



## Which Models of Supervision Help Retain Staff? Findings From Australia's Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault Workforces

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### ABSTRACT

The contribution professional supervision makes to quality services, staff satisfaction, and retention is well recognised across social work and human service settings. Yet frequent supervision is difficult to provide where organisational resources are limited and urgent client-related tasks must take priority. In these contexts, group-based supervision may offer an alternative to traditional individual approaches, yet its impacts have been infrequently researched. Using survey data ( $n = 917$ ), we examine the prevalence of individual and group-based supervision among practitioners delivering domestic and family violence and sexual assault services (DFVSA), and associations these forms of supervision have with staff retention. While individual supervision remains most common, one in eight practitioners report that they never receive it. Multivariate analysis indicates frequent individual supervision is most effective for retaining practitioners. This provides empirical support for prioritising individual supervision within strategies for promoting workforce sustainability and service quality in DFVSA and other social service settings.

### IMPLICATIONS

- Individual supervision remains more common than group-based approaches in domestic and family violence and sexual assault services.
- Workplaces should consider prioritising individual supervision over group supervision when attempting to improve practitioner retention.
- Managers should adopt a critical stance and consider evidence when assessing the implications of adopting group-based approaches to supervision.

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Regular professional, clinical, or practice supervision has long been recognised as integral to quality social work and human service practice (Munson, 2002). Although its benefits for practitioners and organisations are well-recognised, the ways supervision is provided may be compromised in contexts of systemic resource deficiency, high community need, and the overriding emphasis on efficiency and value for money that follows decades of

market-focused public management reform across the human services. Under pressure to do more with limited resources—and in the face of multiple client and case-related demands—practitioners face increased pressures on their time, including the time available to provide and receive supervision (Adams, 2007). Further, shifts in the content and focus of supervision have been observed, including an emphasis on managerialist priorities of efficiency and performance monitoring, over more traditional priorities of worker wellbeing, professional development, and career planning (Beddoe, 2010; Noble & Irwin, 2009). In this context, group or team-based approaches can be perceived to offer efficient alternatives to traditional models of supervision premised on individual transmission of knowledge and support from senior to junior practitioners.

This paper is concerned with individual and group-based approaches to supervision. While there is much diversity in supervision models and their practical operation, we focus on macro-level issues. Specifically, we are concerned with the prevalence of individual and group supervision, and the implications of each for staff retention, a commonly used measure of the status of the human service workforce and service quality (DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2008; Mor Barak et al., 2001). Data came from a national survey of practitioners in Australia's domestic and family violence and sexual assault (DFVSA) sector. Within DFVSA, social workers form a significant practitioner group, working alongside practitioners from other disciplinary backgrounds.

Although our inquiry is relevant to other human service contexts, it is particularly important to understand the relative merits of configuring supervision in different ways in DFVSA given the complex, multifaceted, and emotionally demanding nature of this work, and the high risks of vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout (Tarshis & Baird, 2019). Associations between supervision and retention in DFVSA are especially important to identify because of the high organisational costs of staff turnover, including recruitment and training of new staff. In addition, service disruption has critical impacts on clients, as well as on continuing staff who must step in when practitioners leave, exacerbating stress, job dissatisfaction, and further turnover (Merchant & Whiting, 2015; Webb & Carpenter, 2012; Wendt et al., 2019). Previous research has highlighted the importance of supportive workplaces and the role supervision plays in promoting positive worker outcomes and preventing burnout and turnover (Merchant & Whiting, 2015; Mor Barak et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2014; Webb & Carpenter, 2012; Wood et al., 2019). Yet the impacts of different forms of supervision in specific social service subsectors, including DFVSA services, have attracted little attention. DFVSA work is an ideal context for examining the prevalence and impacts of different forms of supervision, as it encompasses diverse fields and services with multiple models of supervision in place.

The article firstly discusses the importance of supervision to human service practice and highlights the paucity of contemporary studies exploring divergent approaches to supervision in the DFVSA fields. Next, we introduce the survey data and analytic techniques and examine the ways DFVSA practitioners access professional, clinical, or practice supervision. Data demonstrate that levels of access to professional supervision are variable, with some practitioners lacking access. Among those who have access, frequent individual supervision has superior retention outcomes. We conclude by discussing the need for individual models of professional supervision to remain part of organisational and workforce development strategies for ensuring high quality DFVSA service provision.

## Supervision in Contemporary Human Services Workplaces

Providing the “best possible support” to service users is often considered the “ultimate goal” of supervision (Carpenter et al., 2013, p. 1844); however, there is also consensus that supervision benefits workers and organisations in multiple ways. Although supervision varies across countries, settings, professions, and fields of practice (Hafford-Letchfield & Engelbrecht, 2018; O’Donoghue et al., 2018), it is generally understood to contribute to support, management, and professional development functions. Most often, it has been studied in terms of hierarchical relationships between newer or more junior workers and their more experienced supervisors (Chiller & Crisp, 2012; Davys & Beddoe, 2010).

Although supervision can operate in different ways and play different roles within different social service professions, it is commonly recognised as crucial for enabling front-line workers to acquire and maintain professional competence (Gonsalvez et al., 2017). Social work has a longstanding history of supervision (Munson, 2002), and the Australian Association of Social Work’s supervision standards continue to emphasise its importance as a forum for reflection and self-care, and for developing practice-based knowledge, competence, and retention (AASW, 2014). Professional supervision is widely recognised to create opportunities to work through practice dilemmas, to enhance the quality of interventions while building constructive relationships, and to prevent professional isolation and burnout (Nickson et al., 2016). Simultaneously, it offers practitioners opportunities to explore the broader social justice implications of their work, enabling development of collective identities while countering the impacts of structural pressures, such as the increased pace and volume of work, and erosion of autonomy and discretion (Baines et al., 2014). Supervision may also contribute to organisational and workforce priorities by providing a forum for discussing values, protocols, and standards of practice (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Dawson et al., 2013). International studies across social service contexts (Mor Barak et al., 2009), including those in child welfare (DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2008; Williams, 2018) and mental health (Fukui et al., 2019), show supervision is a critical contributor, albeit not the sole contributor, to workforce retention. In Australian social work, supervision is also credited with generating organisational and financial gains from reduced staff turnover (Chiller & Crisp, 2012). However, scant research has focused on supervision in the specific context of DFVSA services.

## Supervision in Domestic and Family Violence Services

Supervision is recognised for its restorative, formative, and normative functions across settings (Dawson et al., 2013, p. 65), but is particularly important in challenging, high-risk work, including in frontline DFVSA practice. Although the resource constraints and immediate demands of DFVSA practice mean supervision is sometimes considered a luxury (Beckerman, 2018; Bogo & McKnight, 2006), it underpins practitioners’ capacity to effectively perform this work, and to navigate its inevitable complexities (Vetere, 2012). Supervision is particularly important given the wide range of responsibilities encompassed in DFV practice (Slattery & Goodman, 2009), and workers’ multiple sources of stress. In light of such challenges, supervision has been found to help build practitioners’ task knowledge, problem solving, and general competence (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2011). Moreover, it has been described as pivotal in the context of high risks of becoming

overwhelmed by the work—leading to poor decisions or inaction—or, conversely, feeling “underwhelmed and potentially unresponsive” (Vetere, 2012, p. 183).

Vetere (2012) emphasises the need for supervision to explicitly focus on safety, risk, and responsibility in DFV contexts, to provide “a safe space for thinking and reflection, within a trusting relationship” in which “indecision, reflexivity and action” are all respected (Vetere, 2012, p. 183), and where “shared responsibility and shared accountability” help contain tensions and encourage creativity (Vetere, 2012, p. 183). Choi (2011, p. 235) argued secondary traumatic stress is the “natural consequence” of doing DFVSA work, and that organisations should actively acknowledge this by providing opportunities to discuss it in supervision as well as peer settings. Others have also affirmed supervision as a way to facilitate trust, respect, and safety, and to reduce the impacts of emotional stress and the likelihood that stress will intensify (Slattery & Goodman, 2009, p. 1372). However, across this small body of scholarship, studies have not tended to explore and compare the implications of different forms of supervision.

### **Models of Supervision**

Research has not fully elaborated the experiences and impacts of supervision in different forms and contexts (McLaughlin et al., 2019). Models may vary according to whether supervision is provided within the organisation or externally (e.g., by an independent consultant); on an interprofessional, cross-disciplinary or peer-to-peer basis; in individual (one-to-one) or group settings; or through some combination of these (O’Donoghue et al., 2018, p. 349). One-to-one supervision, which may imply hierarchical accountability based on seniority, remains the norm in most countries and service contexts, yet group, peer-based options are increasingly common (Beddoe, 2015, p. 89).

Group-based models are assumed to benefit practitioners by facilitating access to multiple perspectives and the diversity of issues encountered by colleagues. McLaughlin et al. (2019) link group supervision to enhanced learning and reduced practice-related anxiety. It generated cross-pollination among colleagues, and enhanced peer connectedness (Beddoe, 2015; McLaughlin et al., 2019). Group supervision may also link peers remotely, with technology used to facilitate peer supervision for rural and remote practitioners who would otherwise lack professional connectedness (Nickson et al., 2016, p. 273). It is also considered time-efficient and cost-effective compared with individual approaches (Beddoe, 2015). However, the extent to which group supervision is used and its impacts on worker outcomes are unclear. In the context of its purported time–cost efficiency benefits, it has been observed to be increasingly used in response to funding pressures (McLaughlin et al., 2019). However, others contend that group supervision is used to supplement, rather than replace, individual supervision (O’Donoghue et al., 2018, p. 350).

### **Data Source and Sample**

To examine the extent to which individual and group-based models are used, and to understand some of their impacts, we performed secondary analysis of a national survey dataset. Analysis addresses two core questions:

- (1) To what extent are individual and group-based models of supervision used by DFVSA practitioners?
- (2) To what extent do individual and group-based approaches help retain frontline practitioners?

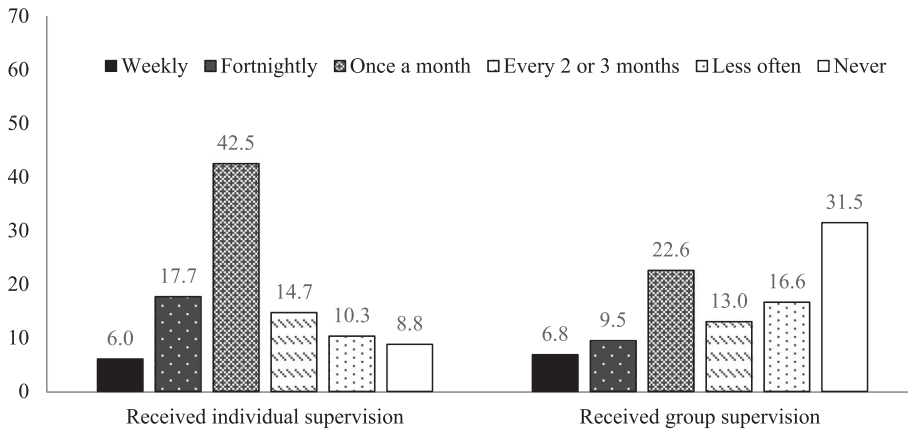
Data come from Australia's National Survey of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Workforces, which was commissioned by the Australian Government in 2017 to address objectives of the *Third Action Plan of Australia's National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children 2010–2022* (COAG, 2016). The survey, which was approved by the University of New South Wales Human Ethics Committee, was designed to provide evidence of the characteristics and perspectives of frontline employees working with victims and perpetrators of DFVSA. The sample frame consisted of Commonwealth-funded services delivering prevention or crisis responses including accommodation, community legal services, financial and employment supports, and counselling. Sample characteristics are in Appendix 1. Although respondents from a range of professional and educational backgrounds are included, social workers are a dominant group. Questions were designed to explore a range of workforce issues including skill development needs, job quality, and supports for practice. A brief section was dedicated to supervision. The survey targeted both service leaders (in a survey of services) and workers (in a workforce survey), but given our focus on receipt of supervision, we draw only on the worker survey (Cortis et al., 2020).

### Analysis Techniques

To ensure a focus on frontline practitioners, we selected the 917 respondents (from the full sample of 1,157) who worked directly with victims or perpetrators of DFVSA at least weekly. This excluded those in administrative, leadership, policy, project, or other roles with less frequent client contact. Appendix 1 shows that social workers comprised a quarter of all survey respondents (25%) and a third (33%) of all degree-qualified practitioners in the sample. Analysis involved firstly examining the extent to which individual and group-based models of supervision were used in DFVSA settings (Figure 1). The implications of individual and group approaches were then explored by examining whether and how each was associated with intention to leave the organisation in the next 12 months, recognising supervision is a key but not sole, contributor to turnover and intention to leave (Mor Barak et al., 2009).

To do this, we assessed frequencies then used logistic regression, a technique that enables exploration of relationships between multiple variables and a binary categorical (non-numerical) dependent variable, and which has previously helped researchers understand human service workforce characteristics and dynamics (e.g., Cortis & Meagher, 2012; Powell & Cortis, 2017). Our dependent variable was a two-level indicator of whether respondents intended to leave the organisation in the next 12 months.

Control variables were included to account for potentially confounding personal, job, and employer characteristics, such as age, gender, education, location, part-time work, workplace size, workload pressure, and pay (Appendix 2). For all binary variables, "yes" was coded as 1, and "no" as 0. Analyses were performed with SPSS 24, with a .05 threshold



**Figure 1** Proportion of workers receiving individual and group supervision, by frequency of receipt (%) (*n* = 917)

Source: National Survey of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Workforces, 2017 (see Cortis et al., 2020).

for statistical significance. Comments from the open-ended comments section of the survey were thematically coded and used to illustrate practitioners’ perspectives on the benefits and challenges of supervision.

## Findings

### Prevalence of Individual and Group-Based Supervision

Figure 1 shows the proportion of workers receiving individual and group supervision, based on the question “Roughly how often do you receive the following forms of professional, clinical or practice supervision?” which invited separate responses for individual and group-based supervision. Response categories were weekly, fortnightly, once a month, every 2 or 3 months, less often, and never. The largest group (42.5%) reported monthly individual supervision, although many practitioners received it more frequently: 17.7% received fortnightly individual supervision, and a further 6.0% received it weekly. Concerningly, more than 1 in 12 (8.8%) reported that they never received individual supervision. Group supervision was less common than individual supervision, with almost a third (31.5%) never receiving it, a quarter (22.6%) accessing it around once a month, and 16.8% receiving it on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

Based on these data, access to regular, high quality supervision appears far from universal among DFVSA workers. Thus, it is not surprising that, where respondents chose to leave open-ended comments on any issue, more than one quarter noted concerns about supervision, other professional development supports, or vicarious trauma. Comments underlined that supervision is highly valued by practitioners, but limited access is a key concern, for example:

I am disappointed at the lack of regular supervision available within many “social care” agencies and services in Australia. Supervision of staff is both misunderstood and trivialised—no wonder so many good workers burn out!

Workers in isolated areas reported high needs for supervision as they often worked alone, but found it particularly difficult to access:

I am a sole worker in an isolated area and close to burnout due to a high caseload and lack of supervision. My team are very supportive but are all two or more hours away so we only see each other once per month. The clients I work with are high risk and I am expected to do a lot of home visiting by myself. I am about to move ... and will be seeking a job within a strong team environment.

While some highlighted limited supervision, others described a narrow focus in supervision meetings, and noted the need for genuine clinical supervision rather than “line-management” supervision, for example, “I get regular supervision from my manager; however, it is not an opportunity to talk about issues coming from work but rather [it is to] plan for upcoming work and receive additional tasks”.

Supervision was also framed as an element of a strong and supportive team culture, which was not present in all locations:

Given the organisation is designed to allow for supervision, flexible work hours, and ongoing professional development, it is very disappointing to see that some sites are choosing not to provide this to their team, leaving workers burnt out and disillusioned with their roles. I think it is really important we keep working towards streamlining operations between services so that no team is missing out, and no leadership roles are allowed to continue neglecting the people under their guidance.

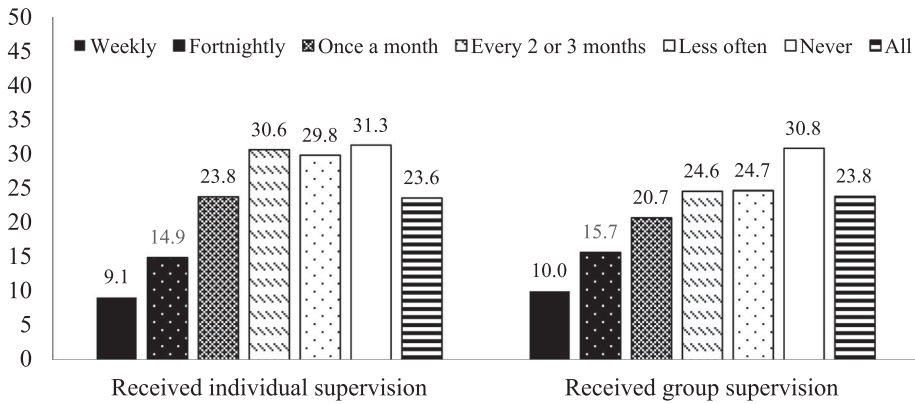
These comments corroborate how practitioners value supervision, and highlight their desire for it to be meaningful and to enable reflection, debriefing, and support to mitigate burnout. They also suggest the dissatisfaction and concerns that absence of meaningful supervision can cause. While comparison of group and individual models did not arise as a theme in practitioners’ comments, we explored this in quantitative analysis.

## **Supervision and Intention to Leave**

The preceding analysis showed how often practitioners receive different forms of supervision (Figure 1) and underlined that access to quality supervision is important to DFVSA practitioners (open-ended comments). To explore the impact of individual and group-based supervision, we firstly examined binary associations between respondents’ intention to leave the organisation and their receipt of individual and group supervision. Figure 2 shows that compared with those receiving supervision less frequently, practitioners receiving weekly or fortnightly supervision were least likely to intend to leave their organisation within 12 months. While 9.1% of those receiving weekly individual supervision intended to leave within 12 months, the figure was 30.6% among those receiving supervision every 2 or 3 months, and slightly higher (31.3%) among those who never received it. Similarly, 10% of those receiving weekly group supervision stated their intention to leave, compared with 24.6% of those receiving it every 2–3 months, and 30.8% of those who never received it.

Figure 2 does not, however, account for sample composition. Practitioners receiving individual and group supervision may differ on the basis of age, education and disciplinary background, gender, or other factors. Intention to leave may also differ according to the size of organisation, or workers’ age, for example, confounding associations between





**Figure 2** Proportion of workers who intend to leave their organisation in 12 months, by frequency of receipt of individual and group supervision (%) (*n* = 911)  
 Source: National Survey of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Workforces, 2017 (see Cortis et al., 2020).

receipt of supervision and future work intentions. Further, the data in [Figure 2](#) does not account for concurrent receipt of individual and group-based supervision. Indeed, sample characteristics ([Appendix 1](#)) showed that 17.6% of respondents reported receiving each form of supervision at least monthly (equivalent to a fortnightly average).

Sample characteristics also show some differences in access to supervision between groups of staff including social workers ([Appendix 1](#)). Degree-qualified staff, especially those with psychology training were less likely than others to receive fortnightly individual supervision. Indeed, psychologists were more likely than others to receive group-based supervision on its own or in combination with individual models. Those in smaller organisations (less than 10 staff) were also less likely than others to receive any form of fortnightly supervision (65.6% did not receive it), and individual fortnightly supervision in particular (10.4% received it). For practitioners working in metropolitan locations, part-time hours, gender, and years of experience had no significant associations with fortnightly supervision. These differences are accounted for in the logistic regression model that examines whether frequent individual or group-based supervision, or receipt of both, independently predicts workers’ intention to leave the organisation in the next 12 months. A list of variables contained in the model is provided in [Appendix 2](#), with regression results in [Table 1](#).

Results in [Table 1](#) indicate that, after controlling for gender, age, experience, education, and aspects of work and organisational environments, receipt of individual supervision is associated with lower odds that a practitioner will intend to leave their organisation in 12 months. Compared with no supervision, receiving individual supervision at least fortnightly was associated with half the odds a worker would intend to leave the organisation within 12 months ( $OR = 0.5, p < .01$ ). Receiving a mix of individual and group supervision at least fortnightly was associated with the same odds ( $OR = 0.5, p < .05$ ). Group supervision on its own, however, had no statistically significant independent effect ( $OR = 0.6, p > .05$ ).

Some control variables also predicted intention to leave. Being under 35 and being male, each independently increased the odds of intending to leave (although significance was slightly above the .05 threshold). While degree-level qualifications (including having a



**Table 1** Logistic Regression Results. Odds Ratios (Intention to Leave the Organisation Within 12 Months)

	Odds ratio	Standard error
<b>Type of supervision</b>		
Fortnightly individual supervision	<b>0.5**</b>	0.3
Fortnightly group supervision	0.6	0.3
Both individual and group supervision	<b>0.5*</b>	0.2
<b>Individual characteristics</b>		
Male	<b>1.5<sup>^</sup></b>	0.2
Aged under 35	<b>1.5<sup>^</sup></b>	0.2
Aged 55 or over	0.8	0.2
Under 2 years relevant experience	0.7	0.3
<b>Education</b>		
Degree in social work	1.5	
Degree in psychology	1.0	0.3
Degree in law/legal studies	1.0	0.3
Degree in another field	0.8	0.2
<b>Work and organisational context</b>		
Outside the metropolitan areas	0.8	0.2
Part-time (<35 h)	1.0	0.2
Days of training	0.9	0.1
Small organisation (<10 staff)	1.1	0.2
Large organisation (>50 staff)	1.0	0.2
<b>Self-perception of work environment</b>		
Appropriate induction to organisation	<b>0.5***</b>	0.2
Able to spend enough time with each client	0.9	0.2
Paid fairly for the work they do	<b>0.5***</b>	0.2
Constant	0.8	0.3

Notes: <sup>^</sup> $p < .07$ ; \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ . NS ( $p > .05$ ). Hosmer-Lemeshow chi-square = 7.6 (8),  $p = .47$ ; Nagelkerke  $r$ -square = 0.13,  $-2 \text{ Log likelihood} = 919.4$ . Reference category is non-degree qualified middle-aged female, in a medium-sized metropolitan organisation, receiving no fortnightly supervision.

social work degree) and measures of the work and organisational context did not independently predict intention to leave, perceptions of the work environment did. Having received an induction that the respondent considered appropriate, and feeling fairly paid for their work, were associated with lower odds (OR = 0.5,  $p < .001$ ). Thus, while supervision is not the only predictor of retention, receipt of regular, frequent individual supervision, or a combination of regular group and individual supervision, predicted lower intention to leave.

## Discussion

While the specifics of different approaches to supervision and issues of power and ethics within supervisory relationships also warrant detailed attention (McLaughlin et al., 2019), we have focused on the macro-level issues of the prevalence and impact of two broadly divergent approaches to supervision in DFVSA settings. Analysis highlighted variable levels of access to supervision. Of particular concern is that 1 in 8 practitioners lack access to regular individual supervision, while others receive either individual or group supervision, infrequently. While individual supervision remains most common, we found group supervision to be more commonly received in combination with individual models, not on its own, consistent with observations of O'Donoghue et al. (2018).

Although data showed lower access to frequent supervision in smaller organisations, we did not find significantly lower receipt outside metropolitan areas. This contrasts with other studies in which a lack of supervision in these locations has been understood to

contribute to high staff turnover and burnout (Alston, 2005; Chisholm et al., 2011; Nickson et al., 2016, p. 265). These differences, and the factors influencing the use of different supervision models in different contexts, invite further exploration. However, results highlight the need to carefully consider group supervision. Individual approaches appear associated with improved retention, at least insofar as this was captured in the measure of workers' intentions. These associations were not found for group supervision received on its own, but group supervision used regularly and concurrently with individual supervision lowered intention to leave.

Of course, the study is not without limitations. The survey measured workers' intentions but not whether these intentions were realised. Nor did we explore associations between supervision models and other workforce or client outcomes. Further, analysis captured only broad categorisations of supervision as individual or group-based, and not other factors that are also likely to impact on supervision and its outcomes—such as theoretical underpinnings of supervision models, supervisor characteristics (qualifications, competence, and skills) or group size and structure, or relational factors. Further modelling is needed to explore forms of individual and group supervision in more detail, and to explore the direct and indirect ways they impact on retention and other workforce outcomes. Developing more detailed and nuanced accounts of supervision practices will promote further understandings of ways to support and maintain the DFVSA and wider human services workforce.

## Conclusion

Despite significant policy attention and support to prevent and address DFVSA in Australia, it is only recently that strengthening the DFV workforce has appeared in Commonwealth and State plans, strategic policy, and working groups. It is increasingly recognised that a “skilled and sustainable workforce of practitioners” (COAG, 2016, p. 87) is the necessary foundation for high quality programs. Developing such a workforce requires appropriate investment and support (Wendt et al., 2019). Apart from the complex and challenging nature of the work itself, those working at the coal-face of DFVSA services face insecure funding, low remuneration, workforce ageing, high levels of burnout, lack of clarity in job descriptions, and poor access to professional development (Cortis et al., 2018; Victorian Government, 2016; Wendt et al., 2019). Access to professional supervision is an important element of supporting practitioners and must be a priority for service and organisational development.

Our findings underline the need to maintain individual models of supervision as a central workforce strategy across the DFVSA sector. We have shown that supervision makes a difference to workforce outcomes, specifically that individual supervision—on its own or in combination with group supervision—impacts positively on staff retention. Close attention to the evidence-base for supervision, and recognising that its form matters materially to outcomes, is necessary when developing strategies to best support DFVSA practitioners. This calls for managers to adopt a critical stance towards claims that promote the benefits of group-based supervision, especially if pressure to utilise group-based approaches is linked to managerialist logics centred on resource efficiency. While group-based supervision may be beneficial for practitioners in many respects, we recommend a nuanced and evidence-based approach to understanding these approaches.

Although others have shown the benefits of group approaches, including collegiality and peer support, our study indicates that at least for workforce retention, one-on-one supervision, either alone or in combination with group supervision, is more effective. This provides guidance for organisations concerned with the impacts of supervision. Relatedly, our findings call for funders to more rigorously consider the effects of funding levels on services' capacity to offer individual supervision to support their frontline workforces and ensure clients receive quality services.

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## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Sample Characteristics: Receipt of Fortnightly Group and Individual Supervision (*n* = 917)

		Did not receive fortnightly supervision	Fortnightly individual supervision only	Fortnightly group supervision only	Mix of fortnightly individual and group supervision	<i>p</i> - Value
Gender	All	57.7	16.0	8.9	17.3	<.001
	Male ( <i>n</i> = 129)	54.3	17.1	7.0	21.7	NS
Degree	Female ( <i>n</i> = 774)	58.2	15.9	9.3	16.6	
	Has a degree ( <i>n</i> = 615)	55.6	18.9	8.0	17.6	<.01
Field of study (degree- trained only)	Has not ( <i>n</i> = 302)	61.9	10.3	10.9	16.9	
	Law/legal studies ( <i>n</i> = 140)	58.6	14.3	9.3	17.9	NS
	Psychology ( <i>n</i> = 93)	47.3	23.7	4.3	24.7	<.05
	Social work ( <i>n</i> = 226)	57.1	20.8	8.8	13.3	NS
Experience	Another field ( <i>n</i> = 217)	57.6	15.7	7.8	18.9	NS
	<2 years ( <i>n</i> = 131)	48.9	19.1	12.2	19.8	NS
	2–10 years ( <i>n</i> = 431)	57.0	16.4	8.5	18.0	
Age	>10 years ( <i>n</i> = 353)	61.8	14.4	8.2	15.6	
	<35 ( <i>n</i> = 263)	53.6	17.1	9.1	20.2	NS
	35–54 ( <i>n</i> = 447)	56.8	16.0	9.9	17.3	
Hours	55 and over ( <i>n</i> = 198)	65.2	14.6	6.6	13.6	
	Part-time (<35 h) ( <i>n</i> = 337)	60.2	14.5	10.4	14.8	NS
Location	Full time ( <i>n</i> = 580)	56.2	16.9	8.1	18.8	
	Metropolitan area ( <i>n</i> = 543)	55.1	17.9	8.3	18.8	NS
Size	Non-metropolitan area ( <i>n</i> = 374)	61.5	13.4	9.9	15.2	
	>50 staff in organisation ( <i>n</i> = 176)	53.4	17.0	7.4	22.2	<.05
	10–50 staff ( <i>n</i> = 491)	55.2	18.5	9.6	16.7	
	<10 staff ( <i>n</i> = 250)	65.6	10.4	8.8	15.2	

Note: *p*-Value was calculated using chi-square test. NS = non-significant (*p* > .05).



## Appendix 2: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model

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<b>Dependent variable</b>	Intention to leave the organisation in 12 months	Binary (Intended to leave in next 12 months = 1, did not = 0)
<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Type of supervision</b> Fortnightly individual supervision Fortnightly group supervision Mix of individual and group supervision on a fortnightly basis <sup>^</sup>	Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 <sup>^</sup> Those receiving individual and group supervision, each at least monthly were classified as receiving a mix on an average fortnightly basis
<b>Control variables</b>	<b>Individual characteristics</b> Male Aged under 35 Aged 55 or over Under 2 years relevant experience <b>Education</b> Degree in social work Degree in psychology Degree in law/legal studies Another field <b>Work and organisational context</b> Outside metropolitan areas Works part-time (less than 35 h) Works in a small organisation (<10 staff) Works in a large organisation (>50 staff) Days of training received in the last year <sup>^^</sup> <b>Self-perception of work environment</b> Agreed/strongly agreed they received appropriate induction to organisation Agreed/strongly agreed they can spend enough time with each client Agreed/strongly agreed they are paid fairly for the work they do	Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 Binary: No = 0, Yes = 1 <sup>^^</sup> Measured in 4 categories: no training = 1, 1–2 days = 2, 3–5 days = 3, more than 5 days = 4

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