

## Standard 8

# Code of Ethics and Professional Practice for Supervisors and Members of the Association for Supervised Pastoral Education In Australia Incorporated

### 8.1 Pre-ambble

Clinical Pastoral Education(CPE) is a program of education and formation for pastoral care practitioners.. The goal of CPE is that the participant will be acknowledged first hand as the bearer of the sacred and the distinctive provider of spiritual and pastoral care. This takes place primarily in clinical settings where pastoral and spiritual care is practiced. Ethics and a Code of Practice were identified as key issues and became the focus of a future directions working party in 1991. However, it was not until 1997 that it became an urgent priority. Internationally there was a growing awareness of sexual abuse issues in the church and in universities and colleges. ASPEA recognized the need for immediate action and a subcommittee convened by Ms. Lynne Robertson pioneered a code of ethical practice and complaints procedures that was accepted by the Association at the 1998 AGM.<sup>1</sup>

### 8.2 Status of the Code

In 2014 the ASPEA Inc. Executive and Registration and Certification Committee decided it was time for a major revision of the Code of Ethics that had served the Association well for seventeen years. The new code is organized in two sections. Part A is clearly focused on ethics for all Provisional and Accredited ASPEA Inc. Supervisory Members. Part B is for Associate and General Members of ASPEA Inc. Many of the statements in the 1998 Code place responsibility on CPE participants as well as supervisors. ASPEA does not have a student membership and cannot impose the ethics agreed to by Association members on those who are not members of a professional group. However ASPEA Inc. does require that CPE Centres have a CPE Center Code of Ethics for CPE participants and a model Code is found in appendix to Standard 8.

### 8.3 Ethical Principles underlying Supervision and Pastoral Practice

These Code of Ethics are based on ethical principles identified from ethical theories and frameworks. Principles such as:-

**Benefice.** Supervisors do what is beneficial for supervisees and assist supervisees to do what is good for their recipients of care<sup>2</sup>

**Non-malevolence.** Supervisors do not do harm to supervisees and directs supervisees from actions that would harm their recipients of care.

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<sup>1</sup> Joan M. Kenny “A Finger pointing to the Moon” (2003) John Garratt Publishing,, Mulgrave, Victoria, pp. 175-176.

<sup>2</sup> This can include patients, clients, church members

**Autonomy.** Supervisors assist supervisees to move towards autonomy and value freedom and choice. They oversee the supervisee's respect for the self-agency of their recipients of care

**Justice.** Supervisors are respectful, fair, unbiased and equitable in how they work with supervisees and assist supervisees to be respectful, just and impartial in their work so that their recipients of care do not suffer because of their faith, gender, race, disability or sexual orientation.

**Fidelity.** Supervisors are faithful and loyal to the contracts that are entered into with supervisees and see that supervisees fulfil their responsibilities and keep their commitments to the recipients of care.

#### **8.4 Declaration of Maintenance of Standards of Supervisory practice.**

At the time of payment of the annual membership fee and renewal of registration as an ASPEA member for the following 12 months, supervisory members and ordinary members shall also sign a declaration that:

1. The current "Code of Ethics and Professional Practice" applicable to their membership has been read and is accepted by the member as their code of ethical practice;
2. Provide a declaration of professional conduct indicating either that no complaints have been received in the previous 12 months, or a complaint is currently being investigated, or if a complaint has been investigated a summary of the outcome;
3. That they have completed the required hours of professional development for their membership status.

### **8.5 Part A: Code of Ethics and Professional Practice for Supervisory members -**

The purpose of this Code is to establish and maintain standards of ethical behavior for supervisors who are members of ASPEA Inc. and to inform and protect participants seeking courses in Clinical Pastoral Education and practitioners seeking supervision. While this code cannot resolve all ethical and practice related dilemmas, it aims to provide a framework for addressing ethical issues in supervisor – supervisee relationships.

#### **8.5.1 Supervisory Responsibility for Ethical awareness of Supervisees**

This Code requires that ASPEA Inc. Supervisors ensure that each CPE participant<sup>3</sup> they supervise will have received, read and signed a declaration that they have read the Code of Ethics and Professional practice of the CPE Centre in which they are training prior to their commencement in a CPE program. A CPE Centre Code of ethics will set out the ethical responsibilities of the CPE participant towards those to whom they offer pastoral care, CPE peers, Institutional staff, and themselves.

#### **8.5.2 Human rights of all individuals**

A fundamental principle that underlies all ASPEA Inc. Supervisory practice is respect for the inherent dignity, worth, unique attributes and human rights of all individuals. CPE supervisors consider the needs and respect the values of the CPE participants they

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<sup>3</sup> CPE participants may also be known as students or interns

supervise, the people to whom the practitioners provide pastoral care and the CPE peers and other professional colleagues with whom the CPE participants work.

### **8.5.3 Limitations: personal awareness is important for Supervisors.**

CPE Supervisors are involved in the selection of those they will supervise. At the selection stage of the process the supervisor should seek from applicants information that will assist them to determine the supervisory issues that may be faced in order to assist the supervisor to assess their own capacity to manage the potential supervisory issues. This includes the CPE participants' capacity to manage themselves as caregivers when those they care for are experiencing trauma, emotional crisis, and extreme stress. Supervisors may request that applicants share their personal life story in their application for Clinical Pastoral Education. The Centre Director and Supervisor need to ask whether or not the supervisor has the capacity to endure the journey of the CPE unit with this CPE participant. Factors such as early formative experiences, culture, value systems, religious or spiritual beliefs, lifestyle, sexual orientation or gender expression, and primary language should be considered at this stage to determine the appropriate supervisory alliance or appropriate referral. ASPEA Inc. is now a multicultural and multifaith organization committed to providing education and improving the quality of pastoral care offered by spiritual caregivers of all faiths. Supervisors should only include in a CPE unit people of different faiths if they are sure the CPE supervisors and peer group, can provide an emotionally safe environment for each member of the group.

### **8.5.4 An environment and culture of civility and kindness.**

As the CPE unit begins, the supervisor needs to establish a relationship of trust with the CPE participant, setting aside any bias or prejudice. The CPE Supervisor creates an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness, treating CPE participants, employees, recipients of pastoral care, administrators, colleagues, referees and others with dignity and respect. This standard of conduct includes an affirmative duty to act to prevent harm. Bullying, exploitation, harassment, intimidation, manipulation, threats or violence are always morally unacceptable behaviors. These behaviours are distinct from the acknowledgement of differences, the sharing of stories and feelings, the presentation of contradiction, the request to provide clinical evidence that one has met a formulated goal, confrontation with a complaint from a recipient of care or an authority within the clinical context, and the request for transparency in a peer group setting.

### **8.5.5 Forming intimate relationships**

A supervisor shall not become romantically or sexually involved with a CPE participant while they are engaged in a CPE unit even if both are single adults. A sexual relationship between a supervisor and a CPE participant is morally unacceptable behavior in this Association. The Association recommends that supervisors do not become romantically or sexually involved with a CPE participant following termination of the supervisory relationship until the same length of time has elapsed as the supervisory relationship had been in place.

### **8.5.6 Multiple relationships**

Supervisors are reminded that dual relationships can complicate and sabotage supervision. Being a line manager, psychotherapist, friend, priest or minister can bring complications to the supervision that may not be in the interest of either supervisor or

CPE participant. In some situations and working on some issues, a workplace manager can provide excellent supervision, in other situations this can impede the supervisory process.

### **8.5.7 Disputes between ASPEA members**

If you are a supervisory member of ASPEA Inc. and you have a complaint against or dispute with another member of ASPEA you should consult and follow the direction set out in Rule 8 of the Association, 'Disputes and Mediation'.

### **8.5.8 CPE Participants Complaints**

A CPE participant or other person who is not a member of ASPEA Inc. who wishes to make a complaint about an ASPEA Inc. Supervisor or needs to express a grievance towards an ASPEA Inc. Supervisor or ASPEA Inc. member is encouraged to take the steps as outlined in 8.5.8.1-8.5.8.9. ASPEA Inc. encourages CPE participants to work out concerns, disputes or grievances informally, face to face, and in the spirit of collegiality and mutual respect.

If differences are not resolved, a complaint involving an alleged violation of ASPEA Inc. Code of Ethics and Professional Practice may be acted upon in the following manner:

**8.5.8.1** The complainant will request a meeting with the CPE Centre Director. The complainant can decide if they wish to include their supervisor in this meeting. If the Centre Director is the one about whom the complaint is made the Centre Director will request that either the manager to whom they are accountable or the ASPEA Inc. Registration and Certification Committee Chairperson take his/her place in the dispute process. The Centre Director in considering the seriousness of the complaint will decide whether the dispute can be resolved by mediation within the Centre with or without the assistance of local consultants. For example, if the CPE participant's complaint is that the supervisor is underperforming, the Centre Director shall manage the Supervisor's performance as set out in 8.5.13 below. If the complaint is resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant and the supervisor, the Centre Director will make a written one page report of the process that will be signed by the three parties involved. A copy of this report will be kept in the Centre's file and a general statement of the complaint and the outcome sent to the Registration and Certification Committee Chairperson.

**8.5.8.2** If the supervisor is the CPE participant's individual supervisor, the Centre Director will consider whether either of the following actions are necessary: - changing the CPE participant's supervisor or temporary suspension of the supervisor from all their duties until the complaint can be considered. If the supervisor is the Course Coordinator, the Centre Director will attend any group in which the CPE participant is present until such time as the dispute is satisfactorily resolved.

**8.5.8.3** If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the Centre Director shall email the ASPEA Inc. President, Secretary and Chairperson of the Registration and Certification Committee (see ASPEA website for contact details). The Centre Director will also encourage the complainant to email all or one of the above. The President will arrange and chair a meeting of these three ASPEA Inc. representatives with the complainant, the complainant's chosen support person and the Centre Director to hear the complaint.

- 8.5.8.4** Depending on the nature and seriousness of the ethical complaint, the Association President, Secretary and Chairperson of Registration and Certification Committee shall form a three person committee to meet with the supervisor, and their chosen support person.
- 8.5.8.5** The President, Secretary and Chairperson of Registration and Certification Committee and any other supervisor or consultant assisting in the mediation of the complaint shall be paid an honorarium for each attendance at a meeting. The ASPEA Treasurer will send an invoice for the cost of the complaint mediation to the Centre Director of the Centre in which the complaint was raised.
- 8.5.8.6** As a result of its consultation, the “Ad Hoc Complaints Mediation Committee” can by majority resolution either recommend to the Registration and Certification Committee that a supervisor be disciplined in accordance with Rule 7 of The Rules of the Association, or that the complaint be dismissed.
- 8.5.8.7** The findings of the “Ad Hoc Complaints Mediation Committee” will be forwarded to the Executive for ratification of recommendations or further amendment.
- 8.5.8.8** Any action by the Executive of the Association shall follow Rule 7 of the Rules of the Association.
- 8.5.8.9** The Centre Director, ASPEA Inc. President, Secretary and Chairperson of the Registration and Certification Committee shall encourage both the complainant and the supervisor to speak to someone they trust and find supportive and if necessary provide the person with details about gaining a referral from their GP under the Better Access to Mental Health Care Plan to see a Medicare Registered Psychologist or Social Worker. They may also bring to the attention of the complainant and the supervisor the following information if it is felt that immediate assistance or support is needed.  
**Lifeline:** 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)  
**beyondblue: the national depression initiative**  
1300 22 4636 (1300 bb info) or [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)  
**Black Dog Institute**  
[www.blackdoginstitute.com.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.com.au)  
**Employee Assistance Programs** provided by workplace

## **8.5.9 Maintaining Professional Relationships**

Supervisors will maintain good standing in their faith or spiritual tradition. They will abide by and accurately teach the professional standards and practices established by the Federal and State Governments and the institution in which they are employed. Supervisors shall not directly or by implication claim professional qualifications that exceed actual qualifications. Supervisors shall continue their professional education and development, including participation in the meetings and activities of ASPEA Inc.

## **8.5.10 The Conduct of Business**

Supervisors will conduct their administrative responsibilities in a timely and professional manner. Centre Directors or supervisors responsible for budgets shall implement sound fiscal practices, maintain accurate financial records and protect the

integrity of funds or grants entrusted to their care. They will accurately describe the CPE Centre and the educational programs offered. Publications advertising a Centre's programs shall accurately describe program expectations, including time requirements.

### **8.5.11 Confidentiality**

Supervisors shall respect the confidentiality of CPE participants. All pastoral and supervisory communications shall be held in the professional confidence of the ASPEA Inc. context of case presentation training, interpersonal group processes, individual supervision, debriefing and processes of review and accreditation to the extent permitted by Federal or State laws. Supervisors shall respect the integrity and wellbeing of the CPE participants with whom they are working. At the commencement of a training unit, supervisors will negotiate a level of confidentiality within each individual training group that is acceptable to the immediate group. Supervisors shall follow established guidelines in the design of research involving human subjects and gain approval from the institutions human research ethics committee before conducting such research.

### **8.5.12 Privacy**

ASPEA Inc. supervisors will respect and adhere to the Privacy Policy of the institution within which they are functioning. They will also familiarize themselves with the Privacy Legislation Act and the following three legislated ways in which pastoral practitioners, supervisors and participants in Clinical Pastoral Education programs can professionally gain supervision of their clinical work and also respect the privacy of individuals.

**8.5.12.1** The Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) does accept disclosures involved when health services providers seek supervision and consultation in the context of their training or employment.

**8.5.12.2** For the purposes of education where the documentation of cases is an essential learning process ASPEA Inc. unambiguously recommends that it is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that all documentation of cases be de-identified.

**8.5.12.3** The Association further recommends that supervisors in training gain the written consent of their CPE participants when they document their supervision for purposes of accreditation.

### **8.5.13 The "Right to Due Process" in response to unsatisfactory performance**

Underperformance, or unsatisfactory performance, is when a CPE participant is not performing their pastoral care duties in accordance with the ASPEA standards, or not following hospital or institution policies, rules or procedures

If a CPE participant is underperforming, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to address this within supervision.

It is important that both supervisor and CPE participant have discussed and agreed

on a proposed solution together, including clear and reasonable steps for improvement. The supervisor and CPE participant will document their understanding of the meeting and the outcomes; plus exchange their written evaluations of the meeting for ongoing discussion.

CPE supervisors will respect the rights of CPE participants by giving feedback, warning and education for improvement in a timely manner

## **8.6 Part B: Code of Ethics and Professional Practice for ordinary members of ASPEA**

The purpose of this Code is to establish and maintain standards of ethical behavior for ordinary members of ASPEA Inc. and to inform and protect recipients of pastoral care. While this code cannot resolve all ethical and practice related dilemmas, it aims to provide a framework for addressing ethical issues within pastoral relationships.

### **8.6.1 Human rights of all individuals**

A fundamental principle that underlies all ASPEA Inc. member practice is respect for the inherent dignity, worth, unique attributes and human rights of all individuals. ASPEA Members consider the needs and respect the values of the recipients of their pastoral care and other professional colleagues with whom they work.

### **8.6.2 An environment and culture of civility and kindness.**

Members of ASPEA Inc. promote an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness, treating recipients of care, fellow employees, administrators, colleagues and others with dignity and respect. This standard of conduct includes an affirmative duty to act to prevent harm. Bullying, exploitation, harassment, intimidation, manipulation, threats or violence are always morally unacceptable behaviors.

### **8.6.3 Forming intimate relationships**

A member of ASPEA Inc. shall not become romantically or sexually involved with a recipient of their pastoral care while they are the person's pastoral practitioner even if both are single adults. A sexual relationship between a pastoral practitioner and a recipient of pastoral care is morally unacceptable behavior in this Association. The Association recommends that members do not become romantically or sexually involved with a recipient of pastoral care following termination of the pastoral relationship until the same length of time has elapsed as the pastoral relationship had been in place.

### **8.6.4 Other multiple relationships**

Members are reminded that other dual relationships also complicate and can sabotage pastoral care. Being a business partner, line manager, psychotherapist, friend, priest or minister can bring complication to the pastoral care that may not be in the interests of either caregiver or cared for.

### **8.6.5 Disputes between ASPEA Inc. members**

If you are a member of ASPEA Inc. and you have a complaint against or dispute with another member of ASPEA you should consult and follow the direction set out in the Rules of the Association 8 'Disputes and Mediation'.

### **8.6.6 Maintaining Professional Relationships**

Members will maintain good standing in their faith or spiritual tradition. They will abide by and accurately teach the professional standards and practices established by the Federal and State Government and the institution or hospital in which they are employed. Members shall not directly or by implication claim professional qualifications that exceed actual qualifications. Members shall continue their professional education and growth, including participation in the meetings and activities of ASPEA Inc.

### **8.6.7 Confidentiality**

Members shall respect the confidentiality of recipients of their pastoral care. All pastoral communications shall be held in professional confidence to the extent permitted by Federal or State laws. Members shall follow established guidelines in the design of research involving human subjects and gain approval from recognized institutional review boards before conducting such research.

### **8.6.8 Privacy**

ASPEA Inc. members will respect and adhere to the Privacy Policy of the institution within which they are functioning. They will also familiarize themselves with the Privacy Legislation Act and the following three legislated ways in which pastoral practitioners, supervisors and participants in Clinical Pastoral Education programs can professionally gain supervision of their clinical work and also respect the privacy of individuals.

**8.6.8.1** The Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) does accept disclosures involved when health services providers seek supervision and consultation in the context of their training or employment.

**8.6.8.2** For the purposes of education where the documentation of cases is an essential learning process ASPEA Inc unambiguously recommends that all documentation of cases be de-identified.

### **8.6.9 Identification**

Pastoral Care practitioners will wear identification through which they are clearly identified as stipulated by the institution in which they work..