could protect supervisors by making them aware and informing them about what their practice needed to be, that would provides safeguards against legal liability. So yes, we do need something, don't we, about record keeping. Maybe it's a wee bit ad hoc at the moment, and that is maybe not safe, or, come to think of it, particularly good practice.

10-E

Lack of clarity about record keeping in supervision stimulated some suggestions for change. Some supervisors mentioned templates for record keeping as a possible means of improving on present practice. Other suggestions for improving record keeping in supervision included training and a specific policy.

4.2.4.4 What would you hate to lose?

The things that supervisors would not like to see jeopardised by increased accountability included creativity, use of their professional judgment and the gains made by the profession in getting supervision recognised.

And I think I would view it as a double edged sword, yes accountability, but also constraint, it's how far the pendulum goes on putting a constraint on how we report, for supervisees, for clients and for agencies as a means of reducing risk of litigation. And that will take away a lot of the creativity, however as supervisors our work is about creativity and we will find a way... If an agency was to say that every record that was kept between me and the

supervisee had to go through the agency then of course that's going to change the way that we're going to do records as supervisor and supervisee.

9-E

One supervisor felt that defined standards for supervision record keeping would not result in loss, but provide some certainty about being able to meet standards.

Yeh, it's about accountability and professionalism... I don't think I'd lose anything out of that, because if I know what's expected of me in a role I find that much easier than guessing what people perceive I should be doing. If someone said this is supervision and you must do this, this, this and this and I can demonstrate that I can do that, I know that I'm performing.

8-IM

Supervisors had mixed feelings about increasing the accountability of record keeping in supervision, it could mean loss of creativity, or it could mean the comfort of knowing how to meet performance standards for their work.

4.2.4.5 Who should or should not steer change?

Supervisors canvassed a number of options for who should steer a change in supervision record keeping.

Supervisees, supervisors, safe practice. I don't look beyond that. Supervision is for social workers... a standard regarding supervision recording – seems to be just a bullet point in overall supervision policy to me.

6-E

The Association needs to drive any changes; otherwise, we will be influenced by other people's agendas. Maybe I worry about privatisation... the organisation could say no, that you're the external supervisor; what goes on is your responsibility. I suppose divorcing themselves from the relationship.

10-E

It shouldn't be the Social Work Registration Board. It shouldn't be Ministry. It would be most helpful to come

from the place of authority, and social work practitioners have the authority, they have the expertise, they have the knowledge, they live in that world of risk.

9E

Well maybe it is the social work registration, or the ANZASW, I don't know. I haven't thought about that. What have other people said?... I mean CYFS should. CYFS should really practice what they preach

8-IM

Supervisors mostly thought that their professional association and social work practitioners who are engaged in supervision are best placed to guide change.

Although one supervisor specifically mentioned that the Registration Board should not guide change, one supervisor thought that the people involved in registration and Child Youth and Family should play a role in change.

4.2.4.6 Would one system of record keeping work in Aotearoa?

In the complex social work supervision environment in this country could a single standard work?

No, I don't think so because you've got cultural things to take into account, you've got the resources, of the agency, each agency has different resources. But I think some consistency would be good.

8-IM

Well, you see I'm thinking, well there could be lots, and I'm thinking – why would we need lots? I don't know. I like simple. If it's so complex and complicated, no one's going to use it. It's going to be too inaccessible. It'll stay on a shelf somewhere... Yes, I do think there's going to be a simple way.

10-E

It was generally agreed by supervisors that there needed to be flexibility, but with some consistency in record keeping for supervision.

4.2.5 Different types of supervision

For external supervisors and internal professional supervisors the responsibility for oversight of the supervisee's performance lies elsewhere.

Well I don't see I have the responsibility of oversight unless the person is practicing in a way that is clearly lacking safety and it is unethical what they are doing... and if we couldn't come to a resolution then it's really clear, and this is part of the contract, that I would escalate that or make my concerns known to that person's operational manager and all of that sort of stuff would clearly be written and well, I guess, well recorded.

1-IP

I'm not actually responsible for the supervisee's performance. I'm not monitoring that, so I don't see that as my role. The supervisee's responsible for their work and the decisions that they make. The manager would be in a position of power. There's a different set of boundaries, a different set of criteria for management supervision than what I do in external supervision. So yes I see the records being for very different purposes.

9-E

And when you're only relying on what a person brings to the session you haven't got the full context, and you can only do what you do...

6-E

The supervisor providing cultural advice (and not client case supervision) provided the strongest statement about supervision records belonging to the supervisee, rather than the supervisor or the contracting agencies.

Well, I have a philosophy...that those records belong to the client [supervisee]... And then I might just say: can I take a photocopy and keep it because it might just swing around again. But they know I've got a photocopy of it, and I'm very clear on it's not my information, it's not my issue. It's theirs. But that would be blurred if I was a manager, managing that social worker.

5-CA

One of the management supervisors included the conflict between management oversight and building a trusting relationship with a supervisee.

The conflict for me is that supervision is supposed to be about support. You want people to come and tell you if they're finding things really stressful, so that you can work through it. You want to know how they're going, but are people going to tell you the tough stuff when they know that you're going to be doing their performance appraisal and that sort of thing, so I think there's a conflict there, but I think you can manage it. It's about being very clear in your contract and your relationship building.

8-IM

The supervisors are accountable to different bodies for their own practice. For the managerial supervisors their accountability for their supervision is to the same organisation as the supervisee, as to an extent is the internal professional supervisor, but the external supervisors are in private practice and answerable to their professional body the ANZASW.

[We keep records]... For me, for my association in terms of accountability

9-E

The cultural advisor's authority rightly stems from, and responsibility for practice belongs to, the iwi.

I have a lot of structures around me that have the capacity to rein me in. Which I'm not sure as a social worker, got my ticket, hire an office, put up my shingle, advertise and I'm away. You've only got really the Association behind you, whereas. I have a whole tribal structure behind me, because what I'm talking about are cultural things, and if I go off on the wrong tangent, there are plenty who will bring me into line.

5-CA

The cultural advisor occupied a different position to all the other supervisors in this research because this person, although acting in an advisory capacity to ANZASW, is not a social worker by profession. The supervision they provide was about cultural issues not the total practice of the supervisee. Because the cultural advisor kept no

records of supervision sessions there were many topics in this research where a response from the cultural advisor is not present.

In peer group supervision, it was seen to be the responsibility of each individual to keep their own records.

Well, one of the supervision processes that I'm involved in is a peer group supervision... The records that I would keep would be more like my jottings of what I bring to the supervision, rather than what others bring and present...I've seen other members of the group have some notes when they're wanting to present an issue to us as a supervision group... I wouldn't have any concern if a member of the supervision group wrote some stuff about what I presented. If they did that I would assume that they were doing that for their own learning rather than having any sort of management or critique of me.

1-IP

Record keeping of supervision is a complex subject and differs depending on the level of organisational responsibility that the supervisor holds for the work being discussed in supervision.

4.2.6 Summary of supervisor themes

This section summarises some of the main findings from the supervisor interviews across the four research themes and also looks at their comments on different types of supervision.

4.2.6.1 What you are doing now?

Contracts between supervisors and supervisees were in place for all supervisors in this study. However, practice around involving the management of the employing agencies varied. Many agencies did not have their own supervision contracts and in order to satisfy their professional obligations as ANZASW members, external

supervisors sometimes supplied the contract and education on policies to the agencies in the absence of them having policies in place. Agency policies have very little to say about how to record supervision sessions and supervisors followed ideas from their training and other professional development. However agency policies were in place covering safety issues, which were recorded on either the client files or the personnel file of the worker involved. Confidentiality of the supervision relationship was regarded as very important by supervisors, and they consulted with supervisees when information for reasons of safety needed to be passed on in order to maintain trust in the relationship. The supervision contract clearly included the exceptions to confidentiality of the supervision relationship. Supervisors said they had always been able to get the agreement of the supervisee to take practice concerns outside of the supervision, though they concede it would be possible to have a disagreement. Records of supervision were kept as a memory aid for the supervisors, to benefit supervisees and ultimately their clients, and with some idea of accountability. However supervisors were often unclear as to the purpose of the records to the employing agencies, and how they might be used by anyone other than themselves and the supervisees. Many supervisors said that they would keep more detailed records for student practitioners, and for critical incidents that might create interest outside of the supervisor/supervisee dyad. However they did note that they had never been asked to show their supervision records to anyone outside that dyad. Perhaps because of the lack of clarity about how agencies benefited from records, there were very different responses from supervisors about the disposal of supervision records. The range was from disposing of records as soon as the supervision relationship ended to possibly keeping them for ten years, to align with agency policy for other records.

4.2.6.2 What changed over the last five to ten years and what has influenced change?

Most supervisors agreed that record keeping in supervision had changed to be more accountable over the last ten years. Internal supervisors were more likely to see the changes as coming from their agencies, while external supervisors were more likely to put the changes down to their own professional development and to pressure of legislation, like social worker registration. Registration was seen as a response to address high profile child abuse cases in the statutory agency according to a former employee.

4.2.6.3 Which theories are being used in supervision?

As a first response, supervisors talked about their use of theories or parts of theories that shaped the supervision relationship, naming those of Kolb and Proctor, also reflective practice, transference, narrative and strengths based. After explaining their use of those theories, they talked about other influences like training, trust and relationship building, the cultural component, issues of power, and a range of practice theory and models used in supervision sessions and in their reflection after supervision sessions. Theories were sometimes made obvious in supervision records, or more often they structured the information recorded but explicit naming was often omitted. Two external supervisors, for whom supervision provided a large part of their workload and income, had complex theoretical frameworks that guided their supervision practice.

4.2.6.4 What would ‘best practice’ in supervision record keeping look like?

‘Best practice’ was identified by some supervisors as clarity about the purpose of the record keeping, and this related to complaints and other concerns about safety and poor practice. For one supervisor, ensuring record keeping is simple and useful to themselves and the supervisee were the most important things. Supervisors acknowledged the lack of definition in supervision record keeping and would like to have the purpose for keeping records clarified, particularly with agencies. They had mixed feelings about changing the present situation, which largely left decisions in the hands of supervisors and supervisees. Supervisors concluded that their current record keeping and supervision was sufficient to protect them from legal liability for their supervisees’ practice, but many supported the development of standards by ANZASW to make expectations clear to all supervisors and agencies employing social workers. Standards, if they are developed for ‘best practice’, should be about what needs to be recorded, introduce some uniformity and become part of the ANZASW competency standards. Of prime importance to supervisors is trust between them and supervisees in the supervision relationship and for supervisees to have a choice of supervisors. Supervisors would not want the pendulum to swing too far to the side of accountability at the expense of professional autonomy: the freedom to use creativity, judgment and discretion in their supervision. Consequently they support supervision practitioners steering any change. In any new system supervisors would value flexibility with some consistency.

4.2.6.5 Different types of supervision

The main finding on this topic was the recognition that non-management supervisors (external and internal professional) do not have the responsibility to oversee the work of the people they supervise, though they will report on safety or ethical concerns.

These supervisors have no access to client files, and have to rely on the supervisee to choose which part of the caseload to discuss. Managers, who have access to client details, on the other hand, have to balance their authority with an ability to develop supervisee's trust in the supervision relationship. The cultural advisor, though sharing the external supervisors' role as a private practitioner, in fact gave very different responses to many of the research questions, because of their focus on the cultural aspects of their supervisees' work and because they were not accountable to the social work profession. In peer supervision, supervisors take responsibility for recording their own insights and take no role in monitoring their peers.

4.2.6.6 Would one system of record keeping work in Aotearoa?

Supervisors believed that a record keeping system for social work supervision needed to be flexible to take into account cultural and agency differences, but also wanted some consistency.

4.3 Information from the supervisor focus group

The intention of the focus group was to validate the data gathered from the interviews. The supervisor focus group was an ambitious undertaking for this novice researcher. It brought together nine supervisors, seven meeting in Dunedin and two joining by audio-conference. Although I had considered having two separate supervisor groups, the reason I decided to try to bring all the supervisors together was to offer the supervisors participating the widest exposure to dialogue from other supervisors as it had become clear from the interviews that supervisors wanted the chance to exchange information on their supervision practice with others. This desire on their part set up a conflict between covering the findings from the interview phase of the research and letting them have the chance to talk freely about their own practice and listen to others doing the same. Also the technical aspects of the audio-conference (including the failure to start recording at the beginning of the discussions) resulted in some time being lost and some loss of data. As a result the information gathered from this focus group was limited. The two supervisors that joined the audio-conference from outside Dunedin said they felt included in the discussion and felt able to make their contributions.

In an attempt to simplify the discussion and fit it into the ninety minutes that supervisors had made available the discussion was restricted to the first and fourth themes: “What are we doing with supervision record keeping now?” and “What would ‘best practice’ in supervision record keeping look like?” Supervisors were given a summary of the findings from these two research themes before the focus group. The data collected from the focus group was grouped using the same themes as the interviews. The data from the focus group does not identify different

participants. The responses were stimulated by other group participants, as is expected in a focus group, with a lot of agreement between participants. Therefore it did not seem important to delineate the different contributors. These themes were then compared to the data from the interviews to pinpoint any discrepancies and to highlight points of agreement.

4.3.1 What you are doing with supervision record keeping now?

4.3.1.1 Contracts

One supervisor had some contracts with agencies but otherwise had no contracts with supervisees. All the other supervisors had contracts with supervisees, which were sometimes signed by managers of the supervisees. For some, practice had evolved over time with supervision contracts now being signed by NGO agencies, which is helpful for accountability. Some supervisors have their own contracts with supervisees, and in addition an organisational contract. Group contracts are signed by all supervisees, the supervisor and the manager, and reviewed annually. Contracts negotiated with supervisees were sometimes based on a template. They included the purpose of supervision for the supervisee after discussion with them. Contracts mention two things about session records, that records are kept and how they are stored. The focus group agreed on the importance at the beginning of the relationship of building trust between them and the supervisee, while negotiating the contract, saying it was: “Vital... Very important... Essential”.

4.3.1.2 Agency policies

Supervisors reported that some agencies, including educational institutions placing students on fieldwork, are quite prescriptive about reporting and record keeping

arising from supervision, but for most there isn't much detail. They agreed that open expectations about reporting to agencies should be included in supervision contracts from the commencement of the supervision: usually for reasons of safety. For supervisees who are private practitioners, reporting and accountability would be to a professional association instead of an agency.

4.3.1.3 Records of supervision sessions

The thing that clarifies records kept of supervision sessions is the agreement reached in negotiating the supervision contract. Some supervisors would not keep records of the content of every supervision session, though they always recorded that the session happened. Supervisees are responsible for their own notes. Some supervisors encourage supervisees to take their own notes, others assumed they would take responsibility for this themselves and didn't inquire. In peer supervision, each person takes responsibility for their own record keeping.

4.3.1.4 Confidentiality and accountability

It was common practice for supervisors to write supervision reports from their records involving their supervisees.

A report... is with the supervisee to first find out any issues coming up and then there are no surprises. It's kind of that really collaborative way of working – it's social work practice.

Some said those reports would be restricted to themes covered but not the detail of sessions. But others said that for students in particular, detail would be recorded. Supervisors were careful to restrict the details to keep the records confidential and maintain the trust of their supervisee. However supervisors would breach

confidentiality if there was a potential harm involved and this possibility would be included in the contract. The supervisor's sharing some of their supervisee's material in their own supervision is made clear to supervisees in the contracting discussion. The identity of the clients discussed in supervision is not available to non-managerial supervisors, whereas the confidentiality of the client is held within the agency for managerial supervision and their identity is known to the supervisor.

4.3.1.5 Who are supervision records for?

It was obvious from discussion that perhaps the major purpose of keeping records is as a tool for the supervisor to help them process the information. But both the supervisor and supervisee were expected to benefit from records, and to a limited extent through reports, the agency.

4.3.2 What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

Supervisors commented that the discussion on this topic needed to continue. Essential features of 'best practice' include: confidentiality, trust and a good relationship, consistency, clear communication and agreement in the contract about what records are kept, their secure storage (where and how including electronic records) and their availability to supervisees. Supervisees needed to know agency expectations and agreements that have been reached. Also considered essential were reaching agreement on the details of reviews or annual reports, ownership of information, responsibility of supervisors, the purpose of record keeping, disclosure (when and how), how long to keep records and what happens on the death of a supervisor.

4.3.3 Summary of supervisor focus group themes

This section summarises some of the main themes from the supervisor focus group and compares them with the themes from the supervisor interviews.

Contracts were highlighted by the focus group as essential in the supervision relationship. This reinforced the fact that, in the interviews, contracts with supervisees were found to be universal. In the focus group discussion on other aspects of record keeping (like the purpose, agency requirements etc.), supervisors said they make them explicit in the contract at the beginning of the supervision relationship, giving more depth of detail than was gathered in the interviews. Again in focus group discussion on 'best practice' in record keeping, the importance of a clear comprehensive supervision contract was promoted. For the focus group, the other very important feature of supervision contributing to 'best practice' in record keeping was the development of a trusting relationship with supervisees. The conflict between this trust and reporting on safety issues is handled by involving supervisees, where possible, and making the need to report on safety issues clear in the supervision contract. These findings came through in the interviews as well, with the added detail that some supervisors mentioned that they had never had a supervisee refuse to pass on concerns to their agency. Supervisor records are useful as a tool to process the session and are accessible to supervisees. For agencies the focus group said, in practice, access is only through reports that are generated using the records. It was clear from the interviews that agency access to the supervision records had not been gained by reading them, although internal management supervisors, because of their accountability to the agency, but none of the other supervisors, acknowledged the possibility that this could happen. The identity of clients is not made available to

non-managerial supervisors, consistent with protecting their confidentiality and this was discussed in interviews and the focus group, with interviewees offering the clarification that they didn't have the responsibility of overseeing the supervisees' work and therefore were reliant on them to raise agenda items in supervision. The cultural advisor's accountability and differences from other supervisors was not discussed in the focus group.

Although the technical difficulties resulted in loss of some of the data offered by the focus group and less data being gathered than would have been possible to a more experienced researcher, the data from the focus group when compared to the interviews showed major areas of agreement and highlighted many important findings. There were no real contradictions with the data gathered from the interviews and some clarification of the reasons behind responses was recorded, though there were areas where the interviews offered more detail about reasons for responses than the focus group did, which is the opposite of what I would have expected to have found.

CHAPTER 5 – RESULTS: DATA GATHERED FROM SUPERVISEES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the data gathered from the four supervisees who participated in the interview phase and the three who participated in the focus group. Because the supervisees in the interview phase were each recruited by their supervisor, their data gives a different perspective on the each of those four supervision relationships.

Again, I have identified the types of supervision (internal/management, internal/professional and external) and marked the quotes with the coding from the previous chapter, because the context influenced the responses. Supervisee participants were not confined to the role for which they were chosen: the supervisee in external supervision also received management supervision internally; one supervisee was on the point of becoming a supervisor and another was considering taking on that role.

The words of supervisees in this chapter follow the headings used in the previous chapter. In the sections quoted from interviews and focus groups I have added for clarity, some explanations in [brackets] of the topic that interviewees were responding to. In addition this chapter contains a brief report on the outcome of the request to a selection of agencies to contribute their supervision policies to this research project.

5.2 Interviews with supervisees

5.2.1 What methods do you use for recording supervision now?

5.2.1.1 Contracts

All supervisees had a contract, which was signed by their supervisor.

There is a contract between supervisor and supervisee, an organisational contract... No [management component] and no reporting back to that.

2-IP

It's a written contract all the time... Between the supervisor and me... because [the supervisor] is also the manager.

4-IM

Certainly for external I do... Our manager has a copy of that... she has signed it and agreed, which I think is fair and reasonable since the agency has paid for it. And she also receives a copy of any reviews.

11-E

The written contracts in place sometimes did not have a reporting link to the supervisee's manager.

5.2.1.2 Records of supervision sessions

All supervisees reported their supervisors kept records of supervision sessions, and some kept records of their own.

My supervisor takes notes and we both have a copy to look at... Usually it's outcomes of discussions of what the next step is of the issue I've taken to supervision. Sometimes it's a bit of a summary... and we review that at the next session.

7-IM

What methods do I actually do? I write in my diary and that's it... Time and day. Oh and we've got a book out there, agency book that we record the time and the day, and who your supervisor is and the session... In the nature of how I'm working, if I'm stuck and I need some advice I'll take that in supervision to S and then it comes back in with my notes [client records]. It doesn't specifically say I discussed that with S.

4-IM

I write short notes in an exercise book that I've got specifically for external supervision and I keep another one for internal supervision... in external, I believe my supervisor writes up some notes following our session. And in internal my team leader writes up some notes and gives me a photocopy, so they're written up as we go.

11-E

Supervisees took a variety of approaches to keeping their own record of supervision, from having a copy of the supervisor's notes, to keeping brief notes themselves, recording outcomes on client files and in one case, not using notes as a memory tool, relying on the supervisor to initiate topics they have forgotten to cover.

5.2.1.3 Agency policies

Supervisees are not aware of much guidance from agency policies on recording supervision sessions.

There's no requirement to report inside the organisation one's supervision, apart from the supervisor needs to keep note of the sessions, the amount of sessions had.

2-IP

In terms of safety issues for clients there are agency policies about reporting.

...if it's concerns with the children, well then you go through Child Youth and Family, and notify and you do that, and you always must take that to my manager here, who is my supervisor, which is the same thing. So you carry it through that way... That's agency policy, yeah. And it's all documented as well... [on the client file]... I would do that and also we've got a notification file as well.

4-IM

Abuse, is the predominant mandatory reporting situation really... Child and partner abuse are both reportable inside the ... organisation... and it's also recorded on the client file. That's only in the last couple of years those initiatives have really been put in place.

2-IP

Although agency supervision policies seem silent on recording supervision sessions, safety issues for clients are covered by other agency policies, which require that records of actions taken are kept on client files.

5.2.1.4 Confidentiality and accountability

Supervision records raise issues about confidentiality of both client and supervisee information and the accountability for the supervisee's practice.

The supervisor's approach has been ...– what is brought to supervision is the responsibility of the supervisee... There would be a carefulness and a careful consideration as the situation requires, I would say. Which has been my experience, and there has been critical incidents

2-IP

Two supervisees affirmed that they informed their clients that their information might be discussed in supervision and their supervisor's name.

They know, when I do your tick box thing at the start with them, with the introductory thing, is that yes, I will take their case to supervision. I tell them who my supervisor is, that's all, that's prefaced at the start, so they know that.

4-IM

The conflict between confidentiality and accountability was seen as a dilemma.

For some people it could be really positive that there's clearer records kept and you can review them much more easily. I think for other people the outcome for clients might be that supervisors and supervisees might be fearful of keeping too much so it would be damaging.

11-E

Supervisors leave the decision on which clients to bring to supervision to the supervisee. There is no systematic scanning of the client caseload in supervision by supervisors. Supervisees feel the conflict between record keeping to be accountable and protecting the confidentiality of themselves and clients, which could lead to a less open and productive supervision relationship.

5.2.1.5. Who are supervision records for?

The agenda rests with the supervisee.

Usually it's up to me to come with the issues or the situations I want to discuss. But generally I touch on each family... At my discretion, yes... If there's anything going on in the agency that I need to be made aware of or things like that then my supervisor would talk about those, but generally it's driven by what I bring.

7-IM

The benefits to themselves of supervision records are obvious to the supervisees.

The records that have been kept to date were I think of great benefit [to me]... my experience of a lot of the supervision in health is to do with the organisational difficulties, rather than client difficulties in some senses the records between the supervisor and myself have been held somewhat as insurance... to show that issues have been thoroughly aired and dealt with professionally

2-IP

The records of supervision - I see it as for myself and for my supervisor. We are the only ones that see them, unless of course there's a contentious issue or a there's a concern about an action I've taken or actions that my supervisor has taken then we have an agreement on where we go with that... It's not stipulated how that would be, but I would imagine if there was a need to bring a third person in, they may want to see how we got to this point. And I would imagine the notes would be part of that... With agreement, yeah... [of] myself and my supervisor.

7-IM

Supervisees see supervision records as a benefit to them professionally, and therefore to the clients at least indirectly.

I think the benefit to clients is to me the professionalism of being able to take difficult issues, planning and strategies into the supervisory forum. You know, to make sure that as many bases as possible have been covered and that a very skilled practitioner's perspective is also offered.

2-IP

[The records benefit clients] indirectly, I think for me it gives a sense of moving forward on things I'm struggling with or what's going well.

7-IM

Some supervisees had never read the supervisor's records of their sessions.

No, I've never asked to see them.

4-IM

As mentioned earlier some supervisees kept their own records of supervision and that is what they use to follow-up on the discussion. Whether supervisor records or their own, the supervisees saw the benefits to themselves and indirectly to their clients, in the records, which helped them develop professionally.

5.2.1.6 Do records differ for critical incidents versus routine topics in supervision?

Some supervisees said that they didn't believe the notes differed in a critical incident.

Not in my experience... [the notes are] brief. More like bullet points... What was covered, action to be taken ...

7-IM

Others said they would keep more detailed notes.

Yes. I would be much more careful about keeping more readable notes that might need to be used in a court setting or an internal setting, and I think if it came to that situation, and I haven't had it yet, I'd be sharing them with the [external] supervisor as it went... I'd be much more careful in the detail... Instead of just the shorthand I do now to remind myself.

11-E

None of the supervisees thought that anyone other than their supervisors or themselves had read the supervisors' records of their supervision sessions.

Supervisees experience is that reporting on to management happens within the supervision relationship.

I think my current experience is that records would really be produced out of that relationship predominantly when there is organisational conflict and they would appear as evidence...our records have never had to be utilised as evidence [never been read by anyone else]... No, but the sessions have been operated in a way that they were thorough, issues were thoroughly covered so that should they need to be produced they were there for that format really

2-IP

One supervisee was aware that no-one else saw their supervisor's records of their supervision and the records included safety issues and ethical dilemmas.

...because if there was a critical incident around safety, I'd take it to my supervisor anyway, but that would be noted on the [client] file as a critical concern, and supervision is just part of that work, I don't see that as different.... it might show on S's file, cause I don't keep any records of the supervision.

4-IM

In the case of reporting on critical incidents supervision records may be used as the basis of a report developed in discussion with the supervisor. Supervision notes may be kept in more detail by most supervisees in case of critical incidents.

5.2.1.7 How long are supervision records kept?

The length of time that supervisees kept their own records of supervision varied.

They're in my file obviously and I don't give copies of those notes to the supervisor ... The current folder's got history of the few years I've done with this current supervisor.

2-IP

I have no idea. That's the question. I keep them probably six months back. I actually have no idea how long my supervisor keeps them for. I have never actually given that a thought.

7-IM

The length of time the records were kept was an individual decision. The question of whether the records the supervisees kept belonged to the agency was not asked.

5.2.2 What changed over the last five to ten years and what has influenced change?

Changes in supervision and record keeping have been made over this time period.

...there are actually records kept. Five years ago it was purely conversation, there was no record of the conversation at all so supervision was very much just at the talking level and anything that was written down wasn't a planned or structured part of the session.

7-IM

I think it depends very much on the experience of the supervisor and what background they come from. So for me, I guess I've managed my side of the bargain much same way for quite a long period of time... one of the things that I was really aware was that we do live in a far more legislated society and that if you are supervising we do need to be aware of what records you keep and how they could be used.

11-E

Some supervisees didn't think that changes in supervision had affected their supervision relationship. The cause of the changes in record keeping was perceived to be about an increasing professionalism of the supervisors and the accountability of agencies.

For me personally, I don't think that it has changed my relationship but it hasn't definitely changed what I would take to supervision. I don't think it has changed that aspect of it, but more quality professionally is expected... Accountability for supervisors and perhaps for the supervisees as well because there's actually a record that the supervision has happened and sort of a record of what was covered... I think it's more about the professionalism of the supervisor... And the place of the agency.

7-IM

Supervisees had mixed views on how much record keeping of supervision had changed. It depended on the supervisors and the agency's business, but change was attributed to a drive to increase the professionalism of social work.

5.2.3 Which theories and models are used in supervision and how do they influence the recording of supervision sessions?

A range of theories and other influences were reported by supervisees as being used in their work and coming into supervision.

In work, the task-centred model has always been crucial... Basically the two models for working in an acute setting, the task-centred practice works well and so do the brief intervention models.

2-IP

...we work in a strengths way, so it's always what's working, not what's not working, always from that perspective... But a lot of the work we do here is solution-focused work, it's brief work, and the idea is it's four or five sessions, high turnover, so you might take it to supervision twice and... then you're finished, so it's quite finite.

4-IM

Kolb's model. It goes back to the Margaret Morrell training we were very heavily influenced by that sort of the "what is?" issue. The "what now?", "what?", and so forth. Strengths-based is a theory that has been quite widely developed in this agency. For me, I'm quite a task-orientated person. I guess I go to supervision and I come away with wee tasks for me to do to better in whatever problem it is. Family-centred, child focused, that's the bread and butter of [our agency] and we're so family orientated. Child approach is paramount. That's about all at the moment

7-IM

Reflective practice was important to some supervisees.

I guess the models are very eclectic. But the model that I work best from, which my supervisor soon picked up, is reflective practice. That's the way I work and I've identified

that. I often laugh about it because it is the way I work and I don't think it would reflect on the record keeping too much.

11-E

Theories are not always seen as a vital part of supervision.

I mean I think probably if the records were examined and people would be able to see the model structures in there, yes. It hasn't been crucial or important in our recording to be honest and it hasn't been something we've considered. It's really more been a heart to heart, head to head situation.

2-IP

For some supervisees the interagency work was as important as theories in supervision.

Whereas the longer-term clients I have they're all strengths-based, but they involve Child Youth and Family and lots of other agencies as well and as far as that goes with the supervision, what's really helpful is S's knowledge.

4-IM

The focus of the work of the agency was also identified as of prime importance.

...we deal with care and protection so there's always that over-riding framework of: where does that fit within, is it a care and protection issue, where is that on the spectrum, is it low level, is it high level? So I think that's sort of a framework of particularly any family issue that's brought to supervision is OK where does that fit in terms of care and protection.

7-IM

Theories referred to in supervision were generally ones used in client work.

However, theories were no more important than the work of the agency or the support function of supervision.

5.2.4 What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

5.2.4.1 'Best practice' is/is not

One supervisee thought that a better method of record keeping would help.

I think a good electronic supervision diary would be good... I get a wee bit tired of a lot of hand written notes. I think it could be tidier with electronic record-keeping.

2-IP

For one supervisee 'best practice' was not having to keep records of supervision for themselves, but just to record on client records the useful insights that supervision had provided.

I don't have to do it... Well, [my supervisor] is doing that so that would be duplicating things... I want to just add, there's enough paper work anyway and if every time I took something to supervision you've got to come back and write a screed on the notes, that, for me, would defeat to me the purpose of doing it... [Supervision records should contain] Just that the discussion's taken place. Yeh, because it's my personal opinion that the case notes belong with the client's file not with the supervisor... They get to see everything you see. I believe that's good. I think you should be transparent with your clients.

4-IM

From a different perspective, other supervisees thought that the keeping of records and having a contract encouraged professional development.

I quite like that there are records kept... I think it does sort of make me up my game and be more professional about the issues I'm bringing and I think that's something that we all strive for ... I think having a contract. It gives you a baseline of where to start. It sets the expectations and I think that encourages best practice because you've both going into that relationship on the same page, so you're going in with similar expectations on what's going to be kept and stuff and that has flow on effects to your work. I guess, having your supervisor looking in on what you're doing and keeping a note of that... it gives that sense of that the agency is trying to work towards having best practice in general. Record keeping is one aspect of that.

7-IM

...in any training that I have done on supervision it has suggested ideas on record keeping in supervision, and I guess the ideas have really been around the supervisor and the supervisee working out what best meets their standards... So it's a contractual agreement of what will be kept, what will be done with that information... I think a contract's really important. And I think even if there is some sort of standard format, it's really important that there is an agreement about content. And that that's discussed in the early stages, right in that setting up the contract stage...

And that the records are available to both sides to view... I think if people that are supervisors and particularly supervisees are happy with participating in setting up some sort of standard, especially around content and how records will be kept, they'll feel more comfortable about using supervision.

11-E

Supervisees supported the movement to make supervision more professional.

Agreement about keeping of records and clear negotiated contracts agreed to by supervisees contribute to trust in supervision.

5.2.4.2 What works well now?

For one supervisee nothing needs to change. Present practice is meeting their requirements.

I don't think it does [need to change]. It meets all the requirements of ANZASW and to have anything more formal, like a template or a checklist, I don't know how you would monitor it. All they need is that you go to supervision, you go on a regular basis and you're supervised by a qualified person.

4-IM

Choice of supervisor has worked well and choice is still seen to available but increasingly difficult.

We're bound to using only internal supervision. External supervision now, if there is the odd case of it still in existence, is very, very rare. You have to work inside of the organisation... it's still choice... it's within the pool available, and that's not so easy.

2-IP

Having a trusting relationship with their supervisor was important.

...a good relationship with [my] supervisor. And I guess everything works out OK until there's conflict. And we haven't had any conflict yet.

4-IM

The ease of operating and monitoring the current record keeping system, with no standards made it ‘best practice’ for one supervisee. Having the supervisee choose their supervisor has worked well. Very importantly, having a trusting relationship in supervision contributes to ‘best practice’.

5.2.4.3 What needs to change?

Changing record keeping in order to protect the safety of clients was not thought necessary by one supervisee.

I think in good professional supervision, if it’s happening, the answer is probably no. The key things, the key actions that are required if you’re bringing client work to supervision if it’s not dealing with those actions so that you actually step out of that supervision and go and act, I think it’s failing in its process. And if there are mandatory reporting issues, well then they have to be done...

2-IP

Another supervisee thought that more detailed notes might be needed.

Maybe a bit more depth in the notes. At the moment like, it’s bullet points and I’m just thinking there could be situations where perhaps more detailed notes might be useful particularly if there’s an issue with a client family that could potentially end up in another arena or a complaint or something like that, having some prior record of the steps taken before it got to that point, would definitely help, yeh. So I guess more in depth notes would perhaps be an opportunity to reflect more on where it’s at, on emerging things or issues that we look at.

7-IM

No change was needed to protect clients and satisfy legal liability of workers.

I do [think sufficient safeguards are in place for client safety and legal liability. But in saying that I don’t pretend to be completely knowledgeable in that area... [If anything needs changing] For me because that’s an area if you’re competent in knowing a lot of information, it’s about education.

7-IM

For one supervisee change would need to be worthwhile for the amount of work it created.

It would need to be beneficial for the worker and for the clients as well. The worst thing would be just create a huge paper -trail that benefits no one and be just a waste of time. If it was a to system that could work to benefit everyone then that would be good.

4-IM

One supervisee wanted to see an increased awareness of what supervision is.

I think what needs to be developed really is an awareness... in the wider community... of what supervision is about and therefore what needs to be kept... I think that the practice of internal supervision through other workers in the hospital setting... is as much a dollar issue as anything else... I guess it's about educating the people in higher places of what this means that they've got to understand what supervision means first.

11-E

Supervisees didn't believe that changes needed to be made to protect the safety of clients. There was concern, however, that change would increase the workload of social workers without benefiting anyone. An understanding of supervision by people making budgeting decisions about and in agencies would be a useful change.

5.2.4.4 What would you hate to lose?

Loss of choice of supervisor would be difficult.

Being actually anchored to a limited pool of supervision is actually very restricted and I find, I will find it really hard to find a replacement supervisor, especially of the quality and calibre that I've had, which has been of great value, so I feel that we've almost lost it, it's almost corroded down to dust. I don't know whether we can lose much more apart from the taking away of supervision full stop.

2-IP

One thing that supervisees commented on was the importance of the privacy or safety of the supervision relationship.

I'd hate to lose the feeling that supervision is a safe place where you can openly share your concerns if you're struggling away. I'd hate to think I would lose the ability to do that and be worried that gosh, it's on record that I'd struggled with these issues, what's that going to mean for me at this point. And I think that would be doing our clients a real disservice if we can't be that open and honest about how our work is affecting us, then that's going to make continuing the work more of a challenge.

7-IM

I'd hate to lose my external supervision. For me it's a real safety – it's a - that place I can go that I know is absolutely safe. That I can there let off steam about things that are happening in the agency, about boundaries, about the people I work with. I know that it's safe I know that I can spit it out, reflect on it, and with the help of my supervisor I can usually come away feeling as if I've solved problems. I feel much safer... I look forward in one way to more structure around supervision and more understanding, in another way I'm a bit fearful of ... Attaching it (supervision) to appraisals and wage rises, salary increases. I think that they're two separate things.

11-E

The privacy of the supervision relationship was to protect the privacy of clients as well as supervisees.

Some clients don't like any records kept, because they have this fear someone else might see it. Or someone from CYFS might look in and see something. And my clients can see their records, my notes that I write any time and of course that has an influence on what I write in them anyway 'cause you know they can read it any time.

4-IM

Supervisees don't want to lose the ability to have a trusting supervision relationship of their choice. The privacy of supervision protects themselves and also clients.

5.2.4.5 Who should or should not steer change?

Not all supervisees agreed that there needed to be a change in supervision record keeping.

The supervisees. It should come from the bottom up. It shouldn't be directed from the top down or it won't happen... If they need a change.

4-IM

It's probably the supervisor and the supervisee, and indirectly the client as well, because, they are part of the reason that you need supervision so that they should be part of ensuring that their worker is the best possible worker they could have. I just believe all parties involved have a stake in the supervision process.

7-IM

I think the Association had already started steering change. And now with registration or the need for people who are now coming into the system to be registered, that must surely impact too. But I think it's also an education process of educating NGOs and health funded agencies and other providers of trying to somehow to educate management about what supervision can provide for workers, therefore the spin-off it will have for clients.

11-E

Suggestions for groups who should steer change included those most affected: supervisees and supervisors and clients. Formal organisations, like ANZASW as well as funders and service providers needed to be educated about supervision.

5.2.4.6 Would one system of record keeping work in Aotearoa?

Most supervisees thought that it would be difficult to have one system that fitted all social work situations.

I quite like the keep it simple method... I think organisations will define their own. So, no, I don't think one size fits all, anywhere.

2-IP

Have some sort of template, where you could check in for some bits, but not for others... Child Youth and Family and the ODHB they are quite different, different working parameters compared with NGOs... Because of the level of risk, particularly with mental health... And they have quite specific documentation.

4-IM

Probably something more complex... I'd like to think one would work but I'm just thinking of different cultures and I guess that people working in a different way culturally might need different options... I guess that's something that you agree at the beginning of your sessions with your contract. But no, I think it would be good to have more of a standard.

11-E

Differences between statutory social workers whose clients are high risk as compared to NGO workers who will refer clients on in risky situations and cultural differences were all going to impact on the way that records need to be kept.

5.2.5 Different types of supervision

The supervisee receiving external supervision reflected on the differences between the two types of supervision they received.

...our team leader, it's more administrative supervision that we have internally. It certainly is looking at your caseload, it's looking at the people you're working with and their needs and certainly talking about ways of managing them, too, but it's very much administrative... both internally and externally we look at training options and needs and gaps, and how we might fulfil them. But I think externally we look more at boundaries and safety issues around the work I'm doing with people. It's good to move it away, outside of the place you work, because often in the place you work there's some preconceived ideas about how things can be managed. So sometimes just taking it outside and chucking it around – [gives you more freedom]...

11-E

This worker found greater freedom to explore agency issues in external supervision.

5.2.6 Summary of supervisee themes

This section summarises some of the main themes from the supervisee interviews across the four research themes and also looks at their comments on different types of supervision.

5.2.6.1 What you are doing now?

All supervisees had a written contract with the supervisor that recruited them into the research, but one supervisee commented that that they didn't have a contract with their internal supervisor, who did not participate in the research. This supervisee's manager had signed the external supervision contract and received reviews of supervision, giving a connection back to the agency. All the supervisees in the research knew that written records of supervision sessions were kept by their supervisors. Some supervisees had not read the records but knew that they had access to their supervisor's records if they asked for them; some of them had a copy of the supervisor's record and used this as their working record of supervision. All of the supervisees kept their own brief records of their supervision sessions or at the least a record of when supervision happened. While not aware of agency policies that would require anyone else to see these supervision records, reviews and reports on specific issues (with their knowledge) were expected to come out of the supervision records. A particularly important issue was reporting on abuse or other safety issues according to agency policy.

Supervisees were confident that the responsibility for presenting issues from their client work was theirs, and there was no systematic coverage of their caseload by their supervisor. Some supervisees offered the information that their clients know that their information could be covered in supervision and knew who the supervisor was. Some were concerned at the conflict between confidentiality and accountability and what that would mean for honesty and openness in the supervision sessions. Supervision records were seen as benefiting the supervisor and supervisee and

indirectly the client. Supervisees kept their records of supervision for anything from six months to indefinitely, with an intermediate position being for the duration of the supervision relationship.

5.2.6.2 What changed over the last five to ten years and what has influenced change?

Changes in supervision record keeping over the last five to ten years were related to supervisors' increasing professionalism and demands on them for accountability. These changes were not reported to have changed the relationship with their supervisors as yet, but might in the future. The registration of social workers is seen to be having some impact on changes. What some supervisees did about their own record keeping has not changed over the same period.

5.2.6.3 Which theories are being used in supervision?

Theories in supervision, to supervisees, meant the theories used in their work with clients. The focus of the work was possibly more important in supervision than any theories they might be using, for example child protection, health or interagency work.

5.2.6.4 What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

What, if anything, needs to change from current practice of record keeping in supervision to enhance 'best practice' from the supervisees perspective? Some supervisees said "not much" for themselves or for clients. In terms of legal liability supervisees thought that current reporting practices were sufficient to protect their own and client safety, though there was some support for keeping more detailed

records on critical incidents. The thing that all supervisees would hate to lose is a feeling of safety in the supervision relationship, so that they could honestly examine their practice. They thought that change might be pushed from outside for legal and professional reasons. Any change would need to be useful to them and clients to be worth the effort of increasing their workload, and risking their relationship with their supervisor. They wanted to be part of any proposed change along with supervisors and clients. Flexibility would be important in any attempt to devise an improved system of record keeping, in order to respond to differences in agencies and resources.

5.2.6.5 Different types of supervision

One supervisee commented on the differences between their management supervision and their external professional supervision. They found their professional supervision was a safe place to check out boundaries and safety issues. For other supervisees their management supervisor also provided professional supervision, but they also identified their supervision as currently a safe situation.

5.2.6.6 Would one system of record keeping work in Aotearoa?

It would be difficult to have one supervision record keeping system that fitted all agency work. Supervisees thought that cultural differences and differences between statutory agencies, whose clients are high risk, and NGO workers who will refer clients on in risky situations were both going to impact on the way that records should be kept.

5.3 Information from the supervisee focus group

5.3.1 Introduction

The focus groups were used for validating the data gathered from the interviews from the first and fourth themes: current practice of record keeping in supervision and what ‘best practice’ would look like. Supervisees were given a summary of the findings from these two research themes before the focus group. The data from the focus group does not identify different participants. Responses were stimulated by other group participants, as is expected in a focus group, with a lot of agreement between participants. Therefore it did not seem important to differentiate the different contributors. The data collected from the focus group was organised using the same themes as the interviews. These themes were then compared to the data from the interviews to pinpoint any discrepancies and to highlight points of agreement.

5.3.2 What we are doing with supervision record keeping now?

5.3.2.1 Contracts

Contracts are important as they set the scene for the supervision relationship.

It sets the stage from which it all flows I think, and if you haven't got those frameworks in place at the start if there is a difficulty or something which has to be faced further down the track if that conversation hasn't been had back here then it can get very messy, but if you've got agreed steps forward that if a problem arises or if my supervisor becomes concerned about something in my practice we've got an agreed path that we're going to follow, then it's not a whole new thing. It's like, ok we've reached this point we need to do something else, we've talked about this was what we were going to do and then it's not quite so threatening.

Usually there was a series of conversations between supervisees and their supervisors and agreement is reached about the details of contract.

5.3.2.2 Records of supervision sessions

Supervisors' notes were copied and given to the supervisees or were open to them seeing what was being written as the record was being made.

I think it keeps you on task, because sometimes between supervision sessions you work in the moment and you've got one thing on your mind but you actually haven't finished something you've done before. And if someone hasn't recorded it, it might just go past and you forget about it.

It's also a safety mechanism I think. You might say that it's been discussed in supervision, but its good to have that written word to check back on

I think if they're kept it can be used to identify developing themes, like if there's a common struggle or a common challenge. It can identify some things that might help develop in your profession, like some training needs or something like that.

I think too, notes, they indicate if you're both on the same track. Sometimes you're talking away and the person you're talking to is on a completely different tangent. Whereas, if it's written down you can hone into the same thing.

Whether they are the records kept by supervisors or the ones they kept for themselves, records served as a useful tool: as a reminder as well as a proof of what had been covered in supervision, a chance to revise the history of supervision content and as a means of keeping a focus on the important issues.

5.3.2.3 Confidentiality

Keeping the confidentiality of clients was not an issue in internal supervision, but it was in external supervision.

Well my supervision is in-house supervision as well so sort of everything is open book anyway so I guess that frees up a

lot of our conversation because it's right there in front of you if you need it to be

For internal supervision I take files too, but for external I haven't and I just use the first names... what my supervisor writes is, she's always up to speed with where it's come from the last time and is able to check out how did that go as we start the new round.

The practice of in-house or management supervisors knowing the clients being discussed was confirmed. It was common practice for supervisees to take client files to supervision in this situation. In contrast the identity of clients was not shared with an external supervisor, though some sort of identifier was used so the external supervisor could track progress with the same client.

5.3.2.4 Accountability

There is a conflict between being open in supervision about areas that supervisees are struggling with and honest accountability if records may be used to intervene in their employment or their work with a client.

The record keeping might actually highlight the patterns of the poor social work, that you might gloss over but the record keeping it's there, you'd see it... I guess it relies on the honesty of the social worker as well. Because if you don't bring the struggles to supervision they won't be recorded so they won't be reviewed. So I guess there is the risk of things going on that completely missed the forum... If it's not clear about what the records are going to be used for, for me it would be an issue...

The supervision record keeping was used to support the case for the need for the supervisee to undertake particular training.

I guess the record keeping when things aren't going too well, that helps with your professional development and it's from the record keeping that your professional development part will add to that... Further training, yes. Missing links.

And I'm just thinking that for me it's the review that does that. It brings together and identifies those missing bits.

Although more detailed records of supervision could undermine honesty in the supervision relationship, they can also be used to support supervisees by making a case for further training.

5.3.3 What would 'best practice' in supervision record keeping look like?

5.3.3.1 'Best practice' is/is not

'Best practice' consists of transparency.

Transparency... So you both know where you're coming from...

And I guess relating to that is trust, you've got to have the trust of the person that you're working with to have the transparency otherwise you're going to hold back...

And respect... Probably the trust and the respect is the result of the transparency...

Contracts set the scene for record keeping of supervision sessions.

I guess the contract, 'cause your contract is essential, that's your relationship building at the beginning, and your contract's the start of your record keeping.

I find it often happens with internal supervision, because you don't have a contract, but you might have some sort of verbal when you start, but that can easily get lost and become secondary to what else might be going on in the agency.

'Best practice' in supervision is being able to honestly present issues in supervision and having the courage to ask the obvious questions and receiving honest feedback, also trust and respect. In terms of record keeping, the contract was an essential part of 'best practice' in supervision.

5.3.3.2 What works well now?

What happened to the records of supervision and who might be able to view them at some time in the future was made clear in their contracts.

Mm. It makes you think about how important the contract is in stipulating all these things at the start. And before starting this investigation I didn't quite realise how crucial it was, 'cause it was just something that happened.

Using supervision records is an efficient way of identifying areas of practice that could be improved or highlighting successes. They can be used to document and identify the practice standards being used by the supervisee, for the purpose of meeting ANZASW competency, working towards registration and evidence of on-going development.

I guess I mean reviewing the notes about decisions that were made or actions that were taken it can show themes. May be you have a set way of responding and you actually look back and you go oh, the last three times something like this happened I did this, this and this and three times it didn't work out too well. Or it can highlight successes like when you're talking about what you did and when you break it down to the action you took and it had a positive outcome then you can carry those skills through to other situations.

One of the things that I've really appreciated in my external supervision is the identification of practice standards, and how I'm using them, that you don't think about, you don't consider. You just go on doing the work and for someone to stop and say to me, did you realise that that fits in with standard da te da is really good for me to reflect on...

Training in supervision was valued by supervisees.

...our manager has sent pretty much everyone on training for either supervisees or supervisors, so it's really valued in our organisation.

Three things were identified as useful in current supervision record keeping: clarity in contracts about what happened to records and who could see them, identifying where

ANZASW practice standards are being met in practice for competency assessment and training on supervision for supervisees.

5.3.3.3 What needs to change?

Introduction of some standards in supervision record keeping would be welcomed.

It makes me wonder if – there's no standards that I know in ANZASW and there should be some standards come from there or registration to make it more uniform.

I think there could be some general principles or guidelines and within that agencies could develop their own ways depending on what their needs and requirements are. It just seems that if social work is becoming more professional there's going to be more accountability, and I think the supervision records might form a part of that, so it might change some purposes of why they're kept and how they're used in future

I think it's good to have guidelines... And in fact in our agency about four years ago there was talk of guidelines being developed, but they haven't arrived yet.

ANZASW guidelines for supervision record keeping could be introduced, including why they're kept and how they could be used in future, and the development of agency guidelines expedited.

5.3.3.4 What would you hate to lose?

Supervisees would not like to see change that undermined the relationship they currently had with their supervisors.

I wouldn't like something like a heavy-hand type of approach to come in and take away the relationship between you and your supervisor. Because I believe that supervision is based on the relationship... [the confidentiality of the supervision process is]... really important. Because that's what makes it safe.

If it's not clear about what the records are going to be used for, for me it would be an issue.

Anything that interfered with the confidentiality of the relationship with the supervisor would lead to a lessening of trust in what was disclosed in supervision, taking away the safety of the process for supervisees.

5.3.3.5 Who should or should not steer change?

The following were the focus group's thoughts on who should steer any change.

It's nice to sit back and say there's a supervisors' interest group, isn't it, in the Association.

The people being supervised should have some input into that too.

And I wonder if clients should be considered in that as well. The reason we have supervision is the work around clients... I wonder if having a group something like this for service users are invited to put their perspective of it forward.

It's their perspective that we're taking

Some of it is being driven by registration, as you say and if we don't take the opportunity now to feedback to either the Association or the people driving registration, the opportunity will be lost.

No one group in isolation.

People who are not knowledgeable about social work who don't have an understanding of what supervision is in this context

The groups who should be involved in steering change for supervision were identified as the supervisors' interest group and supervisees in collaboration. The clients' voice needed to be heard also. The SWRB and ANZASW needed to have input. The groups who should NOT be involved in steering change were any group in isolation and people who are not knowledgeable about social work supervision.

5.3.3.6 Would one system of record keeping work in Aotearoa?

This topic was only touched on in passing in the focus group in the above discussion on ANZASW and the SWRB introducing standards on record keeping. It was agreed that one size doesn't fit all, but a guideline may be useful. With standards, some flexibility was also wanted.

5.3.4 Different types of supervision

Supervisees discussed other forms of supervision and the role it played in their professional development.

In our workplace there's that unwritten [informal] peer support that goes on, that's often your saving grace too...

We have formal peer support where our director leaves and it's just clinical workers and that's really good, and often your peer supervision you get as much out of as your formalised supervision. But there's no record keeping in that, there will never be record keeping in that

Yes we have a team meeting and it sounds like ours is a bit similar to your organisation, where we have a folder. They keep general minutes. Each time someone takes a different turn at chairing, so it's kept in a central location, but there's no identifying features of client or [worker]. I guess for our team meetings there's a lot of conversation as things go on. There's support, I can't remember there being a safety issue raised that needed further action, so it's more a forum for support

And I think if anything like that [a safety concern] was identified in peer support, it would be – “maybe you needed to see the team leader after this”, and maybe we will take it to the manager

...we certainly challenge each other pretty honestly and openly... For the person receiving the services

For the client and for the worker themselves, and its often through those conversations that I learn myself

And sometimes it's in those peer supervisions that you take stuck things to. So you can brainstorm them.... where as in your ordinary supervision there's just two minds, but in peer

support or peer work there's many minds. And also within my agency everyone works from different models and different backgrounds

Peer supervision, either informally or formally, is practiced regularly and forms a valuable place for support and learning for the worker and challenge on behalf of the person receiving the service, bringing in different perspectives.

5.3.5 Summary of supervisee focus group themes

This section summarises some of the main themes from the supervisee focus group and compares them with the themes from the supervisee interviews.

The supervisees expanded on the interview finding of the prevalence of the supervision contract and added that they see it as very important in setting the supervision relationship. A lengthy process of negotiation with their supervisor was described. Records of supervision sessions, their own or their supervisors, were confirmed by the focus group as being a useful tool in their work. The focus group expanded on the more factual data from the interviews focusing on how much was recorded and by whom, and affirmed the records as keeping them centred on their major issues, and in addition providing evidence that their supervisor had the same understanding as them of the issues raised. In the focus group, the discussion on confidentiality focused on confidentiality for clients when in external but not internal supervision, whereas in the interviews the confidentiality discussed was of the supervision relationship, and when and who else might have access to supervision records. The focus group repeated the importance supervisees attach to the dilemma they experience balancing accountability and openness in the supervision relationship. Clarity about what records are for would help supervisees to feel

comfortable about honest communication in supervision. In supervision additional training needs were identified as a way of addressing issues of poor performance.

When it came to talking about ‘best practice’, transparency or honesty in the supervision relationship was given primacy repeatedly by the focus group. This was a rephrasing of the importance the interviewees had placed on an honest supervision relationship in the interviews. The supervision contract was considered by the focus group to be the essential feature of record keeping, outlining how records would be used right from the start of the relationship. This was a stronger statement than had emerged from the interviews.

Change that would be welcomed by the supervisee focus group is the development of some guidelines on supervision record keeping by, for example, ANZASW, with flexibility for agencies to respond to their own different needs. This was a stronger affirmation of the need for guidelines than had been expressed in the interviews. The groups who should steer change were the people involved in supervision, because of their knowledge of supervision. This focus group finding repeated the findings of the interviews, with a stronger call to involve clients, using focus groups similar to this one of their own. The importance of peer supervision to supervisees was discussed in some depth; this was something that had not been raised in the interviews.

The data from the focus group when compared to the interviews showed significant areas of agreement, no discrepancies and some further depth of data showing why supervisees made some responses to the interview questions.

5.4 Comparison between Supervisors and Supervisees

This section will identify similarities and differences in the data gathered from different forms of supervision and between supervisors and supervisees. The supervisors separated into two groups, management and non-management supervision as the sole internal professional supervisor and the sole cultural advisor had most in common with the external supervisors in their responses. Where the focus group agreed on an issue or where all of the group agreed in the interviews, it was taken as strong agreement, otherwise agreement indicates at least one of the group raised or agreed to the item. A breakdown of the data appears in Tables 5.1-5.4.

The discussion on 'best practice' in record keeping is summarised in Table 5.1. It was notable that supervisors and supervisees both put a high value on clear contracts, including negotiation of the details and having a trusting relationship in supervision. Both groups agreed that current practice on reporting critical safety issues was 'best practice'. Supervisors and supervisees were in moderate agreement that their current record keeping protected clients and themselves against legal liability. Also both groups didn't want to lose an open and trusting relationship if change was introduced to put more external controls on their supervision through record keeping. However, some supervisors were also concerned about loss of professional autonomy, while supervisees were very worried about loss of the relationship with their supervisor and losing the feeling of safety in supervision.

Table 5.1: Comparison between supervisors and supervisees of factors contributing to ‘best practice’ in supervision record keeping

FACTORS	SUPERVISORS		SUPERVISEES
	MANAGERS	NON-MANAGERS	
<u>What works now?</u>			
Clear contracts	+	+	+
Negotiation	+	+	+
Trusting relationship	+	+	+
Three signatures	0	+	0
Supervisees steer agenda	+	+	+
Supervisees choose clients discussed	0	0	+
Clients informed of supervision	0	0	+
Reporting safety concerns	+	+	+
Keeping more detailed reports of critical incidents	+	+	0
Legal liability covered	+	+	+
<u>What should change?</u>			
Nothing	0	0	+
More detailed reports of critical incidents	0	0	+
FACTORS	SUPERVISORS		SUPERVISEES
	MANAGERS	NON-MANAGERS	

Things useful to supervisees and/or clients	0	+	+
Standards of ANZASW	+	+	+
Clarity about the purpose for agencies	+	+	0
Using a template	+	+	0
<u>What they would hate to lose?</u>			
Open and honest supervision	+	+	+
Feeling of safety in supervision	0	0	+
Relationship between supervisor And supervisee	0	0	+
Professional autonomy/ creativity	0	+	0

KEY

- 0** unimportant or not mentioned
- +
- +

One supervisee said they would change to keep more detailed notes if a critical incident arose, whereas supervisors mostly said that they already did this.

Supervisees put more emphasis on clients in their discussion, saying that they had control over which clients they chose to discuss in supervision and some mentioned they had informed their clients of the identity of their supervisor and that they may discuss that client in supervision. Some supervisors thought that there should be more clarity about the purpose of records, especially for organisations, a subject not mentioned by supervisees. There was agreement in both groups that ANZASW

should change its practice standards to include detailed discussion on and practice guidelines for record keeping.

Management supervisors differed from non-management supervisors on only three items: the non-managers agreed that three parties (supervisor, supervisee and organisation) currently signed the supervision contract, some non-managers wanted change to be useful to both supervisees and clients. They also did not want to lose their professional autonomy and/or creativity if more oversight of record keeping was introduced.

A comparison of supervisors' and supervisees' opinions on who benefits from supervision records written by supervisors is given in Table 5.2.

All groups agreed that supervisees benefited. Management and non-management supervisors articulated the benefit supervision records had for themselves, keeping track of issues and helping process the content of supervision sessions. Supervisees, and some external supervisors, thought that records benefited the clients of the supervisee. It was a management supervisor who thought that the records they kept could be of benefit to their employing organisation.

Table 5.2:

Comparison between supervisors and supervisees on who benefits from supervision records kept by supervisors

WHO BENEFITS	SUPERVISORS		SUPERVISEES
	MANAGERS	NON-MANAGERS	
Supervisors	+	+	0
Supervisees	+	+	+
Indirectly/clients	0	+	+
Indirectly, employing organisation	+	0	0

KEY

0 unimportant or not mentioned

+

+

Table 5.3 looks at differences and similarities between supervisors and supervisees on the topic of changes that may be introduced in future. Both supervisors and supervisees were unanimous that social work practitioners, who are the people engaged in supervision, should steer change. There was strong agreement in both groups that ANZASW had a part to play. In addition, supervisees thought that their clients should have an opportunity to have input into standards for supervision record keeping through focus groups. There was minor opposition by a supervisor to the Social Worker Registration Board and the Ministry of Social Development having any role in steering change, and support from a supervisee for CYFS to be involved. Supervisees proposed that no one group should be involved in isolation and strongly disagreed with people being involved who didn't know social work. Supervisees and to a lesser extent supervisors were agreed that any new system needed to have flexibility, and simplicity was supported by some of each group.

TABLE 5.3:

Comparison between supervisors and supervisees on changes to record keeping in supervision.

WHAT CHANGE	SUPERVISORS	SUPERVISEES
Who steers change?		
Social workers	+	+
Clients	0	+
ANZASW	+	+
Registration Board	-	0
Ministry of Social Development	-	0
CYFS	0	+
No one group	0	+
People who don't know social work supervision	0	-
Flexibility in a new system	+	+
Simplicity in a new system	+	+

KEY

- 0** **unimportant or not mentioned**
- disagreement
- **strong disagreement**
- + some agreement
- + **strong agreement**

Table 5.4 summarises management and non-management supervisor and supervisee opinions of the effects of different types of supervision on the work of supervisees.

There were no differences between managerial and non-managerial supervisors. Supervisees were unanimous that their peer supervision, whether formal or informal, was very valuable in their work. Records were kept of formal peer supervision and available to supervisees, no mention was made of records of informal peer supervision. A few supervisors made mention of peer supervision, as being something that they engaged in themselves. In interviews a member of each of these groups had a concern about the conflict between the oversight of management supervision and developing trust in the supervision relationship. However one of the supervisees in management supervision and one of the management supervisors said that they did in fact have trusting relationships.

Other things that supervisees raised, not shared by supervisors, were the usefulness of being able to share client case notes with their management supervisor, the keeping of client identity confidential in external supervision and the ability to use their supervision as a safe opportunity to vent frustrations, this later was not confined to either form of supervision, and reflected the trust supervisees put in their supervisor to not over-react.

Table 5.4:

Influence of different types of supervision on work of supervisees

TYPE OF SUPERVISION	SUPERVISORS		SUPERVISEES
	MANAGERIAL	NON-MANAGERIAL	
Supervisee peer supervision	0	0	+
Management supervision conflict with trust	+	+	+
Management supervision			
Open client case notes	0	0	+
Safe forum	0	0	+
External supervision			
Client confidentiality	0	0	+
Safe forum	0	0	+

KEY

- 0** **unimportant or not mentioned**
- +** helpful to some
- +** **helpful to all**
- unhelpful to some
- **unhelpful to all**

There were many areas of agreement between supervisors and supervisees. The differences mostly reflected the focus supervisees have on their clients and their own need for supervision to enhance their work, whereas supervisors shared these concerns and also had a focus on the process as well as the content of supervision.

5.5 Agency Supervision Policies

Eight agencies were requested by letter in May 2009 to supply their supervision policies for this research: four were government agencies and four were non-government (NGO). By the end of September 2009 five agencies had replied and three provided some policy material.

Child Youth and Family did not supply a copy of their supervision policy because it was currently under review. They did, however, say that their supervision policy requires that records were kept. They provided a copy of the template used to record a new group supervision process in their agency. This template collects information on specific cases taken to supervision and focuses on continuums between risk of harm and safety or protective factors, and steps to address the risks. It is a tool to assess client safety and form a plan of action rather than a record of supervision interaction.

Anglican Family Care, one of two NGOs who provided material, has a supervision policy that states that supervision is mandatory for all staff, and cultural supervision is available to Maori and Pacific Island workers. The frequency of supervision, and the providers of supervision are defined. Supervisors are offered clinical supervision training. Formal supervision contracts are required, but there is no indication of who signs them. An appendix to their policy manual (adapted from Child Youth and Family material) adds further detail about supervision, which includes the use of a written contract and accurate recording of supervision including:

- Decisions made
- Casework notes

- Tasks agreed to
- Professional and developmental needs
- Informal consultation to go in [client] case notes.

No template for recording supervision was provided as part of the policy material.

The other NGO, Presbyterian Support, provided their supervision policy and other associated policies, for example their privacy policy, and critical incident report system, with a template for recording crucial incidents. The supervision policy links supervision to providing a quality service to clients. The choice of supervisor lies with the supervisee, with the approval of their manager. A three-way contract between supervisee, supervisor and manager is specified. Supervisors are expected to have practice experience and supervision qualifications/experience recognised by the agency. Again record keeping is not mentioned in the policy, but supervision contracts make mention of supervisors keeping a record of supervision in a secure place, with no further guidelines on appropriate content of those records.

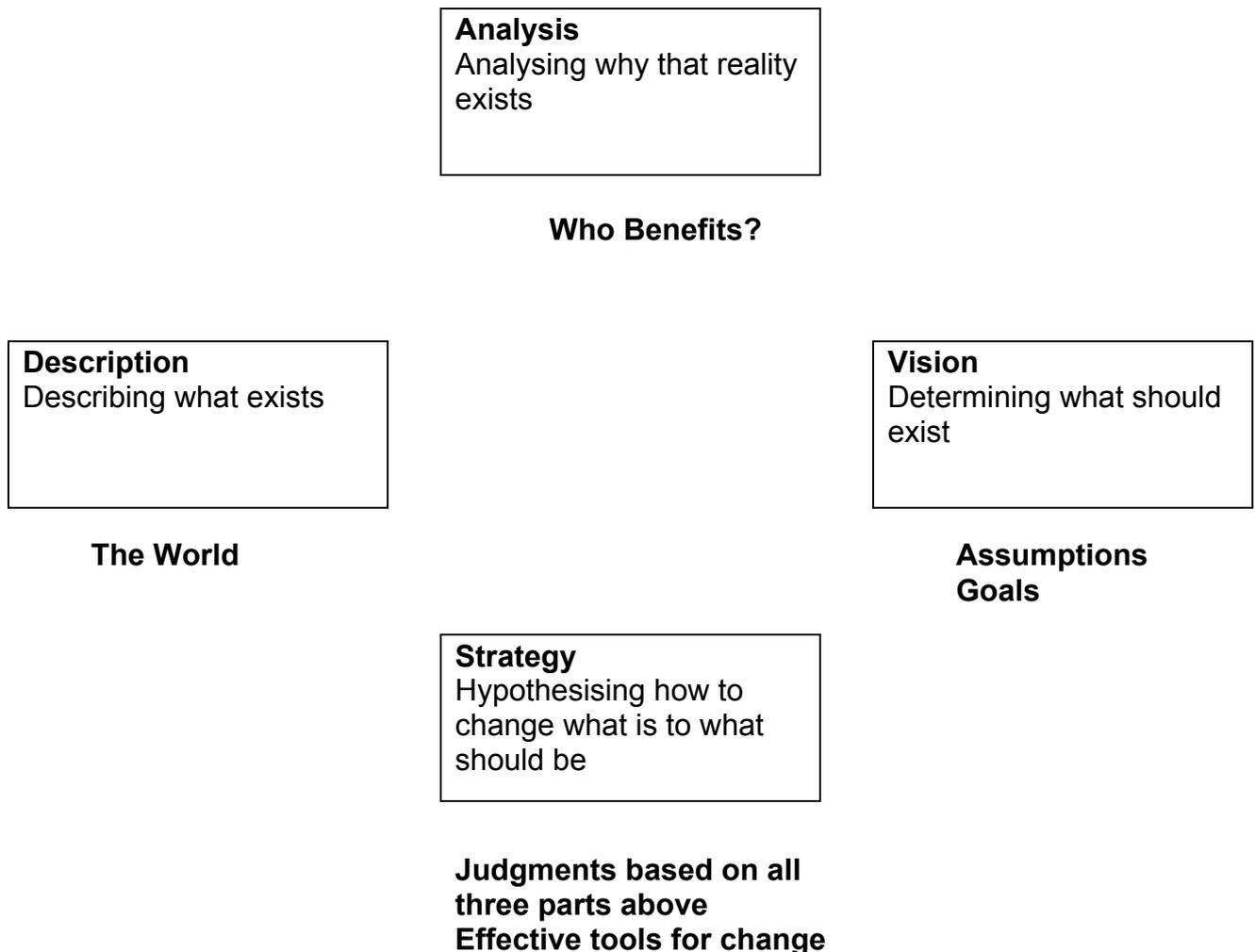
Three agencies were generous enough to contribute some of their supervision policy material to this research. Although the two NGO supervision policies did not make reference to record keeping, other policy material from both agencies did mention record keeping. The Anglican Family Care Policy material based on Child Youth and Family guidelines detailed what the agency expected in the content of record keeping. Presbyterian Support did not offer this sort of guidance, but did specify how the privacy of records was to be taken care of. Both these agencies had clarity in policies that protect client safety, through transferring material to the client record.

CHAPTER 6 - ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter an analysis of the data gathered in this study on supervision record keeping will be undertaken, using Bunch's (1983) Model for Theory. The data will be analysed in four parts: description, analysis, envisioning the ideal future and strategising change.

**Figure 6.1 Bunch's (1983:251-2)
MODEL FOR THEORY**



I will also use constructivism and Foucault's (1980) ideas about power and resistance to examine power relationships in supervision. The sources of power identified in the literature and data collection are: supervisors, supervisees, clients, agencies, the ANZASW and the SWRB. This analysis will look at where power lies in the present situation or will lie in the envisioned ideal future situation and what those power balances mean for social work supervision and for record keeping. This includes debating questions such as what the power balance means for achieving the purpose of supervision for supervisees and clients and how supervision record keeping can best contribute to Tsui's (2005) dual and sometimes conflicting supervision tasks of monitoring and developing social work staff.

6.2 Analysis Tools

As described in Figure 6.1 Bunch's (1983) Model for Theory goes beyond description and analysis of the current situation to include visioning what should be, and developing a strategy to change from the present situation to the ideal envisioned future. The activism of this approach sits well with the social change aspect of social work and with my own desire to use action research techniques. It also provides a means of analysing the in depth contributions gathered from experienced practitioners in this research. Tsui (1997:49) concluded that empirical social work supervision research is still in an "embryonic stage" as many of the 30 studies he found are exploratory, and most are cross-sectional sample surveys. His vision of how to change the present situation is to encourage researchers and supervisors to "strive jointly to build up formal theories which are grounded empirically and constructing practice theories from the wisdom of experienced practitioners" (p.49). This research and the analysis of the results attempts to be part of that change.

Is social work supervision in policies and legislation confined to a hierarchical explanation: locating the power of oversight in social work practice with the supervisor in a supervisor/supervisee dyad? Using constructivism as an alternative viewing of the power relations in supervision is one example of visioning, and one that offers a richer understanding of the more complex nuances of supervision.

Cooper (2000) proposes that the constructivist approach would include all parties to supervision interpreting the process, instead of relying only on the person in a hierarchy who has authority vested in them. In developing a strategy for change I will incorporate a constructivist approach into the Bunch Model to identify which parties holding power over supervision: supervisors, supervisees, clients, agencies, the

ANZASW representing the profession and the SWRB as a regulating body for legislation, are best placed to undertake which actions.

The other analysis tool used here is the work of Foucault (1980) on power relations. Foucault's work is relevant to analysing supervision record keeping because he proposed that members in the higher levels of hierarchies held power over workers in lower levels through constant observation and recording ('the gaze') and the subsequent compliance internalised by the recipients of 'the gaze'. The process of moving from responding to the external 'gaze' of the supervisor to internalising 'the gaze' is inherent in the experience gained in professionalising social workers. It is the aim of the development role of supervision to foster this self-monitoring by workers (American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work, 2004; Tsui, 2005). The external use of 'the gaze' represents the monitoring function of supervision. It was contained in the origins of supervision according to O'Donoghue (2003), but the workers in the lower levels of a hierarchy did not always comply with expectations. Such workers can resist the use of power over them (Foucault, 1980) and gain power in creative ways in the social work profession through their knowledge of the day-to-day work of their organisation. They are described by Jones and May (1992:272) as "street-level bureaucrats" who, contrary to organisational theory, which perceives power as resting in bureaucrats in the upper levels of the hierarchy, gain power by having substantial autonomy in their work with the organisation's clients. Therefore it is important to look at how the present and possible future approaches to supervision and record keeping in supervision influence the balance of power and use of resistance in supervision. Ultimately, we have to ask whether these approaches help or hinder the service to clients and the development of the social worker?

6.3 Application of Bunch's Model to Supervision Record Keeping Research

6.3.1 Introduction

Briefly, the analysis will apply Bunch's (1983) model to social work supervision record keeping as follows:

1. Describe what is currently happening in supervision record keeping now
2. Analyse why that reality exists including the presence of power and resistance amongst the six influential groups of participants: supervisors, supervisees, clients, agencies, ANZASW and the SWRB.
3. Envision what should exist and how the vision will influence power and resistance amongst the participants to supervision
4. Strategise the steps to be taken to achieve what should exist, including the contributions of the six groups of participants and the mechanisms that could be used to achieve the desired change.

6.3.2 Describing what currently exists

The situation that currently exists in Aotearoa New Zealand with respect to social work supervision and record keeping is a reflection of multiple influences: pre-registration local practices; political, and public pressure to reduce risk to social work clients; pressure to professionalise social work; and international practice impacting on the legislation and post-legislation changes. The Social Workers Registration Act 2003 established the SWRB. Regulations produced by the SWRB, which give some detail to the Act, have been quite recent. The *Code of Conduct for Social Workers* was published in 2005 (SWRB, 2005a) and *Supervision Expectations* in 2007 (SWRB, 2007a). Policy changes in ANZASW have been even more recent, with the *Competency Handbook* being revised in 2008 (ANZASW, 2008a) and the Supervision

Policy redrafted (ANZASW, 2008b) and approved in June 2009. A small number of agencies responded to the request to provide their supervision policy material for this research. This means that it is not possible to make any definitive statements about how well agency policies are doing the job left to them by the SWRB and ANZASW.

Firstly I will look briefly at what the research found about the current situation in supervision and record keeping. Supervisors and supervisees commented on how there is now more formal recognition of supervision and that this is particularly evident in the supervision contracts.

[T]he organisation has become more focused on supervision contracts and that supervision really is happening.

1-IP

One supervisee commented there was little or no record keeping of supervision prior to the debate and introduction of registration for social workers.

[T]here are actually records kept [now]. Five years ago it was purely conversation, there was no record of the conversation at all so supervision was very much just at the talking level and anything that was written down wasn't a planned or structured part of the session.

7-IM

So the changes experienced by participants were towards more formal systems being put in place alongside the introduction of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003. This puts more power in the hands of the record keepers (Margolin, 1997) as their records become the official ones for the agency.

The results of this research into the current situation for social work supervision record keeping show that there was universal agreement from the research participants that supervision contracts, at least between supervisor and supervisee, were in place. Such contracts were a valued part of the supervision relationship.

Another aspect of supervision that is currently valued by supervisees and supervisors is the trusting relationship, which appeared with strong agreement in both groups of supervisors and the supervisee group. In addition, all three groups strongly agreed they would hate to lose open and honest supervision. Even though there is a tension between this finding and the fact that only supervisees strongly agreed they would hate to lose the relationship between themselves and their supervisor, the tension may not be as difficult as it seems. The interviewees were not responding to fixed questions, but to open questions, in this case “What they would hate to lose?” Supervisees not wanting to lose a feeling of safety and the relationship they have with their supervisor may have to do with the difficulty some supervisees had experienced when having to change supervisors because of changes in workplaces. This point would need more probing to elucidate the thinking behind the differences. Due to the researcher’s inexperience the supervisor focus group didn’t end up providing data to address this issue. The trusting relationship between supervisee and supervisor allows supervisees to honestly examine their practice, and therefore to gain the most from the supervision.

Supervisees stated that they valued peer supervision for the safety of the forum it provided and because of the multiple perspectives offered. Agency policies protect client safety with records kept in client files or on personnel files, and all three groups strongly agreed that current record keeping outside of supervision worked well now. Safety issues were also included in supervision contracts along with reporting requirements in these situations. Both internal and external supervisors’ practice is to involve supervisees in formulating those reports, and also in wording supervision reviews.

The cultural adviser in this study did not keep routine records of supervision sessions, but gave their own notes to the supervisees. In many ways cultural supervision concentrates more on organisational issues in the supervisee's practice, working to overcome institutional racism and gain recognition of Treaty of Waitangi Article 2 rights (Ruwhiu, 2001). Eruera's emphasis on different iwi (tangata whenua) having their own interpretation of kaupapa Maori supervision leads to the need to develop multiple definitions of 'best practice' in supervision and in recording what happens in supervision sessions. Because the emphasis is not directly on client work, kaupapa Maori supervision is hard to interpret in relation to the social worker registration legislation, which comes from a dominant western culture definition of supervision.

The current social work supervision situation uncovered in this study was largely considered to be 'best practice' by participants. The different expectations of record keeping in different supervision situations suggest that my use of the term 'best practice' was naïve: using the term 'good practices' instead would acknowledge the pluralistic nature of supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand and be in line with Kadushin and Harkness' (2002) research that there is no particular model of supervision that equates with good supervision.

This research suggests some aspects of supervision record keeping should be changed to achieve 'best practice' or 'good practices'. One was the variability in agency involvement in supervision contracts. Where it did exist it was because external supervisors made it their business to help agencies to develop policies so that they could honour their professional commitment.

The social work supervisor only works where systems of accountability are in place in respect of the agency...
ANZASW (2008a)

Another aspect is in how specific the agency expectations of supervision record keeping were. Supervisors and supervisees were unclear about agency expectations and the agency policies provided for the research varied, with Anglican Family Care and, by implication, Child Youth and Family policies providing clear expectations of the content of supervision records, while Presbyterian Support policies left it to the supervisor/supervisee, with the notable exception of safety issues or critical incidents. The supervisor/interviewee who commented that some very good agency policies were still in draft form, was supported by the Child Youth and Family response to the policy request, where they did not provide a copy of their supervision policy because it was currently under review. The absence of discussion of these issues in the social work literature has meant that good policies exist in isolation, unable to influence other agencies and their workers.

Morrell (2008) noted a recent increased incidence of agency supervision contracts indicating a trend in that direction. However, she sees agency contracts as being rather fixed, whereas contracts between supervisors and supervisees are living documents changing over time. There was little evidence in this research of agency policies being influential in aspects of present supervision record keeping practice, other than in contracts.

From this research new employees were no more likely to be intensively supervised than established workers. The exception was students on placement as part of the Bachelor of Social and Community Work requirements, where university protocols

shaped the nature of the records kept. The Social Worker Registration Board has adopted both a recognised qualification and practical experience as indicators of competence for graduate social workers.

[Practical experience is defined as] 2000 hours supervised practice, post qualification... Evidence of both the number of hours worked and the supervision arrangement will be required when providing proof of practical experience. It is expected that the supervision criteria will meet acceptable professional criteria... A period of supervised practice following qualification complements the knowledge, skills and practical experience gained during the programme of study.

SWRB (2007b:5)

This stipulation looks similar to those of the US state regulatory boards for licensure candidates (i.e. new graduates) which determines how much supervision, the ratio of supervision to professional work, and types of supervision and qualifications of supervisors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). But in Aotearoa New Zealand the legal responsibility of supervisors is not defined as clearly as in the USA, where the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (2004) makes clear the responsibility of the supervisor for the client work of post-graduate social workers in a two-year period of close supervision, extensively documented, until they become independent practitioners. The SWRB (2007b) expects supervisors to be registered social workers and, where there is group supervision, at least one member of the group is to be a registered social worker; but it also recognises that it will be difficult to meet this standard for a time.

The SWRB recognizes that it may take some time for sufficient numbers of practitioners to become registered before this requirement could be fully implemented.

SWRB (2007a:4)

There is provision in Aotearoa New Zealand legislation that allows for the use of peer or external supervision for social workers where a suitable professional supervisor is

lacking within the agency employing them. External supervisors in this study were uniformly unaware of the identity of the clients of their supervisees and had no access to clients' records, which Morrell (2001) explains is because external supervision is consultation. This leaves a gap in the safety of clients for those supervisees in external professional supervision who are in the period of demonstrating that they have gained sufficient practical experience.

Both supervisors and supervisees in the study used theory in supervision, although it was not considered more important than the focus of the work to supervisees, or a range of things like trust and relationship building, the cultural component and issues of power, to supervisors. Supervisors used theories that explained the supervision relationship, whereas supervisees used practice theories. This aligned with O'Donoghue *et al* (2005) who found that practice models were preferred over supervision-based models in supervision. Munson's (2002) explanation of practice theory accounts for the focus of supervisees on practice theory with respect to clients versus the supervisors' practice theory with respect to theory of supervision. The importance of including theory and record keeping in this study was to gauge how theory might distort the interpretation of the record by an outsider if the use of theory was not well documented. However the participants had never had their supervision records read by anyone other than the supervisee, and sometimes not even by them.

Research participants were generally comfortable that supervision and current record keeping practice met the development needs of supervisees and legal and safety needs for clients. Some areas of practice that need clarification of expectations are:

- the purpose of record keeping for agencies

- expectations of external supervision and reporting on that supervision back to agencies and
- supervision record keeping for new graduates gaining practical experience for registration.

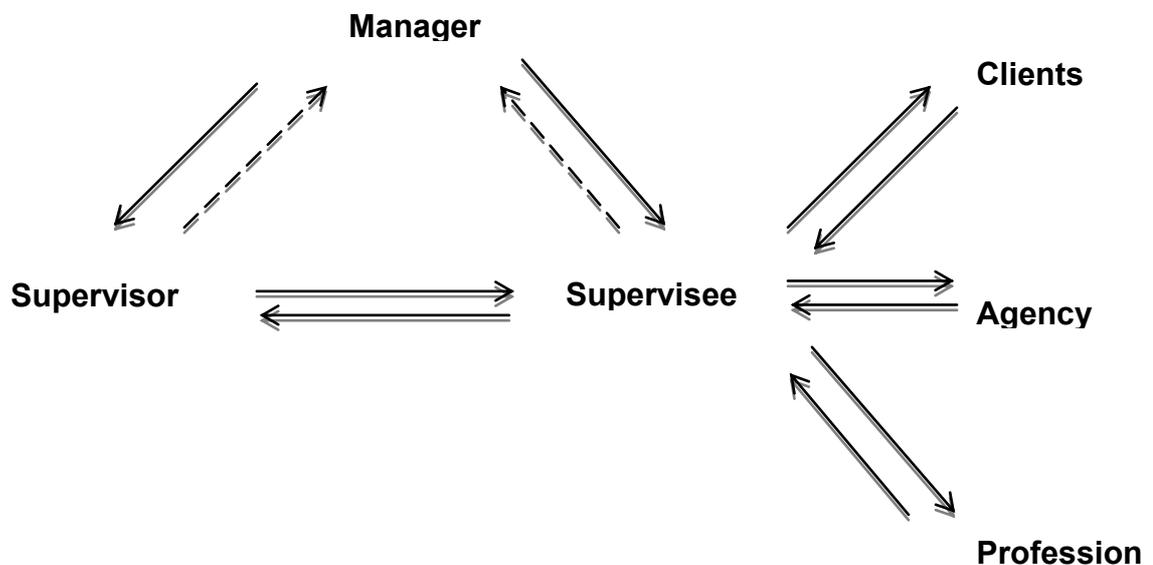
Since outsiders had not read the supervision records of the participants of this study the role of theory in supervision records was not given any emphasis in focus groups, or followed up in this analysis.

6.3.3 Analysing why that reality exists

In terms of the things that are currently working well for supervisors and supervisees, one of the main ones is the value of a trusting supervision relationship. Browne and Bourne (1996) and Kilminster and Jolly (2000) have agreed about the importance of relationship. Kadushin and Harkness (2002) proposed three functions of supervision: administrative, educational and supportive, the later two functions could be subsumed by Tsui's (2005) developmental task. Kadushin and Harkness (2002) described research, which included, as one of the characteristics of a good supervisor, an ability to convey acceptance and trust, enhancing supervisee autonomy encouraging worker development. Their research also showed a reduction of burnout for workers with good supportive supervision in place. This latter aspect of supervision indicates the importance of what one supervisee called "letting off steam about what's happening" (11E) as a means of venting emotions and concerns. In order for supervisees to learn from their practice they need to feel safe to take their uncertainties and emotional responses into supervision. Trusting in that safety, allows supervisees to open their entire practice to their own and their supervisor's scrutiny or (in Foucault's (1980) term) 'gaze', thereby allowing monitoring of the worker to be effective and

interactive with their development. This is illustrated in Figure 6.2. In the following figures solid arrows indicated strong lines of communication, while broken arrows indicate weaker communication, with mixed arrows showing power imbalance. Blockages in communication are indicated by vertical lines across the arrows.

Figure 6.2 POWER and COMMUNICATION in OPEN SUPERVISION

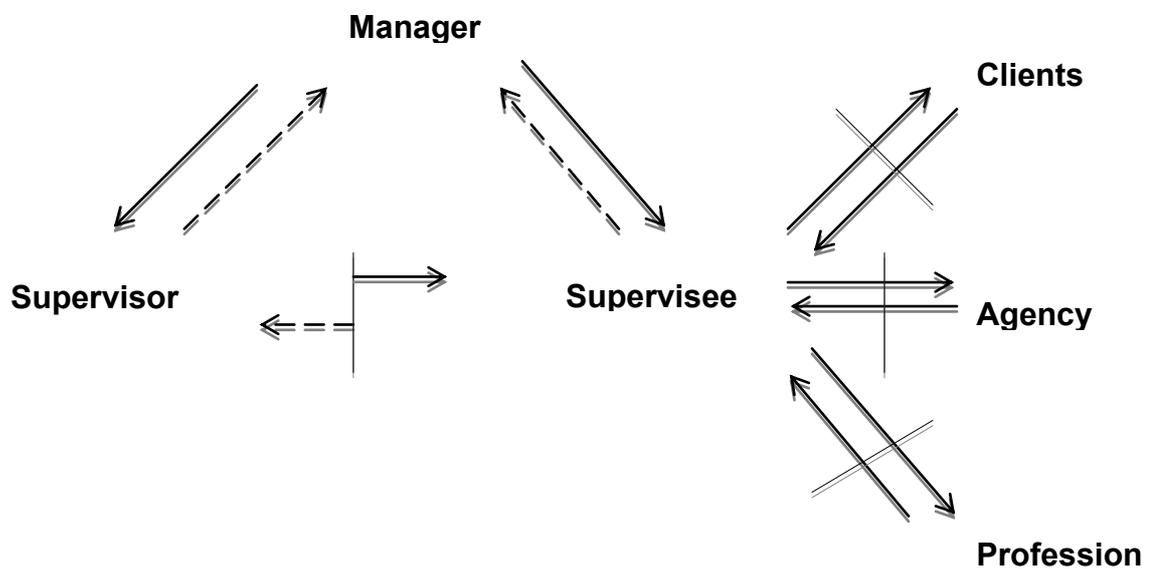


Where trust in the supervision relationship exists, the power balance is very even between supervisor and supervisee and the communication flows in both directions. It flows from supervisor to supervisee, but also from the supervisee disclosing details of their practice to the supervisor and taking insights from supervision back into the three areas of their working life:

1. their client work
2. their relationships with their organisation and colleagues and
3. their professional relationships.

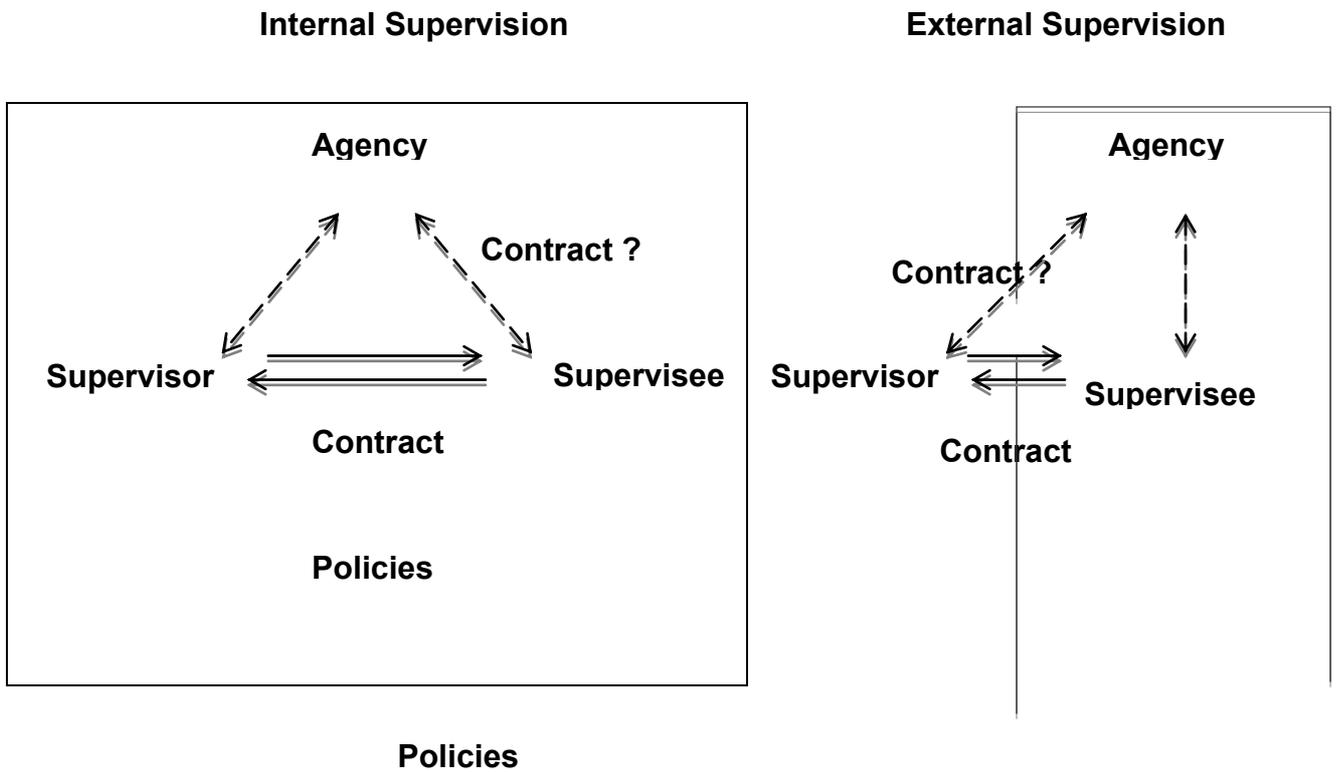
However, where supervisors exert power over their supervisees and don't show trust in their ability to develop and make good practice decisions independently, supervisees can operate the resistance that Foucault (1980) described and block the flow of communication, by only disclosing the parts of their practice that make them look good. This is illustrated in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3 POWER and RESISTANCE in SUPERVISION



This blockage in communication then prevents learning from discussions in supervision and blocks lessons from flowing back into the supervisee's practice with clients, organisation, colleagues and profession. In short, it stops everyone involved from benefiting as they would when the supervisee develops to their full professional capability. Morrell (2001) wrote that in management supervision supervisors exert power over supervisees through things like performance appraisals and employment decisions, leading to less openness in supervision. As illustrated in Figure 6.4, supervisors in internal supervision are bound by the same agency policies as their supervisees.

Figure 6.4 INTERNAL VERSUS EXTERNAL SUPERVISION



Although the participants in this research did trust their management supervisors, they acknowledged resistance from supervisees could arise in different, less trusting relationships. In these cases only a small part of their practice would be brought to supervision thus leading to the reduction in learning opportunities as illustrated in

Figure 6.3, and the consequences of this are explained by one of the research supervisees.

I think that would be doing our clients a real disservice if we can't be that open and honest about how our work is affecting us

7-IM

In contrast, external supervision leaves the link between supervision and agency policies to the professional integrity of the supervisor, unless agency supervision contracts make clear statements on the subject. In this research study one external supervisor stated that they made the effort to engage with agency policies when they set up supervision.

If the approach is from a manager asking me to be a supervisor for staff I will meet with them and take a draft contract to discuss. I will ask them about their mission and for a copy of the worker's job description. I ask what expectations they have of me. I discuss reporting requirements: do they want to meet yearly, or do they want a report? I like to have conversations so that everyone is clear about what supervision means and involves. I have discussion about what is in the contract and who signs it and how often it will be reviewed, and by whom. One thing that I have now decided to ask for is the agency policy on supervision.

10E

The participants in this research probably self-selected because they were open about their social work practice and wanted to learn more. So, not surprisingly, they had formed open and trusting relationships between supervisor and supervisee. This was confirmed directly by the paired supervisees' contributions in both interviews and the focus group and indirectly by self-reports of the other supervisors. However, this viewing of the research results may not generalise into all management supervision relationships, and was not supported in discussion by Morrell (2001) and Morrison

(2005) about an imbalance towards administration where in-line managers also provide professional supervision.

Some supervisors were cautious about losing the privacy of their relationship with their supervisees if and when agencies became more involved in supervision records.

Or if I was to leave the organisation I would have a clean out and destruction of that record. You see I regard that record as mine rather than the agency's.

1-IM

If an agency was to say that every record that was kept between me and the supervisee had to go through the agency then of course that's going to change the way that we're going to do records as supervisor and supervisee. That may then produce a visible record and an invisible record. Nothing new under the sun here is there really?

9-E

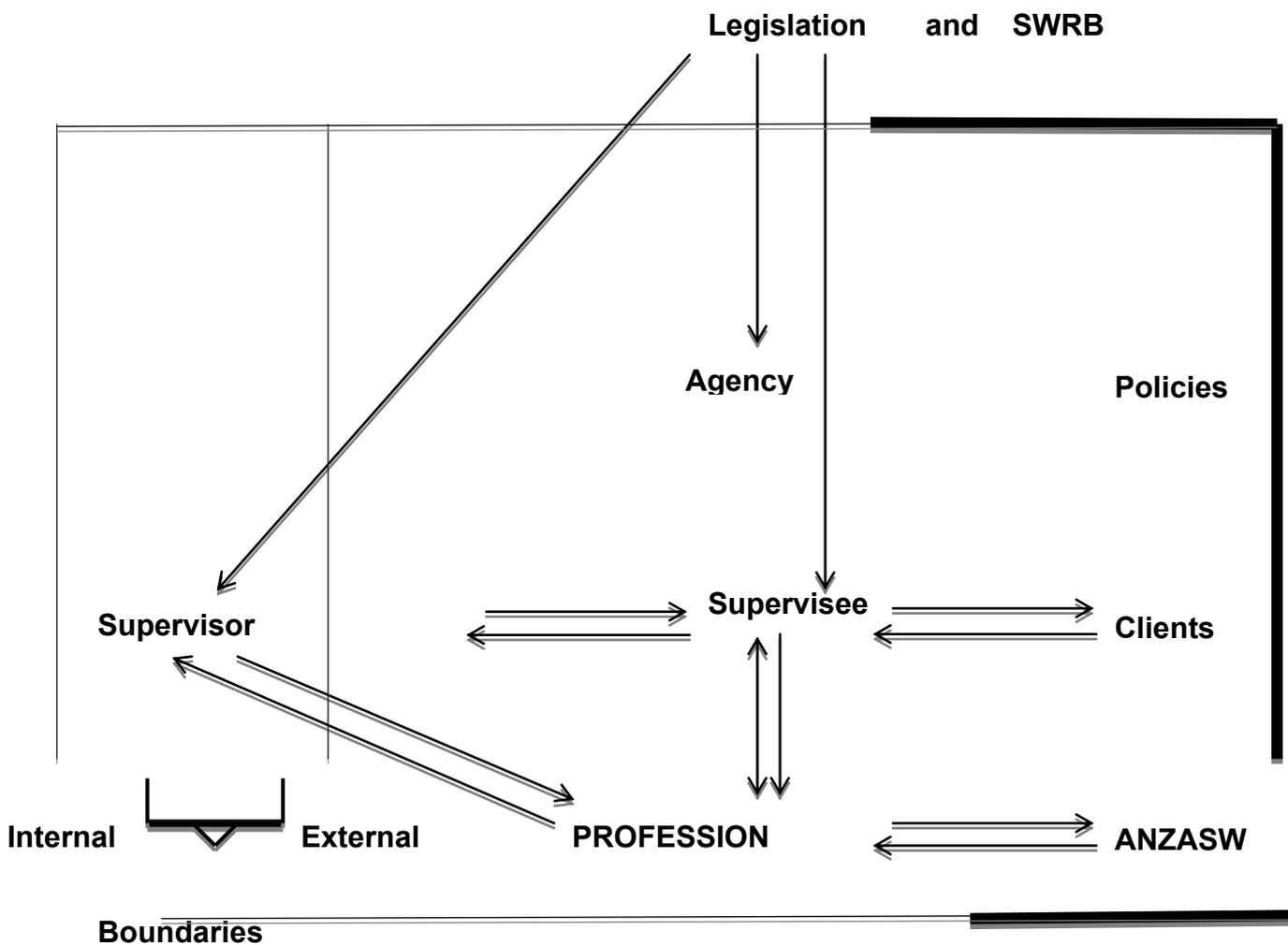
This choice to record or not record, to make visible to agencies or not to make visible to agencies, the private content of supervision is a powerful position for supervisors. Such a position can be used in the interests of supervisees and of clients where their best interests are aligned, but it requires a choice on the part of supervisors to disclose some of that private content where safety is at risk. Supervisors have some complex professional decisions to make as to where their loyalties lie, and sometimes not keeping records is a way of supervisors retaining their creativity by not becoming a part of the bureaucratic machinery of 'the gaze'.

In the USA supervisors of new graduates need to operate 'the gaze' more intently and offer more feedback to protect the safety of clients, organisations and the profession in the period where practice experience is being accumulated (American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work, 2004). For the protection of all parties involved in supervision this should be recorded carefully. This need not lead to a lack of trust

in the supervision relationship, unless it is perceived by supervisees as imposed arbitrarily by some supervisors and not others.

O'Donoghue (2002) saw the privacy of the supervisor/supervisee relationship in negative terms, silencing the voices of the other parties illustrated in Figure 6.4 and 6.5.

Figure 6.5 SWRB and ANZASW POSITION ON SUPERVISION



The ANZASW (2008b) Supervision Policy defers to agency policy, determining supervision as “mandated by agency policy” (3.4) and “a shared responsibility between the supervisee, supervisor and agency” (3.6).

The same hands-off approach is taken by the SWRB. In their *Supervision Expectations for Registered Social Workers* the expectation is that the profession, the employing and educating agencies will provide the detail of supervision expectations through their policies.

The professional body (ANZASW), most service agencies employing social workers, and educational providers arranging practicums have clearly stated policies regarding supervision... It is not in the interest of the Board to define “supervision” as the Board recognizes the definitions that are approved by the profession, social service agencies and social work educators.

SWRB (2007a)

These statements have left policy development up to agencies, and shielded agencies from professional interventions indicated by the heavy barriers In Figure 6.5 between the ANZASW, SWRB and agencies’ policies.

New graduates (though it is not clear whether any supervisors in the research had supervised any new graduates for the purpose of registration) were not treated differently from experienced workers by supervisors in this study. Evidence (from the literature and an inquiry about agency policies as part of this study) is that at least some agencies in Aotearoa New Zealand have not yet caught up with their responsibility in this area. A scan of the practice journal of the New Zealand Children and Young Persons Service: *Social Work Now*, from 2003 to the present, and of the journal of ANZASW from 2000 to the present has not yielded any articles on

changes to agency policies pertaining to supervision. More discussion by the social work profession in the literature would flow through to training and prompt change by agencies and individual social workers. The professional bodies have left policy development to agencies. From comments of both internal and external supervisors (the latter with experience of several agencies each) and from the two agencies that provided policies, agencies have not identified this area as of risk to clients and agency operations. This may have arisen because of our low awareness of legal liability in this country with our long history under the Accident Compensation legislation of not attributing blame (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008).

The other problem with the stance of ANZASW and SWRB is that the complexity of supervision types is not recognisable in the legislation. In particular, external supervisors who are private practitioners are not bound by agency policies, though the people they supervise will be so bound unless they too are in private practice. Peer supervision was valued by supervisees in this study.

in your ordinary supervision there's just two minds, but in peer support or peer work there's many minds. And also within my agency everyone works from different models and different backgrounds, whether your counsellors or your social workers and it's quite valuable to get the other people's opinions

Supervisee focus group

It seems to operate informally with little agency oversight. Hardcastle (1991, cited in Tsui 2005) pointed out that peer supervision doesn't take care of client vulnerability or organisational liability in a critical situation. This lack of definition leaves some parts of supervision outside the professionally imposed standards. And these are the very types of supervision that O'Donoghue (2002) says have increased in number over recent years under the influence of new managerialist policies.

The main reason for including the inquiry about theory in this study was to examine the way in which theory might influence the things supervisors attend to in supervision and what is recorded. The concern was that theory can shape the records kept, and if the theories were not made explicit in the record it would be difficult for an outsider to interpret what the record might mean. As it turned out participants had not experienced having records read by outsiders even though management supervision pairs acknowledged that it could happen in internal supervision. Of course any records could conceivably be subpoenaed in a court (Swain, 2002). However, the interviews in this study uncovered that many agencies have left such matters in the hands of supervisors, by not developing policy, which makes the agency purpose of supervision record keeping unclear to them.

All of the above leaves the power to define supervision very much in the hands of supervisors and supervisees. But privacy has a positive role in enhancing learning. Tsui's (2005) definition of supervision recognised the twin tasks of professional development and monitoring service quality. The question is how to maintain sufficient privacy in the relationship to maximise worker growth, yet protect the safety of the clients, the agency and the profession from on-going poor practice. The tension in record keeping relating to privacy is who will have the power to read supervision records? And this, according to my participants is not well defined in agency policy.

6.3.4 Determining what should exist

Based on the research results from this study and the reading of the relevant literature the following points highlight the main features of what should exist in supervision record keeping 'good practices'. It must be remembered that this is a small qualitative study and it can only be an indication of where further research and debate could concentrate.

1. Retain contracts between supervisors and supervisees and peer supervisors as living documents during the supervision process
2. Ensure three-way contracts with reporting feedback loops to agencies are a consistent feature of external supervision, and these contracts have clear processes for handling safety issues for clients, supervisees and agencies
3. Provide support and training for supervisors to help develop agency policies to ensure their professional accountability
4. For experienced workers who have become registered by completing their post graduate supervised practice, keep supervision private to enhance self-monitoring of worker's practice, with pre-contracted exceptions for safety reasons where reporting on issues to a more senior person is done with the knowledge of the supervisee. Supervision records would remain a tool for supervisors and supervisees to use to manage the process, and would not generally be expected to be read by anyone outside the supervision relationship.
5. For new graduates, clarify the reporting expectations of supervisors of practical experience and who can be a supervisor. It is difficult to see how to safeguard the clients of new graduates if professional supervisors of the client workload do not have access to case files.

6. Clarify expectations in legislation of differing supervision situations, for example external, cultural, or peer supervision.

Power relations in the envisioned future would undergo some subtle and not too dramatic transformations in the relationships between ANZASW and the SWRB and agencies employing social workers. In order to minimise the resistance of supervisees to the Foucauldian 'gaze', experienced practitioners and their supervisors would retain the privacy of their relationship, a powerful position, but subject to the input of clients on how to ensure their safety. One of the means of protecting client safety is the client complaint process. If O'Donoghue's (2002) point about the loss of the client 'voice' in supervision is to be addressed, clients need to be informed of the name and contact details of their social worker's supervisor. This move alters the dynamic between external supervisor and supervisee to include an overt element of surveillance and external 'gaze' rather than a benign development of the worker and recognition of the internalised 'gaze'. Some parts of 'the gaze' are powerful. For example the agency has power over the worker through 'the gaze' of their management supervisor. ANZASW and the SWRB also have power over professional social workers through their disciplinary processes.

However, where organisations at present have been left to develop their own policies on supervision by ANZASW and the SWRB, that would be expected to change with consultation from all those affected. ANZASW would develop more detailed supervision policies of its own, along with training in policy development and implementation for supervisors. ANZASW (2008b) supervision policy currently

refers to contracts including details of the purpose of record keeping and how records will be safeguarded and leaves the power to define the details with the agencies.

Another area that would become more consistent is to tighten up the expectations for external supervisors to report to the managers of their supervisees. Results of this study from interviewees and the very small sample of agency policy show that agencies have not consistently developed policies to clarify these areas of supervision and this has left this task to individual supervisors and their supervisees to record and use supervision records as they have seen fit. The SWRB would clarify expectations of supervisors of new graduates in the period where they are gaining practical experience for registration. This would introduce a hierarchy of power within ‘the gaze’ with new graduates less likely to resist ‘the gaze’ because they experience it as mentoring and lack the power of experience in the work, but experienced social workers have considerably more power to resist ‘the gaze’ of a supervisor because of their experience of the work as was pointed out by the cultural advisor in this study.

I could imagine coming out of a session saying: you need to look at this and do this reading there, so it would be bullet points. Unless, I was hitting some resistance, and that can come from an experienced person more than a junior person.

5-CA

SWRB would include in their clarification what kind of records would be required to provide evidence of the competency of new graduate supervisees, and also clarify any differences in expectations of different types of supervision in terms of legal liability for supervisees’ client practice. These changes would tighten up some gaps in those procedures intended to safeguard safety for clients, without developing an unwieldy system of accountability.

6.3.5 Hypothesising strategy for change

In this section, according to Bunch (1983), the aim is to identify ways of moving from what currently exists to what should exist. It also identifies which groups should participate in the change strategy and how. From the previous sections it was obvious that research participants wanted to retain much of the existing means of conducting supervision and keeping records of that activity. Both supervisors and supervisees wanted the people most involved with supervision to steer the process of change.

Supervisees, supervisors, safe practice.
6-E

My point of reference is always the standards of practice of
the professional association
1-IP

It shouldn't be the Social Work Registration Board. It
shouldn't be Ministry. It would be most helpful to come
from the place of authority, and social work practitioners
have the authority.
9-E

It's probably the supervisor and the supervisee, and
indirectly the client as well, because, they are part of the
reason that you need supervision so that they should be part
of ensuring that their worker is the best possible worker
they could have
7-IM

These groups were defined as supervisors, supervisees, the profession, through its official body ANZASW and, for supervisees in particular, the clients needed to have input. For most of the changes that need to be made it is sufficient to confine the strategy to those groups identified by the participants. However, the safety of clients is alluded to in the Social Workers Registration Act 2003, and the SWRB exists to

interpret that Act. An area that had been left unclear to practitioners by the Act and Regulations, is the supervision of new graduate social workers gaining practical experience. In addition, the word supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand covers a multitude of situations, and the implications of these differences have not been canvassed and clarified in the regulations. Despite one participant in this research resisting the involvement of the SWRB in defining ‘good practices’, these two areas require tighter definition in legislation and therefore require SWRB action.

Table 6.1: Contributions to the development of ‘good practices’ of record keeping by the groups most affected by supervision

Group	Focus of Contributions	Mechanisms
Clients	Ensure client safety Ensure right to quality service	Focus Groups Input into policies ↓
Supervisees	As above, plus Providing support to supervisees Providing a safe forum for supervisee development	Act as change agents Focus groups Input into policies ↓↓
Supervisors	As the two groups above, plus Promote/provide training on supervision and record keeping to staff	Act as change agents Focus groups Input into policies ↓↓↓
Service agencies	Develop clear guidelines on the purpose of supervision records for the agency, who can access them for what purpose	↓↓↓ Consultation and policy development

	Manage reports on safety issues according to agency policies	Use of participatory methods e.g. co-operative inquiry
--	--	--

The process of engaging groups of people involved in supervision in changing record keeping practice is summarised in Table 6.1 above. Strategies to develop ideas about ‘good practices’ in recording supervision, involve participation of the three groups most involved in supervision (supervisors, supervisees and clients). Their ideas feed into policy development of agencies, ANZASW and the SWRB.

6.4 Summary of Analysis

This research has not provided definitive answers to Bunch's question: What should exist? However, it does indicate that multiple 'good practices' could be developed through consulting with the groups most involved with social work supervision. The future of this research topic should include wide spread involvement of social work professionals, clients, employing agencies, and ANZASW and SWRB in cycles of reflection and action.

CHAPTER SEVEN – CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY.

7.1 Introduction

This research set out to pilot the process of investigating current practice in social work supervision record keeping, the effects of changes in legislation and agency policies and to gather practitioners' views on the development of 'best practice' for the future. The initial aim was to undertake a piece of action research, involving supervisors and supervisees in formulating, applying and refining methods of record keeping in supervision. However, the time participants were willing and able to commit to the research meant the revised method used to gather data was individual interviews, with separate focus groups for supervisors and for supervisees, retaining to a degree, the elements of critical reflexivity and democratic decision-making which is a feature of action research. In addition, a representative group of agencies was approached and asked to contribute their supervision policies to the research for analysis. This latter aspect of the research was designed to monitor the extent to which organisations have risen to the challenges presented by SWRB and ANZASW policy decisions to transfer the responsibility for the specifics of supervision policy to agencies.

I have used the data gathered to describe and analyse current social work supervision record keeping practice and to envisage an ideal future with suggestions to strategise change. Woven throughout this summary is an analysis of sites of power in supervision now and how they could change in an ideal future.

7.2 Current Record Keeping Practice

In Aotearoa New Zealand social work and supervision practices have evolved from being informal and not subject to definition by legislation or policy, to the present situation where the introduction of voluntary registration for social workers, has set in chain tighter definitions of some of the parameters of supervision, particularly in contracting supervision. However the regulatory bodies ANZASW and SWRB have left the responsibility for details of supervision to social service agencies, and in many cases, their policies on recording of supervision have not progressed much beyond keeping records of when and with whom it happens. With some exceptions, there is little to no guidance on what the content of record keeping of supervision sessions should cover.

Because of the lack of definition of record keeping in supervision the power lies with the immediate participants in supervision: supervisors and supervisees. Despite the rhetoric from the profession about the need to protect clients of social workers, and the view that supervision plays a large part in ensuring their safety and the quality of service they receive from social workers (Brown & Bourne, 1996; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997; Kadushi & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2003; Tsui, 2005), clients have little involvement in supervision, which has remained largely a private process (O'Donoghue, 2002).

This research shows that members of the supervisor and supervisee focus groups and interviewees believed that the safety of clients is assured by the need to report to the agency when safety is at risk. The question remains: when the risk to safety is not clear-cut, or the social worker lacks the skill to recognise it, or is afraid to reveal areas of weakness in their practice, or when agencies do not have clear reporting back expectations from external supervisors, how well does supervision fulfil the role of ensuring client safety?

Another area where the lack of clarity in policies may present risk to clients, is in the supervision of new graduates and the records kept of their supervision. In the USA there is tight supervision of new graduates covered by legislation (American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work, 2004), which has led to very detailed methods of keeping records of supervision including keeping track of individual clients of social worker supervisees (Falvey et. al., 2002).

In Aotearoa New Zealand a number of factors, including privacy legislation and protecting clients' information may have led to the present legislation having no guidelines on supervision record keeping. Another factor is the presence of comprehensive accident compensation legislation which has reduced the risk of social work practitioners being sued (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008; Morrell, 2001).

The Aotearoa New Zealand Social Workers Registration Act 2003 allows for external supervision where a manager is not able to provide professional social work supervision. However, the protection of the privacy and identity of clients in external supervision, which became apparent from this research, exposes clients in this situation to possible risk because it is not possible to identify individuals.

The research found there was much about current supervision that social work practitioners supported as 'good practices'. Notable aspects were: the privacy and trusting nature of the relationship between supervisee and supervisor, and the use of records (supervision and other agency recording systems) to support and ensure the developmental needs of supervisees were met along with the legal and safety needs of clients. These were highly valued aspects of supervision and participants in the research were hesitant in case change in supervision record keeping might lead to their loss.

7.3 An ideal future for supervision record keeping

Ideally, participants wanted to retain the things they valued in current supervision and record keeping. Involvement of clients in examining supervision practice, and ensuring that they are made aware of who is the professional supervisor of their social worker and how to contact them, puts more power in the hands of clients. The negotiation of contracts between supervisor and supervisee was valued by both parties and required, either professionally or by the agencies. To develop social workers to their potential, it is important to retain the privacy and trust of the supervision relationship and records for experienced practitioners, with contracted exceptions clearly included for safety reasons. External supervision in the future could include routine reports back to agencies, prepared with supervisees. Three areas that could be clarified and improved on are:

- support for supervisors to help agencies develop improved supervision policies and procedures
- clarifications of expectations of supervisors who are working with new graduates engaged in proving their experience in practice to become registered, and
- clarification in legislation of expectations of differing supervision situations like cultural supervision, or peer supervision instead of treating supervision as if it were one homogenous activity.

Two professional bodies: ANZASW and SWRB and the largest employer of social workers, Child Youth and Family should all play a more active role in supporting and encouraging supervisors and agencies to develop their practice. This initiative, along with greater involvement of clients, would swing the balance of power away from the very private supervisory relationships that have been traditional in Aotearoa New Zealand towards a relationship more open to influence from clients and agencies. However, for supervisees to feel safe to explore areas of their practice that have room for improvement, it is important for the development of social workers that the balance does not swing too far. If agency and legislative influence becomes too intrusive then this could lead to a less open and honest supervision relationship, increasing rather than decreasing the risk to clients.

7.4 Strategies for change

This small research study can only provide indications of where future debate and investigation on the topic of supervision record keeping would be productive. More chance for discussion was a clear request from the supervisor focus group.

Participants in this research were clear that change should be a bottom-up process.

They also thought that some consistency would be good, but with the flexibility to have agencies meet standards in their own ways, to account for differences in the types of services different agencies provide, and cultural differences in their client bases and ways of working.

Participants in this research suggested social work practitioners (supervisees and supervisors), with input from clients and from the professional body ANZASW should be involved in change at every level of policy and legislation development, to ensure that proposed changes met the needs of the service users. Change needs to meet the purpose of supervision for social workers and their agencies, to both develop and monitor their work (Tsui, 2005). Although an action research method like cooperative inquiry (Reason 1988) was not possible for this piece of research, it would be an excellent method to use within agencies committed to making sustainable change in their supervision recording procedures. This method involves democratic decision making and could include the 'client voice' (O'Donoghue, 2002)

The involvement of the SWRB, although not mentioned by most research participants, would be essential to clarify expectations around supervision record keeping to meet the requirements of sufficient practical experience post graduation, and have regulations clarify expectations of different types of supervision. Provided that the SWRB drew on the experience of clients, social workers and supervisors in their consultation, the balance of power need not swing so far in the direction of bureaucracy that it undermines a trusting supervisory relationship, and lead to the resistance by social workers as described by Foucault (1980b). Resistance by social workers to bureaucratic power exerted through tighter legislation and policies would have the undesired effect of exposing social work clients to greater rather than less risk to their safety, in direct opposition to the intention of those who hold the power to regulate the law in this country.

7.5 Conclusion

This research set out to find out what was happening now and what ‘best practice’ of record keeping in social work supervision would encompass in the future in the light of the introduction of the registration of social workers.

Most importantly the research highlights the need to retain the privacy of the supervision relationship, in order to retain the valuable element of promoting the development of the skills and knowledge of the supervisee. It also highlights the value of negotiating supervision contracts between supervisors and supervisees. Existing policies used by agencies on reporting safety issues or critical incidents are clear to staff and are considered to protect clients and satisfy legal liability concerns for staff. Supervision records should not be the site of legal accountability for the safety of clients. The trust in the supervision relationship is the foundation on which supervision is based. For supervisees to share their uncertainties with their supervisor they need to be confident that the record will not be scrutinised from a different framework with a different set of eyes at some stage in the future. It is in the best interests of clients and the agencies employing the social workers, that they are supported to develop their skills and resilience to undertake what is often a very difficult job. Critical incidents involving poor practice or the safety of a client should be dealt with as they arise according to agency policies and recorded in the client or employee file in the case of an employed social worker, or for a private practitioner by the professional body the practitioner belongs to.

However, supervision in this country is a very diverse activity and ‘best practice’ would be a misleading term if one standard of record keeping was imposed on all forms of supervision. The legislation lacks clarity in some areas of supervision, which may expose social work clients and social workers and agencies to risk. The three areas that should be addressed by increasing the involvement of regulatory bodies like ANZASW and SWRB and the major employer Child Youth and Family are:

- support to supervisors and agencies to improve their policies and procedures where needed
- clarification of expectations of reporting external supervision to employing agencies, and
- expectations about supervision of new graduate social workers in the period where they are demonstrating they have sufficient practical experience to become registered.

Social worker trainers and ANZASW and Child Youth and Family could all encourage debate about and documentation of ‘good practices’ of social work supervision record keeping in the local literature in order to aid the spread of good policies and practices amongst the diverse social work employment settings present in this country. This would deliver a better service to Aotearoa New Zealand social service clients without introducing rigid legislation along the lines of that used in clinical social work services in the USA.

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APPENDIX A

Towards the Development of “Best Practice” for Recording of Social Work Supervision in Aotearoa after the Introduction of Registration

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for the Master of Social Welfare degree. Public concern in Aotearoa/New Zealand about the safety of social work clients has led to the introduction of voluntary social work registration legislation (Social Worker Registration Act 2003), which has reinforced the importance of the supervisory relationship, placing it squarely in the realm of the legal accountability system of social workers. The major aim of the project is to find out what effect the introduction of the Social Work Registration Board Code of Conduct is having on the recording of supervision and how standards of “best practice” in light of this legislation can be developed.

What Type of Participant is being sought?

Men and women social workers, providing supervision or supervisees, are sought as participants. Supervisors may be a line-manager, or an internal or an external professional supervisor. Supervisors and supervisees from any ethnic group are relevant to the study

What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project you will be asked to participate in an interview lasting 1-1.5 hours, using open questions and impromptu questions probing for further detail to address the topics covered in “**What is the aim of this project?**” Interviewees and other interested members of the social work profession will be invited to attend a focus group near the end of the research to discuss the results of the analysis of the interviews, and add further information and suggestions about the development of standards of “best practice” for record keeping in social work supervision.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and choose not to participate in any part of the discussion without disadvantage to yourself of any kind. If you withdraw from the focus group after making contributions you will be able to decide what will happen to your contributions.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

The information collected will be in the form of written records and audiotapes. Each participant will have access to the written transcript of his or her own interview. This project includes the use of open-ended questions, which will shape the way in which group discussion develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the most of the areas to be explored, the committee has not been able to review all the precise questions to be used. In the event that the line of questioning does develop in a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable with, you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

The themes will be gathered from the information collected with no names or identifying information (eg. employing organization etc.) attached. Suggestions for standards of “best practice” will be produced and commented on further in the focus group.

The information you share will remain confidential. People having access to the data will be the researchers (the only ones to have access to the names of participants), transcribers, typists and staff making photocopies. The results of the project may be published and will be available as a thesis in the library, but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity. You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project should you wish.

The data collected will be stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately by the researcher, except that, as required by the University research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about our project or find that discussion has uncovered a need for support, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Margaret Gillanders	or Peter Walker
student researcher	Supervisor
	Department of Social Work and Community Development
486 1422	479 7651

This project has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee

APPENDIX B - Towards the Development of “Best Practice” for Recording of Social Work Supervision in Aotearoa after the Introduction of Registration

CONSENT FORM FOR SUPERVISOR AND SUPERVISEE PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage.
3. No client information will be collected. Personal and organisational identifying information (names, contact information and audio-tapes) will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed.
4. This project involves some open-ended questioning where the precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been fully determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview or focus group develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
5. I am aware that I do not have to offer any information that I feel uncomfortable to talk about.
6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the library, but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity
7. I understand that reasonable precautions have been taken to protect data transmitted by email but the security of the information cannot be guaranteed.

I agree to take part in this project.

Ethnicity:

Iwi:

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Signature of Manager/Board member if relevant)

..... (Date)

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX C

Plan of sessions for Action Research:

- Session 1 Introduction Supervisors and supervisees
What do you expect of the research – and fears and hesitations
Cooperative Inquiry – what is it?
Round rules –includes we are all active participants
- * get everyone to engage in questioning people, exploring each others' practice
 - * confidentiality of information shared
 - * what outcomes hope to achieve, what is it for?
 - * How and what we are going to record (Perhaps involve the departmental assistant as a recorder/not a participant, blank slate, non-judgemental).
 - * My agenda as the researcher
 - * Not sure where we are going until we get there.
 - * They will be the beneficiaries of the research
 - * Client and the management are the elephants ie not in the room but present in the research.
- Biographies in relation to supervision, theories that guide us and shape what we do.
Ask for information on policies and formats for recording sessions, academic ideas (go to me and I circulate before the third meeting)
Do you want to get together with the other group at the end, or exchange information throughout (non-management groups only)?
- (2 weeks)
- Session 2 What's the purpose of keeping records of supervision and who do we keep records for?
Talk about methods of keeping records now and the impact on the sessions. Why use those methods
Have there been changes after the introduction of registration? What?
Critical incident recording? My thinking is – in order to avoid ethical issues of discussing and/or gathering data about clients to ask the supervisors and supervisees to go away and discuss a critical incident (involving client safety in some way?) and decide from that discussion what sort of information should go in the supervision record and how to handle agency accountability for this.
- (1 month)
- Session 3
Is there a need for change in record-keeping?
Analyse the information gathered
Generate some ideas to trial
- (2 months)
- Session 4
Discuss and analyse the effectiveness of trials
Fine tune and re trial
- (1 month)

Session 5 Final meeting for research – fine tuning and final versions of templates/policies. What information to circulate, to whom? What did you gain from the research – what about the fears and hesitations? Celebration and ending of the research phase.

APPENDIX D

Interview QUESTIONNAIRE

Towards the Development of 'Best Practice' for Recording of Social Work Supervision in Aotearoa after the Introduction of Registration

Questions

What method/s do you use for recording supervision now?

Do you have a contract between supervisor and supervisee? Written or verbal? Are there any other parties to this contract. What do you keep records of? Why? Who do we keep records for? How does this differ for different levels of experience of supervisees? Or different supervision relationships (e.g. managerial/professional vs professional supervision only). How does this differ for serious versus routine topics in supervision (e.g. if there was a critical incident involving client safety or an ethical issue with a supervisee's actions would you keep different records?) Why? Who requires records (eg supervisor, supervisee, employing organization, profession)? Have agency policies been an influence. Who sees records? Uses them? How long do you keep them? Do records benefit clients of the supervisee? How?

Have your methods of record keeping changed over the last five years?

How? Why? Have the changes been influenced by agency policy/the registration of social workers? How do the changes affect the supervision relationship? How do the changes affect the outcomes for clients? Is there a need to change record keeping in the future? Do you think change may be imposed? By whom? What would a change need to achieve? What would you hate to lose if changes were made?

What theories and models are used in supervision and how do they influence the recording of supervision sessions?

What theories/models do you use or refer to in supervision? Do these theoretical approaches influence what you record and how you write about it. Would an outsider reading your supervision records know about these influences (if present)? How do you make the influence of theory obvious in your records?

What guidelines should be developed to describe “best practice” of record keeping in supervision?

What is in place now in record keeping that you would describe as best practice?

Why? What more needs to be developed?

What changes to /aspects of record keeping would protect the safety of clients? Are there sufficient safeguards in place to satisfy legal liability for client safety? If not what should be changed? In what circumstances? Who (which organization/s or groups of people) should be steering change? How many different systems of record keeping will we need in this country?

Is there anything else you want to say about record keeping in supervision that we’ve not yet covered?

Some non-identifying details about you and your experience of supervision

Are you a social worker?

How many years of experience as a social worker?

Member of ANZASW?

Registered ?

How would you describe your employment – statutory organization/ public sector, not for profit organization, private employment, mixed?

What type of supervision do you provide/have now? Is the supervisor also the manager?

How many years experience as a supervisor do you have?

What type of supervision have you provided/had in the past/

Do you receive supervision from a social worker?

What is your ethnicity? Iwi, if applicable?

APPENDIX E

1. Planned Research Questions for Supervisor Focus Group

1.1 Contracts:

Written?

Who signs contracts?

Do they include purpose of supervision for supervisees?

Do Contracts say anything about session records?

How important are building trust and relationship at the beginning of the contract?

1.2 Written Records of sessions:

Yes Sometimes No

S'ors give a copy of their records to s'ees?

Always sometimes Never

S'ees aware they can access records?

S'ees keep their own records?

Encouraged by supervisors?

Agency keeps a log of supervision?

Peer supervision – who uses it?

How are records kept?

1.3 Guidance from agencies on what to record of supervision?

Content of Supervision records y/n
Issues, options & outcomes

Supervision learning and roles taken in s'ion

Critical issues – what is needed to intervene

Tasks to be completed

Working tool to assist evaluations & reviews

Progress on contract agreement

Key ethical & safety issues

Aspects of s'ion – admin, education, support and mediation

Cover conflict situations

Specific feedback on what s'ee is going to change as a result of the session

1.4 Reporting back to management of the worker

How

When

1.5 Who are records for?

Who reads them?

Whose responsibility is the agenda in the sessions?

Who chooses clients for discussion? (caseload content)

1.6 Reports to Management on Critical Incidents

S'ors requested for reports in contract?

How does the feedback work?

Are s'ion notes subpoenaed o asked for by agency management?

1.7 Level of Detail of Records

More detail kept for

Critical incidents – What?

Power and control issues identified in external supervision

For students?

For less experienced staff?

1.8 External and Management Supervision

Differences

Similarities

1.9 How long to keep Supervision Records?

How long?

Why?

1.10 Accountability Mechanisms for s'ors

1.11 Confidentiality of :

The supervision process

When?

When not?

The clients' identities

When?

When not?

Notes on client files when discussed in s'ion?

1.12 Questions

Risks of not recording

What to do when recording is troublesome (trust, honesty, openness)

ANZASW Ethics and standards – see annotated bibliography

1.13 Best Practice is

Supporting workers for best outcomes for clients

Enough recording to be beneficial

- for s'ors practice
- for s'ee
- and their clients
- for the agency
- to protect against complaints/ personal grievance

Clear responsibilities/accountabilities

Factual recording only, no discussion, not difficulties in process

Not just factual, but also learning and feelings

Setting mutual expectations in contracts and evaluating

Simple procedures

Challenging

- poor practice
- safety issues
- lack of quality

1.14 What would you hate to lose that you have now as s'ors?

1.15 Standardisation of record keeping? Ideas?

1.16 What changes are needed to promote 'best practice' in s'ion record keeping+

1.17 Best Practice in Record Keeping

Essential

Desirable

Irrelevant

1.18 Where to from here?

2. Questions for Supervisee Focus Group.

Introductions: Please give your first name, say what aspect of supervision you most enjoy and one thing about your personal style that you would tell your supervisor as you start a new supervision relationship. (icebreaker)

Ground rules and scene setting

includes we are all active participants

- * get everyone to engage in questioning people, exploring each others' practice and reasons for choices
- * confidentiality of information shared and the people participating and their organisations
- * what outcomes hope to achieve, what is it for?
- * How and what we are going to record (blank slate, non-judgemental).
- * End time?
- * Have we missed anything?

2.1 A round of each person asking how record keeping in supervision can contribute to excellent social work practice.

Do any of these issues discussed throw light on how to improve poor practice?

Do we need to change record keeping in supervision?

To what?

Should there be a standardised format?

How would that affect your work?

2.2 Ideas about Best Practice in record keeping (30 minutes)

Essential

Desirable or

Unimportant.

On a large sheet of paper with two concentric circles

Where differences of opinion emerge over the same item tease out if they relate to the differences in the supervision situation i.e. the type of supervision being provided or any other differences.

2.3. Looking to the Future

Who should steer change? Who should not?

What do you want to happen to our deliberations a round for each person to comment on to wrap-up.

Point to resources – distribute copies of Annotated Bibliography .

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APPENDIX F

Consents from Ethics Committees



Dr Peter Walker
Department of Social Work
& Community Development
520 Castle Street
University of Otago

7 May 2008

07/166

Dear Dr Walker

Re: Developing "Best Practice" for recording of social work supervision in Aotearoa after the introduction of registration

Thank you for your letter to me regarding the amendments you would like to make to the original ethics application. You have notified the Committee about the difficulties of recruiting and the changes that you require to have more success. Participants will now engage in individual in-depth semi-structured interviews. Updated Information Sheets and Consent Forms were supplied.

Your proposal, including the amendments, is now fully approved by the Human Ethics Committee for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, re-approval must be requested. If the nature, consent, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise me in writing. I hope all goes well for you with your upcoming research.

Yours sincerely

Gary Witte
Manager, Academic Committees
University of Otago

cc. Professor Amanda Barusch (Head of Department), Social Work & Community Development



07/166

ACADEMIC SERVICES
Manager, Academic Committees, Mr G K (Gary) Witte

17 August 2007

Dr P Walker
Department of Social Work and Community Development
Division of Humanities
520 Castle Street

Dear Dr Walker

I am writing to let you know that, at its recent meeting, the Ethics Committee considered your proposal entitled "**Developing "Best Practice" for recording of social work supervision in Aotearoa after the introduction of registration**".

As a result of that consideration, the current status of your proposal is:- **Approved**

For your future reference, the Ethics Committee's reference code for this project is:- **07/166**.
The comments and views expressed by the Ethics Committee concerning your proposal are as follows:-

While approving the application, the Committee would be grateful if you would respond to the following:

As used in section 5 of the application, please define "recording" and "supervision".

Please clarify what is meant by the supervisor-interviewer-interviewee relationship in the Information Sheet.

Approval is for up to three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, re-approval must be requested. If the nature, consent, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise me in writing.

Yours sincerely,

Mr G K (Gary) Witte
Academic Committees, Academic Services
Tel: 479-8256

Email: gary.witte@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

c.c. Professor A Barusch Department of Social Work and Community Development

NGĀI TAHU RESEARCH CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

TE KOMITI RAKAHAU KI KĀI TAHU

21/08/2007 - 16

Wednesday, 22 August 2007

Dr Peter P Walker
Social Work and Community Development
Dunedin

Tēnā koe Dr Walker

Title: Developing "Best Practice" for Recording of Social Work Supervision in Aotearoa after the Introduction of Registration.

The Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee (The Committee) met on Tuesday, 21 August 2007 to discuss your research proposition.

The Committee considers the research to be of importance to Māori health.

The Committee acknowledges that the researchers have identified Māori as being represented in the study.

The Committee strongly encourage that researchers collect ethnicity data as part of the project and recommend the use of the Census question on ethnicity.

The recommendations and suggestions above are provided on the basis of your proposal submitted through the consultation website process. These recommendations and suggestions do not necessarily relate to ethical issues with the research, including methodology. Other committees such as the Regional Ethics committee, Human Ethics and Institutional Biological Safety committees, as well as grant assessment committees will provide feedback in these areas, based on information which may not have been seen by the Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee.

The Committee notes the support of Hine Forsyth and also notes that a letter from her is to be received.

The Committee suggests dissemination of the research findings to relevant Māori health organisations.

The Committee would also value a copy of the research findings.

Nāhaku noa, nā



PP NTRCC

Mark Brunton
Kaitakawaenga Rangahau Māori
Facilitator Research Māori
Research Division
Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo
Ph: +64 3 479 8738
email: mark.brunton@otago.ac.nz
Web: www.otago.ac.nz

The Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee has membership from

*Te Runanga o Otakou Incorporated
Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki
Te Runanga o Moeraki*



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

Bowen State Building, Bowen Street, Wellington 6140 • Telephone: 0-4-916 3300 • Facsimile: 0-4-918 0099

3 March 2008

UNCLASSIFIED

Margaret Gillanders
Department of Social Work & Community Development
University of Otago
PO Box 56
DUNEDIN

Dear Margaret

APPLICATION TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH

I am pleased to inform you that approval has been granted for your research, *Developing "Best Practice" for Recording of Social Work Supervision in Aotearoa after the Introduction of Registration*. You have agreed to use the amended form of the recruitment notice (copy enclosed).

Ministry of Social Development research access is not granted lightly and bestows continuing obligations on successful applicants. These include an adherence to the spirit of the approval as well as the exact terms. Other applicant obligations are to:

- 1) **Keep us informed** of any significant delays or other changes in the research. Contact the Research Access Coordinator if the nature of the research access needed has changed. The Coordinator will contact you every six months for a brief progress report.
- 2) **Submit a penultimate copy** (draft) of the research report to the RAC before publication or, if the research is for a thesis, before it is submitted for marking. This allows legal and privacy aspects to be checked. Please allow at least 3 weeks for this.
- 3) **Submit a final copy** of the research report for the Ministry's Information Centre.
- 4) **Ensure client or staff data is stored securely** and ultimately destroyed as per the terms of the access approval.
- 5) **Inform us of the future use of the research**. A copy of any subsequent papers or presentations that use the research must be sent to the Research Access Coordinator prior to publication/use.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alicia Wright', written over a faint dotted line.

Alicia Wright
General Manager, Centre for Social Research & Evaluation

Encl: (1) Recruitment Notice

Copy: John Henderson
Regional Director Southern
Canterbury Regional Office
PO Box 5588
Christchurch

Research on Record Keeping in Social Work Supervision

I am looking for social workers in the Dunedin area who supervise other staff, to participate, together with one of their supervisees, in an action research project for my Master of Social Welfare thesis. The research will entail taking part in about 5 meetings 1-1.5 hours long, spread out over 6 months, starting soon. It is a MSD requirement that CYF staff who volunteer to participate do so in their own time. The research will look at current methods used to record supervision and participants will work together to contribute to the development of standards of best practice for the future.

If you are interested in participating please contact me: Margaret Gillanders (student researcher), ph 486 1422 or email margaret.gillanders@otago.ac.nz or phone my supervisor: Dr Peter Walker 479 7651.