

The Future of Pharmacy - Part 4

The Evolving Role of Supervision in Pharmacy Practice

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of article, you will be able to...

- Consider how 4Front's 6Ps of Pharmacy Excellence model can equip supervising pharmacists to supervise from an increasingly 'Sage Perspective.'
- Examine evolving challenges supervising pharmacists face
- Discuss 'Supervision' within (and beyond) the Pharmacy context
- Identify personal, professional and business factors that impact the quality of a pharmacist's supervision
- Describe three key supervisor interventions to enhance team performance and patient safety
- Prioritise your next steps towards a becoming an even higher-value supervisor

INTRODUCTION:

IPN's Pharmacy Business Excellence Series is for community pharmacists committed to growing their professional and business knowledge and skills to overcome challenges and thrive as a community pharmacist.

IPN is proud to partner with 4Front Pharmacy to bring you the **'IPN/4Front Pharmacy Business Excellence Series.'**

In this series, you will apply 4Front's 6P's of Pharmacy Excellence to navigate the 'Future of Pharmacy.'

4Front's 6P's of Pharmacy Excellence are

1. Personal Leadership
2. Professional Practice
3. Person-Centred Care (Patients/Customers/Staff/Other Healthcare Professionals)
4. Products and Services
5. Promotion
6. Prosperity (Profit and Time)

Each month, Rachel Dungan 'The Pharmacist Coach,' guides you to apply **4Front's 6Ps of Pharmacy Excellence Framework** to create your pharmacy future. While Rachel is the creator of this framework and the author of these articles, YOU are the author of your career, your future. The future of pharmacy is in your hands, in your heart, in your head.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to use this framework as a guide to

- (re)activate your inner scientist, so you run the experiments required to take your next bold move towards an ever more compelling future
- develop mastery as you embrace your challenges and opportunities
- take PRIDE in what you do as you create an ever more prosperous future
- equip, enable, engage and empower yourself, your team and your patients to become more proactive about managing your own health and wellbeing.

In Part 1 (July 2021) of 'The Future of Pharmacy,' Business CPD Series, we identified **4Front's Personal Leadership pillar** as the foundation of Pharmacy Excellence. In Part 2 (Aug 2021), we discussed how mastery of **4Front's Promotion pillar** amplifies your ability to promote the value of health, the value of pharmacy, the value of your products and services, and the value of your professional expertise. In Part 3 (Sept 2021) we focused on how **4Front's Professional pillar** can equip us to navigate potential conflicts of interest between personal, professional and business priorities. In this article, we focus on **4Front's People pillar**, in relation to the evolving role of supervision and the supervising pharmacist in pharmacy practice.

Consider how mastery of **4Front's People pillar** lifts performance in the other 5Ps?

Where is the best place to focus to continually grow and develop yourself and the people you supervise in a way that

- honours the PSI Code of Conduct,
- creates a healthy, positive, learning environment,
- empowers, equips, enables and engages you and your team to be at your best,
- increases your confidence, integrity and reputation, and
- future proofs your career, your business and our profession?

What evolving challenges do supervising pharmacists face?

Pharmacy, healthcare systems, patient, staff expectations and the world in which pharmacy services are provided have experienced exponential change since the 'roles and responsibilities of supervising pharmacists' were described in 2008.

From a professional lens,

- governance has evolved to include CPD and Practice Review, Pharmacy Assessment System, the Core Competency Framework, the Code of Conduct and Practice Guidance and Standards on a variety of practice areas and many more.
- The complexity of the medical treatments, the medicine supply chain and the health system in which we operate has deepened.

- We are required to do more with less resources – and this will continue to be so, as the level of human consumption of the Earth's resources is unsustainable.

The increasing responsibility easily creates overwhelm and begs the question – 'How could one person supervise all this?' What would need to change in how you view 'supervision' that takes into account the complexity of the world in which we operate and the responsibilities we must fulfil?

From a technology perspective

- Medical information (and misinformation) has been democratised with the internet
- Virtual communication methods are exploding. A decade ago, telephone and fax were the primary virtual methods of virtual communication. Now, electronic prescribing, electronic consultations, social media, digital ordering and booking systems are the norm and rapidly evolving.
- Prescribing, dispensing, medicine supply systems are becoming increasingly automated. Indeed, it is predicted that anything that can be SOP'd, will be automated by the end of the decade.
- According to Hawkins 'This technological revolution will fundamentally alter the way we live, work and relate to one another. In its scale, scope and complexity, the transformation will be unlike anything humankind has experienced before. We do not yet know how it will unfold, but the response to it must be integrated, comprehensive, involving all stakeholders locally, globally, private, public, academia and civil society'.

From a social, economic and ecological lens,

- There is greater demand for pharmacy services as world population and life expectancy continue to grow.
- We are a multi-generational workforce and customer-base, with different values, different priorities, different motivations and high expectations.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that we are all inter-dependent and inter-

connected. Our health is not our own. If we want well-being (social, economic, ecological, psychological and physical) we must supervise in a way that creates healthy, rather than toxic, environments.

In summary, we are now living in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

What do we mean by 'Super-vision'?

According to the 'Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of Superintendent and Supervising Pharmacists.' Published in the IRISH PHARMACY JOURNAL OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2008 'The Supervising Pharmacist of a practice is the professional who is in whole-time charge of the operation of the pharmacy, and has three years' post-registration experience. This individual is responsible for all operations of the pharmacy, even when absent, and has a reporting relationship to the superintendent pharmacist.'

To expand the perspective of 'super-vision' beyond pharmacy to include 'Supervision in the Helping Professions' (Hawkins and McMahon 2020), supervision is defined as 'a joint endeavour in which the practitioner, with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients (patients and staff), themselves as part of their client-practitioner relationships and the wider systemic and ecological contexts, and by so doing improves the quality of their work, transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession.'

Integrating the developmental role of educator, with that of being the provider of support to your supervisees and ensuring the quality of your supervisees' work with their clients, colleagues, organisation and organisation's stakeholders is not a simple task. These are weighty responsibilities, for which most of us have not received formal training or supervisory feedback on our role.

Indeed, most of us have not prioritised the absolutely critical discipline of regularly and intentionally creating the space to strategically reflect on the bigger picture in which we operate. We are often too stressed and too busy surviving to lift our heads above the parapet. This short sighted strategy greatly hampers our ability to fulfil our supervision function.

In this context, it is clear that many of the supervision norms of yesterday are no longer fit for purpose. How do we know?

The work culture cultivated in many pharmacies is not yet one that genuinely:

- fosters resilience and wellbeing
- develops a positive, energising, learning culture,
- focuses on the right thing to do (from multiple points of view),
- builds team cohesiveness,
- grows team capabilities and
- delivers significant value and impact for all stakeholders (regulators, business owners, community in which your pharmacy operates, patients and customers, staff, suppliers and partners, future generations, the ecological environment, etc)

Instead, chronic, unrelenting stressors create dysfunction within the helping professions, because when we become stressed, we absorb more disturbance, distress and dis-ease from our environment, colleagues and patients than we are able to process and let go of. Symptoms that you and/or your team members may have exceeded your stress buffering capacity (amplified by COVID pandemic) include:

- **Physical** symptoms such as migraines, difficulty sleeping, over-tiredness, loss of appetite or desire to comfort eat
- **Mental** symptoms such as difficulty concentrating, ruminating on negative thoughts, worry, worst case scenario thinking, seeing yourself as a victim (of circumstance, of someone else, of a system)
- **Behavioural** symptoms such as 'compassion fatigue,' (pretending to care or playing the role of carer - but resenting it), avoiding colleagues, situations or patients, turning to drink, over-eating, smoking, gambling or mindlessly scrolling social media, being more accident or mistake prone, increased absenteeism, engaging in destructive interactions such as gossiping, blaming, complaining, hiding mistakes etc.
- **Emotional** symptoms such as wide swings in feelings and moods, not wanting to get up in the morning, feeling anxiety, fear, anger, resentment or guilt in relation to work.
- **Apathy, Boredom and Loss of Interest**, can occur in people whose learning and development journey stagnates (Hawkins). Everything becomes 'same-old, same-old,' with an increasing tendency to treat new colleagues, new patients or new situations as just repeat representatives of those encountered earlier in their career.
- **'The Great Resignation.'** This is a term coined by Anthony Klotz to describe the rise in people

who are resigning from their job in 2021. The Great Resignation could be seen as a symptom of dissatisfaction with the status quo and an opportunity to embrace new ways of thinking and being.

One thing is for sure. As supervising pharmacist, you are in a position of influence. This position of influence means that your impact on the systems in which you operate is significant. Your energy, your beliefs, your values, your saboteurs, your strengths and your behaviours infiltrate every aspect of the pharmacy in which you act as supervising pharmacist. The degree to which you and your team flourishes or languishes is largely in your hands. The best supervisors are humble, teachable and always learning.

What are some factors that affect the quality of your supervision?

- Your Knowledge of the Legal, Professional and Ethical Frameworks in which we operate
- Your Personal Wellbeing Habits
- Your Mental Fitness and Resources to Sustain Resilience
- The Mental Fitness / Stress / Resilience level of your team
- Your Willingness to Learn new Skills and Unlearn Redundant and Unhelpful ones
- Self-Awareness regarding your own Needs, Emotions, Strengths, Saboteurs, Values, Vision, Motivation, Impact on others
- Your Skill at holding a Wider, Systemic, Big Picture View.
- Your Skill in Reflecting On Your Own Learning and How you are Impacting Your Supervisees. What has worked? What has not worked so well? What different approaches could you try next time?
- Your Support Structures, such as clear feedback loops, dedicated space for both personal and team strategic thinking, dedicated appointments with your own supervisor, coach or mentor. If you don't have the space, time and thinking partner(s) with which to reflect your plans, decisions and actions, the quality of your supervision will suffer.
- Clarity on Measures. You and each of your supervisees must explicitly agree on what success looks like and how value is measured.

As a supervisor, one of your highest value responsibilities is to create a positive, energising, learning culture that empowers,

engages, equips and enables your team to do their highest value work, within their scope of practice. Focusing on developing a learning culture will enable you to deepen your supervisory skills, so that you create a virtuous cycle of continuous and never ending improvement. It all starts with restoring and recharging your personal wellbeing foundation, and encouraging your team to join you in your endeavours.

Your Personal Wellbeing Habits

Practice physical wellbeing habits, especially while at work and even on a hectic day. Consider how satisfied you are currently with the physical wellbeing habits you and the team you supervise currently practice. From the five focus areas below, choose one in which you and your team could create a habit that would nurture your team's vitality and create a virtuous cycle of wellbeing and high performance?

- **Breathing.** I breathe through my nose 24/7. I do daily breathing exercises and pay conscious attention to when, how, how often I breathe while at work. *One of the most accurate measures of vitality is the BOLT score (Body Oxygen Level Test). A BOLT score of >40 seconds is the goal for optimal energy. The BOLT score takes less than a minute to complete and is done when you are at rest, by holding your breath and timing how many seconds it takes before your body starts giving you the signals that it wants you to breath. The BOLT score is the time taken between holding your breath and those first indications.*
- **Hydration.** I drink at least 1.5L of water throughout the day. *Being dehydrated by just 2% impairs performance in tasks that require attention, psychomotor, and immediate memory skills, as well as assessment of the subjective state.*
- **Sleep.** I routinely get sufficient quality and quantity of sleep. I go to bed at the same time and consistently wake up feeling refreshed and alert. *Insufficient sleep can negatively affect mood, attention, memory and health in far-reaching ways.*
- **Eating Well.** I pay attention to the timing, quality and quantity of food I eat. While it is well known that healthy eating is important for health, many supervisors do not realise that the foods we eat have a direct impact on our work performance. *For example, research conducted by scientists at Brigham Young University revealed that employees who rarely ate fruits and vegetables at work were 93% more likely to have a higher loss in productivity.*

• **Movement.** I move my body in ways that deliberately build strength, balance, flexibility and stamina. I do not sit for longer than 45 mins at a stretch. *Employees who had difficulty exercising during the day were 96 percent more likely to have increased productivity loss.*

Practice mental wellbeing habits, proven to enhance you and your team's ability to flourish. The field of Positive Psychology has identified practices across five key areas (PERMA), proven to enhance wellbeing, happiness and performance. By intentionally integrating wellbeing habits into the 'way we do things around here,' you bake mental fitness into your workplace culture. Examples of habits supervising pharmacists and their pharmacy teams have successfully implemented include

• **Positive Emotions.** Barbara Fredrickson's Broaden and Build Theory demonstrates that positive emotions create more positive emotions (and negative emotions create more negative emotions). Evidence based ways to increase positive emotions include to start each day by sharing three things you appreciate/am grateful for with your team. Smile regularly. Practice relaxation techniques (such as yogic breathing, restorative yoga, meditation, guided visualisations). Develop your Sage Powers of Empathise (which encompasses the Values in Action Character Strengths of gratitude, appreciation, love, forgiveness, kindness) and Explore (which encompasses the Values In Action Character Strengths of curiosity, creativity, love of learning).

• **Engagement (state of being in flow).** According to Gallup, engaged employees are "those who are involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work and workplace". According to Gallup, in Western Europe, only 10 percent of employees are engaged at work. Luckily, according to Positive Psychology researcher Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, one way to increase engagement or flow is to regularly provide your supervisees with opportunities to achieve intrinsically rewarding goals, aligned with their strengths, concentrate on a task that balances challenge with skill and provide timely developmental feedback. In addition, according to Forbes, supervisees who feel their voice is heard are x4.6 more likely to feel empowered to perform their best work. On the flip-side 33% of professionals cite boredom as the reason they leave their job. Creating a positive, learning

culture of continuous and never ending improvement (CANI) is a powerful antidote to complacency, burnout and boredom.

- **Relationships.** As a supervisor, it is essential to create a positive work environment that brings out the best in everyone, where the team is continually supported to stay ahead of the curve and where everyone feels they want to stay working with you. A key role of a supervisor is to find out what each supervisee enjoys doing, times they have felt most energised at work and to bring in under-utilised strengths. Skilled use of the Positive Intelligence Operating System is a powerful tool to enhance your ability to build healthy relationships. In conflict, it helps you to recognise your own and other's saboteur interference, practice PQ Reps and switch from Saboteur to Sage mode. Character Strengths that are particularly helpful to foster healthy relationships are curiosity, honesty, leadership, teamwork, fairness, social intelligence, self-regulation and kindness. NOTE: Character Strengths are all learnable.
- **Meaning and Purpose.** As a supervisor, your supervisees will be happier, healthier and more productive if you share a common understanding of the purpose of your work, why its important to develop their mental fitness, develop their capabilities, and accomplish team goals, in alignment with your pharmacy's mission, vision and values. Never assume that the purpose is obvious. Always share your why!

- **Achievement.** Supervisees who receive encouraging and honest feedback on their work, feel a sense of accomplishment and success.

Supervisor Intervention Styles

According to Heron, a skilled supervisor uses one of six intervention styles to develop their supervisee. As you read them, notice which styles you tend to use the most and which are in your 'stretch' zone. In each case, think of a time when you used that intervention style and it had a positive impact on your supervisee's learning. Now, think of a time when you used that same intervention style and it did NOT have the desired positive impact on your supervisee's development. What was different? The styles are:

- **Prescriptive intervention** – seeks to direct the behaviour of the supervisee. It is usually used when the behaviour is outside the scope of practice of the supervisee E.g. 'Nurofen Plus is a pharmacist-only medicine. The

sale of OTC codeine containing products is outside of your scope of practice.'

- **Informative intervention** – imparts knowledge, information or meaning to the supervisee. E.g. 'Paracetamol overdose can cause liver failure'.
- **Confronting intervention** – raise awareness in your supervisee about some limiting attitude or behaviours of which they are usually unaware. E.g. 'Are you aware that not placing the hi-tech order on time resulted in the patient being without their medicine for 4 days?'
- **Cathartic intervention** – enables the supervisee to discharge and process painful emotions, usually anger, grief or fear. E.g. 'You look worried. What concerns or fears do you have about the COVID vaccination service?'
- **Catalytic intervention** – elicits self-discovery, self-directed living, learning and problem solving. E.g. 'What gives you energy? What drains your energy?'
- **Supportive intervention** – affirms the worth and value of the supervisee's person, qualities, attitudes or actions. E.g. 'I really appreciate your patience and attention to detail in researching the pros and cons before making a decision.'

In applying any of these intervention styles, 4Front's STEPS Consultation Framework can be a useful feedback framework.

Empathise is the fulcrum on which the success of your intervention depends. Mutual respect, compassion, empathy, honour and integrity all build trust between you and your supervisees. When the team trusts that you have their best interests at heart, it also increases their willingness to share what is really going on for them, to receive your feedback and act upon your advice. Without a firm foundation of vulnerability based trust, both supervisor and supervisee can end the conversation feeling frustrated, not having identified or solved the real problem.

During developmental conversations between you and your supervisee, it requires that you continually

- master your own Saboteurs, Judgements and Stress
- demonstrate empathy,
- stay curious long enough to understand your supervisee's ideas, concerns and expectations,
- identify the cause the problem or challenge,
- offer a context specific intervention and

- safety net with your supervisee.

Professional Self-Reflection Questions

The future of pharmacy and the role of supervising pharmacist is in flux. As you think about pharmacy of the future, consider the following questions with your team, supervisor, coach, mentor or other confidante to help you decide on the most effective path to professional growth and creating value in your pharmacy practice.

- What does 'supervision' mean to you? What does 'supervision' mean to each member of your team? What could 'supervision' mean to you in the future?
- What are examples of you and your team acting in ways that build your mental fitness and embrace continuous and never ending improvement?
- What are examples of negative behaviours you are tolerating? What are the consequences of continuing to tolerate these behaviours?
- What daily habits will you develop within your team, that would support you all to empower, equip, enable and engage one another to achieve your goals?
- What can you do to reduce negative behaviours?
- What potential conflicts of interest are important to identify and proactively address?
- What is work that ONLY you can do (as a pharmacist, as a supervisor)? What activities do you need to stop doing in order to prioritise work that ONLY you can do? What could you delegate? What could you defer? What could you eliminate? What could you automate?
- What conversations / training / upskilling is required to support you and each member of your team to step into your highest value work?

Summary

Being a Supervising Pharmacist can be an isolated and lonely job. Many clinicians and supervisors in other helping professions have the routine support of supervisors to help sustain their learning, development, resilience and quality of work throughout what may be a 50 year career. In a world where there is ever more demand, greater expectations of quality and fewer resources, maybe now is a good time to consider how best to provide supervisory support to supervising pharmacists to enable them to be at their best in the supervision of others?

Next Steps

- Answer the Self-Reflection questions and record a CPD cycle.
- Dedicate regular time in your diary to pause, reflect and debrief your reflections to ensure that you are not just busy, but intentionally moving in the right direction, for the right reasons.
- Re-read Part 1, 2 and 3 of this Future of Pharmacy series and reflect on how 4Front's 6Ps of Pharmacy Excellence inter-relate for you
- Foster resilience and wellbeing by implementing a structured, systematic way to build you and your team's resilience and mental fitness. As we discussed in Part 1 of this series, there are three core pillars of mental fitness – recognising and intercepting our saboteur voices, habitually building your

RESOURCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. As an IPN reader, we invite you to register for FREE pharmacy team training www.4FrontPharmacy.ie. You can also browse our range of online programmes to support you and your team to develop your consultation skills, gain OTC product knowledge and deal with medical emergencies.
2. 4FrontPharmacy Solutions will be hosting two cohorts of the Positive Intelligence® flagship 8-week Mental Fitness Programme specifically for pharmacists and their teams over the coming months. To find out more about how this Programme and Coaching can help you improve morale, wellbeing and team performance, drive your sales and improve patient safety email rachel@racheldungan.com and use the subject line 'IPN Oct 2021.'

AUTHOR: Rachel Dungan MPSI, ACC.

Rachel Dungan MPSI, MIF, ACC. Community Pharmacist. Lifestyle Medicine Advisor. Positive Intelligence Certified Coach. European Mentoring & Coaching Council Senior Practitioner. Award-Winning Wellbeing and Leadership Coach known as 'The Pharmacist Coach.' Rachel worked for 20 years as a supervising and superintendent pharmacist. Now, more than ever, her vision is to empower, equip, enable and engage pharmacists and their teams with the knowledge and skills required to focus on what is most important, rediscover joy and happiness and help them build the habits to put their own oxygen mask on first. She is co-founder of www.4FrontPharmacy.ie.

Its mission is to raise the global standard of pharmacy consultations by empowering pharmacists and their teams to expand their perspective, knowledge and skills to create sustainable health behaviour change.



mental fitness muscles (as opposed to your chronic stress neurocircuitry), and developing access to your Strengths and Sage Brain.

- Engage in ongoing strategies, such as mentoring, coaching or supervision to develop yourself as a supervisor, so you have the reflective space to receive support, knowledge and skills to create and sustain a positive, energising learning environment for your supervisees.

Further Reading

- 'Supervision in the Helping Professions' by Peter Hawkins and Aisling McMahon
- 'Positive Intelligence' by Shirzad Chamine
- The Saboteur Assessment at www.positiveintelligence.com/assessments.
- 'Learned Optimism' by Martin Seligman
- Values In Action Strengths Profile VIA Survey of Character Strengths | Positive Psychology Center (upenn.edu)

Supervising People CPD Cycle

S

Self-Appraisal WHAT I intend to learn and why

I have been recently appointed as Supervising Pharmacist. I want to ensure that I am up to speed on my new role and responsibilities, so I practice legally, professionally and ethically.

P

Personal Plan HOW I intend to learn it

I plan to

- Log into the PSI Website and download any guidance for Supervising Pharmacists
- Speak with colleagues who are working in the role of Supervising Pharmacist
- Speak to the pharmacy owner and superintendent pharmacist to clarify expectations
- Record my learnings in the first few weeks of my new role in this CPD cycle

A

Action What I actually did

- As above PLUS
- I reviewed the IPN business CPD articles on 'the Future of Pharmacy,' because they have an article specifically about the role of Supervision in Pharmacy Practice
- I contacted the article author Rachel Dungan MPSI
- I applied to be a mentee on the IOP Pharmacist Mentoring Programme

D

Document What I have learned specifically

- I had been taking a very limited, narrow view of the role of supervising pharmacist, but my conversation with Rachel and reading the IPN article expanded my perspective enormously.

E

Evaluate ONE example of how I put my learning into practice

- I had never considered Pharmacy Mentoring until I spoke to Rachel Dungan and she shared her experience as a mentor on the IOP Mentoring Pilot. The opportunity to have a confidential space to explore my professional practice excites me, so I wrote to the IOP to submit an expression of interest for their upcoming Mentoring Programme.
- Having spoken to Rachel Dungan, I have enrolled in the 8-Week Positive Intelligence Programme® as a way to enhancing my ability to embrace the challenges and opportunities that being a Supervising Pharmacist will bring.
- I now view my teammates as supervisees, and my primary roles as supervisor are to champion my supervisees growth and development, support them to navigate challenges and enable them to do higher quality and value work, which plays to their strengths. This is far more energising and exciting for me to wrap my head around than the idea of being a 'command and control' style supervisor.

CCF Domains (and Competencies)

The Pharmacist selected Competencies under the following domains for this CPD Professional Practice (Professional, Ethical, Legal, CPD), 2. Personal Skills (Leadership Skills, Decision Making Skills, Team-Working Skills, Communication Skills)

Contributed by Rachel Dungan MPSI of 4Front Pharmacy. To find out more about how 4Front Pharmacy's Positive Intelligence® Programme and Coaching can help you improve morale, wellbeing and team performance, drive your sales and improve patient safety email rachel@racheldungan.com and use the subject line 'IPN Oct 2021'.