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Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *CHCCSM006 Provide case management supervision*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Icon	Feature	How you can use each feature
	Learning content	▶ Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
	Examples	▶ These highlight key learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
	Practice tasks	▶ Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
	Video clips	▶ Where QR codes appear, you can use a smartphone or other device to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help
	Summaries	▶ Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
	Learning checkpoints	▶ There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Technology and digital literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Efficiently using digitally based technologies and systems correctly and safely ▶ Accessing, organising and presenting information ▶ Using equipment correctly and safely

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcomes	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Provide leadership	1A Leading and supporting case workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Staff training and development	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2 Legal and ethical compliance	2A Best practice in case management	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B The legal and ethical framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 3 Continuous improvement	3A Monitor and evaluate	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Meet legal compliance	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3C Evaluate own performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

The 'SMART goal' format is outlined here.

Specific



Examples:

- ▶ Adele will reduce the incidence of falls by 50 per cent by 1/10/2018
- ▶ Amanda will be heroin-free by 15/5/2018

Measurable



The progress towards the goal must be measurable. This means it can be tracked, and there are clear and specific outcome indicators with which to measure progress towards the goal.

Attainable



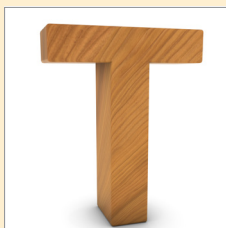
Goals should have a reasonable degree of challenge, but must not be set beyond clients' capabilities.

Realistic



The goal should be within the capacity of the service provider to support. Resources and time must be available, and costs must be factored in.

Time-framed



A time should be set by which the goal will be met.

A case worker may also seek advice from a subject matter expert (SME) in a specific area of practice; for example, seeking specialist advice on a client's AOD issues from a qualified AOD practitioner. Even client family members may be considered an SME.

Advice is not a direction or instruction to do something, but may be discussed, weighed up and analysed by the case worker. Case workers should keep in mind that advice given by senior staff or other SMEs is probably very valuable, as it is usually the result of significant experience in similar situations.

Case workers may seek advice from the following SMEs and government bodies:

- ▶ psychologists
- ▶ psychiatrists
- ▶ behavioural specialists
- ▶ medical specialists
- ▶ communication experts
- ▶ educational experts
- ▶ cultural experts
- ▶ allied health practitioners
- ▶ work health and safety (WHS) experts
- ▶ legal experts
- ▶ funding bodies
- ▶ regulatory bodies.

Debriefing

Debriefing is a process to support staff who have been involved in a critical incident.

Debriefing may occur one-on-one or in a group discussion with staff who have been involved in the incident. Debriefing sessions may be led by peers, other suitably skilled professionals, or a therapist/counsellor, depending on the situation and organisation. The main purpose of debriefing is to assist the worker to process the effects of the critical incident, and to reduce the likelihood of long-term trauma. Debriefing helps to identify whether further counselling may be needed.



Examples of critical incidents are:

- ▶ natural disasters
- ▶ violence or sexual assault directed at a staff member or other person
- ▶ life-threatening situations
- ▶ siege or hostage situations
- ▶ bomb threats
- ▶ client self-harm
- ▶ client or staff death (including suicide and murder).

Provide direction

Direction may involve suggestion and guidance, or giving direct instruction to a case worker.

Supervisors frequently give directions to case workers by formally directing or instructing the case worker to undertake or refrain from doing a specific action.

As a supervisor, you need to identify when to give directives to case workers; case workers may not understand the full implications of the situation they are in and may require decisive direction from you.

1B Staff training and development

Providing opportunities for staff training and development is an important aspect of your role as a supervisor.

Case workers need to be trained so that they can provide clients with the best possible case management. Training also helps to ensure that the case workers meet the legal requirements of service provision. As a supervisor, you need to be aware of and implement any additional training required by case workers. You may also need to access emotional support for a case worker and undertake their formal performance review.

Training and development strategies

To provide the highest possible case management services to clients, it is vital that case workers undertake training and professional development.

This is to ensure that current best practice approaches continue to be implemented.

Laws apply in relation to staff training and development. Organisations must comply with these laws to achieve and maintain accreditation.

Organisations may use a training matrix to specify which staff members require training and when this will occur. This systematic approach ensures that no staff training is missed. Training priorities are determined by the urgency of risks to service provision, operations and other legal risks, as well as resourcing issues.

Training needs analysis

Supervisors who are responsible for training and staff development may undertake a training needs analysis (TNA) to determine which case workers should undergo training and developmental activities.

The TNA will consider the following factors to determine the training and development needs of staff.

Staff roles



The TNA will consider the knowledge and skills required by case workers to demonstrate best practice when providing client care, ensuring they keep up to date with best practice approaches.

Other indicators of staff training and development needs

Events may occur in an organisation that indicate staff training and development is needed.

The following may trigger staff training and development.

Critical or adverse incidents

- ▶ If a critical or adverse incident has occurred, it may indicate that case workers were unable to deal with a particular situation. They will require debriefing and further training in relation to such incidents.

Complaints

- ▶ Complaints may indicate that a case worker may need additional training and development in a specific area.

Audits

- ▶ Internal audits and external accreditation audits may indicate skills or knowledge gaps that need to be addressed.

Staff self-assessment and self-reflection

- ▶ A case worker may request specific training or professional development if they have identified a lack of skills or proficiency in a specific area.

New, unique or specialised client support needs

- ▶ A client may have care or support needs that case workers are not familiar with, such as chronic mental health needs or the use of an EpiPen. Alternatively, the needs of the client may have changed or increased.

New service areas

- ▶ An organisation may diversify or expand its areas of service delivery, meaning that staff will require training in these new areas.

Staff turnover and absenteeism

- ▶ A high level of staff turnover and absenteeism may indicate low morale and poor motivation. Staff training and development may be required to address the factors that have led to this.

Increased rate of accidents or injuries

- ▶ This may indicate that health and safety training is required.

Client dissatisfaction and withdrawal from services

- ▶ This may indicate poor-quality services, which must be addressed so the organisation can appropriately service clients and continue to operate.

Specialist input may be needed when:

- ▶ there are complex legal/ethical matters
- ▶ the client has medical issues
- ▶ changes have occurred to the law and regulations
- ▶ changes have occurred to funding systems or criteria
- ▶ client matters are under legal proceedings
- ▶ there are significant legal risks
- ▶ there are health and safety risks
- ▶ clients have care/support needs that are unique or new to the organisation
- ▶ client cases and issues are leading to worker stress, trauma or burnout
- ▶ there are emotional issues, such as child abuse and death.

Example

Support case workers

Roy is a case worker who has been transferred to the rehabilitation unit. His client Jackson is recovering from an acquired brain injury (ABI). Roy has not worked with ABI clients before, and is looking forward to this new role.

Libby is Roy's supervisor and meets with him to discuss the support that will be available to him, including the training and development she will be providing in her supervisory role.

Libby introduces Roy to an ABI expert who provides Roy with advice on setting realistic goals and outcomes for Jackson. Libby also gives Roy the contact details of a cognitive therapist he can meet with to discuss the activities he should access to improve Jackson's cognitive function.

Libby organises Stuart to be Roy's mentor. Stuart is an experienced case worker who has worked with ABI clients before. Stuart sets up a meeting to discuss areas to include in the mentoring program.

As a result of Libby's efforts, Roy feels supported and is looking forward to his new role.



Watch the example video here.





Summary

- ▶ Case management is a process in which a case manager (also known as a case coordinator or service coordinator) coordinates a range of services to address a client's co-existing needs.
- ▶ The case plan is an overarching plan that sets out the goals, strategies and resources that will be used to support clients' needs.
- ▶ Before the case plan can be developed clients may require clinical assessments to determine how best to manage their complex needs.
- ▶ As a supervisor, you must ensure that any support, practice advice and direction provided to case workers is within the parameters of your role and authority, which is determined by your position description and the organisational structure.
- ▶ Clinical supervision assists the case worker's professional development and aims to ensure the case worker understands and upholds all legal, ethical and organisational responsibilities.
- ▶ Debriefing after a critical incident may occur one-on-one or in a group discussion with staff who have been involved in the incident.
- ▶ To provide the highest possible case management services to clients, it is vital that case workers undertake training and professional development.
- ▶ Supervisors that are responsible for training and staff development may undertake a training needs analysis (TNA) to determine which case workers should undergo training and developmental activities.
- ▶ Case workers may need to consult a specialist or subject matter expert (SME) to extend their knowledge to manage a case plan.

3. A training needs analysis (TNA) will determine which case workers should undergo training and developmental activities.

Explain what the TNA will consider in relation to the following:

- a. Staff roles
- b. Professional development requirements
- c. Needs of clients
- d. Mandatory training
- e. Staff performance appraisals

4. As a supervisor, you may need to meet with case workers to offer support and provide leadership in best practice.

Suggest **three** considerations when providing direction, support and advice to case workers.

5. Provide **two** reasons why case workers could benefit from consulting with other case workers. Outline **two** strategies you could implement as a supervisor to ensure this consultation takes place.

2A Best practice in case management

'Best practice' refers to the approach, practices and systems recognised by a particular industry that must be used to achieve quality outcomes, while upholding legal and ethical obligations.

Best practice forms the professional benchmarks that services are expected to achieve across service delivery. The funding and accreditation status of a service may depend on its ability to demonstrate it is operating according to best practice standards.

Best practice is underpinned by legislation and other elements of the legal and ethical framework and is put into practice through organisational systems, leadership and staff commitment. There is also a requirement for transparent service delivery, in which all organisational processes are open and applied equitably to everyone. Mistakes must be recognised and acknowledged by the organisation and staff.



Case plans must meet requirements by:

- ▶ being up-to-date
- ▶ complying with legislation
- ▶ reflecting current best practice.

Case plan requirements

Supervisors should challenge and support case workers to ensure their case plans meet legislative and organisational requirements.

Case plans should be up to date and in line with legislation. Ways to ensure case plans meet these requirements are described below.

Up to date

To ensure case work is up to date, check that the following occurs:

- ▶ Goals are time-framed.
- ▶ Reviews occur when scheduled.
- ▶ Appointments are kept.
- ▶ Milestones occur when anticipated.
- ▶ Documentation is current.
- ▶ Monitoring occurs in a timely manner.

Person-centred practice

The person-centred practice begins at the intake and assessment stage and continues through the care coordination cycle. The person-centred practice encourages the client and/or their representative to identify services that best align to their goals and aspirations. It seeks to utilise the client's informal support as the client makes choices about their life.

Person-centred practice involves the following principles:

- ▶ Assumes that the client, rather than the case worker, should have the greatest say over their life.
- ▶ Places the client at the centre of decisions about their life and the support services they receive.
- ▶ Supports the client to identify and work towards their own goals and aspirations, rather than those that someone else has determined to be appropriate.
- ▶ Optimises self-determination and choice.
- ▶ Encourages the case worker to form meaningful partnerships with the client's significant others in the process of planning and support.
- ▶ Ensures that the priorities of service delivery are driven by the client's needs, not the organisation's interests.

Recovery-oriented practice

Recovery-oriented practice involves understanding the client and their perspective.

This facilitates inclusion and purpose, and helps clients with mental health issues to:

- ▶ gain and retain hope
- ▶ understand their abilities and struggles
- ▶ live the most fulfilling life possible with an optimal level of self-determination.

Some mental health conditions are chronic, and have no cure. Recovery-oriented practice does not give clients false hope; it works towards reducing the adverse impact that mental health issues have on the person's life to the lowest level possible.

Rights of the client

Case workers must uphold the rights of the client when managing their case plan.

Clients have service user rights that are specific to each sector, and are drawn from the wider legislation and standards that govern the particular sector. Client rights must be upheld throughout all aspects of service delivery. As a supervisor, you must ensure case workers are aware of their clients' rights and that all organisational responsibilities are upheld.



Consumer Directed Care (CDC)

Under a CDC model, funding is attached to the client rather than given to service providers.

CDC is both a philosophy and a practice. It recognises that the client should have the greatest possible say in the services they receive, and enables them to do this by being able to choose where they use their funding for services. This means that if clients do not receive high-quality services, they may go elsewhere. The intended effect is to make community services organisations lift their standards, as they need to attract and retain clients. Disability services and subsidised home care are currently moving into CDC with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Cultural competence

Culturally competent services must be planned and delivered with respect and consideration for clients' cultural identity.

Supervisors must support case workers to have the skills and knowledge to deliver culturally competent services. The ability for clients to express their cultural traditions and needs is a key factor in maintaining their emotional and psychological wellbeing. You must also demonstrate cultural competence towards case workers you are supervising.

Cultural competence can be demonstrated by:

- ▶ acknowledging case workers' cultural differences
- ▶ accommodating case workers' cultural holidays and festivals in work schedules, where possible
- ▶ learning about a culture that is specific to a case worker
- ▶ accepting cultural differences without bias or prejudice.



Consult with culturally specific workers

Ensure that case workers have access to culturally specific workers to support their development in cultural competence.

Some clients may have significant and complex cultural considerations requiring specialised service delivery. Specialised or culturally specific personnel may be needed to provide additional guidance and support for case workers to ensure their care is appropriate. If a culturally specific worker is needed, but is not directly employed by the service, they must be accessed using the relevant organisational protocols and processes.

To provide case workers with access to culturally specific workers you may use the following strategies:

- ▶ Develop policies that enable cultural consultation to take place.
- ▶ Allow case workers to meet with cultural experts as part of their professional development.
- ▶ Create a cultural competence plan that schedules regular information sessions with cultural experts, providing a platform for case workers to expand their cultural knowledge.

Example

Ensuring case workers meet best practice requirements

Chen has recently been employed as a case work supervisor in an organisation that specialises in services for homeless youth. Chen has had more than 10 years' experience as a case worker and understands the importance of documentation such as case plans.

One of Chen's first tasks as a supervisor is to prepare for an internal audit. The compliance manager wants Chen to check that case plans meet the required standards of service delivery and client outcomes.

Chen has developed a checklist of items she will be looking for in her audit. Her manager has asked her to focus on the evidence-based practices of the staff to ensure their research skills are adequate for the job. To do this, Chen will take a sample of case plans developed by each of the case workers from the last two years. She will then analyse and discuss the case plan documents with each case worker.

Chen wants to be able to demonstrate that the documentation produced by case workers meets not only the service standards, but also the professional expectations of the industry. Chen wants the case workers to come away from the exercise feeling confident they can identify best practice examples in their work, as well as areas they need to improve.

After the audit Chen produces a report on her findings. One of her recommendations is that case workers be given more time to keep their documentation up to date, and she has recommended the organisation runs a professional development activity to make sure staff are aware of current legislation and any recent changes.

Chen will also work with two case workers to ensure they have strategies for working with clients who have LLN issues. Chen has some good ideas she used in her practice as a case worker.



Practice task 3

Question 1

Explain evidence-based practice and how it can be used

Question 2

Why do supervisors need to implement strategies to ensure consultation with stakeholders?

Anti-discrimination legislation

There is a range of anti-discrimination legislation that supports access and equity, and ensures that services are delivered to clients without favouritism or discrimination.

Anti-discrimination legislation also protects staff, including case workers, from discrimination by employers and clients.

As a supervisor, you must monitor your own attitudes and professional conduct to ensure you are upholding access and equity provisions to case workers and clients. Ensure your management and supervisory processes are transparent, objective, fair and consistently applied to all staff, regardless of gender, age, religion, culture, sexuality or any other personal characteristic recognised in anti-discrimination law.



Here is some of the key anti-discrimination legislation.

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

This Act makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the grounds of age or age-specific characteristics.

The Act applies to:

- ▶ employment
- ▶ education
- ▶ access to premises
- ▶ provision of goods, services and facilities
- ▶ accommodation.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

This Act makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the grounds of:

- ▶ disability
- ▶ diseases and disorders, including diseases that affect thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment, or result in disturbed behaviour.

The Act applies to:

- ▶ employment
- ▶ education
- ▶ provision of goods and services.

Health and safety legislation

Health and safety legislation imposes duties on employers and employees to optimise safety in the workplace.

Hazards in community services may relate to the physical nature of the work, client behaviours or the specific service area you work in.

You must be aware of hazards that present a risk of harm to case workers. Case workers need to be made aware of situations, people or physical items that can pose a risk to their safety.

You must provide case workers with support, practice advice and direction to minimise risks to their health and safety, including providing training, instruction and supervision. Additionally, you cannot give practice advice, support or direction to case workers that may create unreasonable risk to their physical or psychological safety or wellbeing.



Employee responsibilities

- ▶ Maintain safe equipment and systems of work.
- ▶ Eliminate or reduce risks in the workplace as far as reasonably practicable.

Supervisor responsibilities

- ▶ Provide workers with adequate supervision, training and instruction to enable them to safely carry out their roles
- ▶ Minimise risks through robust policies and procedures.
- ▶ Minimise risks to case workers whose clients display physically aggressive behaviours.
- ▶ Design rosters and work schedules to avoid staff exhaustion and burnout.

Risk of harm to case workers

You must be aware of and respond to risks that are present in the areas you supervise, including to case workers.

Encourage case workers to identify and report hazards and risks, and ensure these are assessed and controlled according to organisational processes.

Stress from the emotional and psychological requirements of the role



Stress may be due to:

- ▶ clients who self-harm
- ▶ clients who have committed suicide
- ▶ exposure to family/domestic violence
- ▶ ongoing exposure to trauma.

Suggested control measures:

- ▶ Conduct ongoing monitoring of case load, and the nature of case work.
- ▶ Conduct clinical supervision sessions.
- ▶ Have an approachable management style in which case workers are encouraged to share their concerns or struggles.
- ▶ Encourage case workers to use the employee assistance program (EAP).
- ▶ Ensure recreation and other leave is taken appropriately, not stockpiled.

Exhaustion



Exhaustion may be due to:

- ▶ working long hours
- ▶ having large case loads
- ▶ inadequate human resources
- ▶ dealing with contingencies and crises.

Suggested control measures:

- ▶ Conduct ongoing monitoring of case loads.
- ▶ Collaborate with case workers to determine priorities.
- ▶ Use forward-planning regarding acceptance of new clients.
- ▶ Conduct clinical supervision sessions.
- ▶ Have an approachable management style.
- ▶ Encourage case workers to use the EAP.
- ▶ Ensure recreation and other leave is taken appropriately, not stockpiled.
- ▶ Implement a formal, fair and consistent time in lieu system to ensure staff are able to take time off if they have worked additional hours.

Complaints management

As a supervisor you may need to manage complaints about case workers, client care, service provision or complaints resulting from staff conflict.

Each organisation will have a complaints procedure and protocols that must be followed. Services may also have internal protocols that must be followed. The actions taken to manage the complaint will depend on the nature and urgency of the complaint. Resolving a complaint may involve clarifying and assessing the complaint, referring the complaint to the appropriate body or reporting the complaint to the appropriate management or department.



Codes of practice and ethics

It is important that case workers uphold the ethical requirements of their role.

Case workers need to be able to identify the presence of an ethical issue and make an appropriate judgment in response. As a supervisor you need to monitor case workers to ensure all aspects of ethical practice are upheld, and assist them to develop reflective and ethical practice strategies.

To do this, take the following steps:

- ▶ Encourage case workers to evaluate their own performance by reflecting on feedback from clients and peers.
- ▶ Encourage case workers to develop self-awareness by reflecting on their own behaviours, belief systems, values and biases.
- ▶ Have the case worker participate in role-playing ethical situations.
- ▶ Practise active listening with the case worker.
- ▶ Explain how ethical situations can cause harm to the client and the case worker.
- ▶ Encourage the case worker to reflect on emotions that trigger ethical responses.
- ▶ Encourage case workers to keep a reflective journal, noting:
 - ethical dilemmas that have occurred, and strategies that were or could have been used in response
 - values that were previously unnoticed, but became apparent in a situation with a client. What triggered the conflict? What was the response? What could have been done differently?
 - reactions and responses to situations based on cultural differences and diversity. What biases, expectations and assumptions contributed to how the case was managed? What could be done to change biases, expectations and assumptions?



Summary

- ▶ 'Best practice' refers to the approach, practices and systems recognised by a particular industry that must be used in order to achieve quality outcomes, while upholding legal and ethical obligations.
- ▶ Current best practice approaches include strengths-based practice, person-centred practice and recovery-oriented practice.
- ▶ Cultural competence can be demonstrated by acknowledging case workers' cultural differences, learning about a culture that is specific to a case worker and accepting cultural differences without bias or prejudice.
- ▶ Values stem from a person's beliefs. Beliefs and values affect a person's attitude toward situations, cultures and people.
- ▶ Evidence-based practice ensures that decisions about client support have been informed by the relevant evidence. It is used to assess needs, and determine, monitor and evaluate services for effectiveness.
- ▶ Two main types of standards that apply to the health and community services industry are professional and service standards.
- ▶ Duty of care is an obligation that requires an individual to take all reasonable actions to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm occurring to someone.
- ▶ An ethical dilemma occurs when there are two or more competing sets of values or ethical belief systems, and a decision must be made about a course of action.



Learning checkpoint 2

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in relation to ensuring that strategies and developmental processes are implemented according to the organisation's legal and ethical framework.

1. Give **two** examples of strategies you could use to promote best practice among case workers.



Topic 3

In this topic you will learn how to:

3A Monitor and evaluate

3B Meet legal compliance

3C Evaluate own performance

Continuous improvement

Service providers that foster a culture of continuous improvement use feedback from all service users and stakeholders to improve client care.

Case workers and supervisors must monitor the progress of case plans to ensure they are providing the services required to assist clients to meet their goals. Case plans may need to be adjusted as clients' needs change, or if the services or funding is no longer available. Making adjustments to plans contributes to continuous improvement of client care. Supervisors and case managers can use reflection to improve their practice through continuous improvement.

Example**Evaluating a case plan**

Lily is supervising Jayden, who is Miriam's case manager. Miriam requires living at home assistance. Jayden has written an individualised plan that includes Miriam's goals, needs, support networks and services that need to be accessed. The case plan includes bathroom modifications designed by the occupational therapist and a referral action plan for additional services, such as meal support, domestic and shopping assistance, and personal care assistance.

Lily checks the plan to make sure it addresses Miriam's needs holistically and that specialists who can provide support have been identified. Lily provides feedback to Jayden on the importance of ensuring the support enhances Miriam's independence and quality of life. She also discusses how Jayden can manage the time lines for Miriam's goals, and how to adjust the plan when Miriam's needs change.

**Practice task 5**

Check your understanding of monitoring and evaluating case plans.

Question 1

Briefly describe monitoring and evaluation.

Question 2

How could you assess a case plan developed by a case worker?

Respond to areas in need of improvement

Once self-evaluation has taken place, and areas in need of improvement have been identified, measures can be taken to develop professional and practical skills.

The role of a supervisor can be challenging. You may have been promoted to a supervisor role because you are good at direct care, but have had little preparation or experience in a supervisory role.

When areas of improvement are identified, you can develop your skills by seeking opportunities to:

- ▶ pair with a mentor or experienced supervisor
- ▶ access off-site or on-site training
- ▶ join networks of other supervisors
- ▶ access support from a manager.

Escalate and refer issues

Even the most experienced supervisor will be confronted with situations that are beyond their scope of practice or area of expertise.

Depending on the complexity and urgency of the situation, the matter may need to be escalated to upper management or referred to experts. The following are situations when escalation or referral may be required.

Disciplinary action is required

- ▶ If a case worker requires disciplinary action to be taken, the situation may need to be referred to the human resources (HR) department and/or senior management.
- ▶ A referral to the Fair Work Commission or the Fair Work Ombudsman may be required.

Personal difficulties affecting work performance

- ▶ Personal difficulties may require referral to the HR department and/or senior management.
- ▶ The case worker may need to be referred to the employee assistance program.
- ▶ You may need to contact the case worker's medical practitioner.

Cultural conflict

- ▶ The matter may require escalation to the HR department and/or senior management.
- ▶ The matter may need to be referred to cultural mediators.
- ▶ Consultation may be required with representatives from cultural or ethno-specific community groups.

Summary

- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation is the process through which service providers can measure the quality of their services.
- ▶ As a supervisor, you need to assess the case plans developed by case workers to determine if all components of the case plan are addressed, implemented and are effective in assisting the client to meet their goals.
- ▶ Monitoring the progress of case plans involves checking the effectiveness of support strategies towards meeting client goals.
- ▶ Once you have analysed and assessed the case plan developed by a case worker, feedback must be given to support the case worker to improve their practice.
- ▶ You may be required to develop and promote professional standards to case workers in the organisation, and you must ensure case workers understand and comply with legislation relevant to their role.
- ▶ Proactive and reactive mechanisms may be used to inform and advise case workers of their legal obligations.
- ▶ Self-evaluation can be used to identify your achievements and strengths, as well as areas in need of professional development.
- ▶ Once self-evaluation has taken place, and areas in need of improvement have been identified, measures can be taken to extend and develop professional and practical skills.