

NO Reply

From: Matthew McNally <mcnallypsych9@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 11:45 AM
To: NO Reply
Subject: Ending Career-Long Supervision for LPAs

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you in support of the North Carolina Association of Professional Psychologists (NCAPP) and your efforts to end career long supervision requirements for Licensed Psychological Associates (LPAs). It is my understanding that the primary assertion levied against the idea of ending career-long supervision is a matter of competence, or lack thereof, by LPAs to practice psychology without ongoing, perpetual supervision. The related argument is that, if LPAs are not competent to practice independently, then the public would be at risk to receive services provided by unsupervised LPAs. Frankly, this assertion is absurd. It is well known that LPAs in North Carolina are highly educated in the scientist-practitioner model of practice, and are required to pass very similar licensure testing requirements. As for the supervision, I am indeed in support of mandatory supervision for the first few years of practice by LPAs. I have benefitted greatly from it over my 22 years of practice, and continue to do so. However, the idea that my consultations with my clinical supervisor are “supervisory” in nature has not been the case for nearly two decades. Good mental health professionals consult regularly with their colleagues as this is considered a best practice. I will continue to do so regardless of what legislation is passed or changed in this regard. However, the argument that clinical supervision should remain mandatory for the entirety of an LPA’s career is simply unfounded and, thus, perplexing. Furthermore, if the clinical supervision is adequate, it would seem that after 3, 5, or perhaps even 7 years of work under such supervision, the accumulated experience and education derived from such supervision would be tantamount to several years’ worth of internship to further expand and refine one’s professional knowledge and skills. Lastly regarding supervision, the idea that an LPA of 25 years of practice or more might be mandated to be clinically supervised by, perhaps, a doctoral level psychologist with 2 years of practice experience seems silly on its face.

In addition to the above, it is my opinion that there are two other deleterious effects of mandatory, career-long supervision for LPAs. The first is the obstacle it creates for LPAs to become paneled as providers with many insurance companies. The impacts of this are of course obvious and terrifically unjust. The second of these is the idea of providing competent mental health services to the general public. As we are all aware, the number of graduate programs in counseling and other fields related to the practice of psychology, has multiplied exponentially. Many of these graduate degrees are offered through universities whereby the class work is almost exclusively online! These graduates go on to be licensed as Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, etc. While there are several excellent schools providing such degrees, there are seemingly more where the degrees granted are very suspect, yet enable the degree holders to obtain licensure in a related field and subsequently

practice with complete independence. They then enter into competition with both LPAs and doctoral level psychologists. I dare say that the public is not better served by having potential future psychological professionals steered into these related fields in an effort to avoid having to endure the professional restraints that mandatory, career-long supervision installs, however unintended they may be. As a result, it seems obvious based on any online search that mental health practice is increasingly being ceded to non-psychologists, thus posing a professional threat to LPAs and doctoral level psychologists alike. Given the high level of education and training found in most masters and doctoral programs in psychology provide, I find this to be a very troubling development indeed. If this trend continues, it seems that the practice of psychology, in time, will be surrendered altogether to non-psychology professionals. Psychologists would then be largely, if not exclusively, relegated to testing and academia. Again, such an eventuality would be both a detriment to the general public as well as to the field of psychology on the whole.

Given the above, I am in full support of of NCAPP's proposed changes to mandatory, career-long clinical supervision.

Respectfully,

Matthew W. McNally, MA, LPA