

Paper H3

Pastoral supervision update

Ministries Committee

Basic information

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| Contact name and email address | Paul Whittle moderator@urcscotland.org.uk |
| Action required | None. |
| Draft resolution(s) | None. |

Summary of content

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| Subject and aim(s) | An update on pastoral supervision for ministers. |
| Main points | To update General Assembly with changes made to the policy, and to give statistics of how many ministers have engaged with pastoral supervision to date. |
| Previous relevant documents | URC Pastoral Supervision GA 2020 (resolution 25). |
| Consultation has taken place with... | Synods. |

Summary of impact

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| Financial | None (money allocated in budget). |
| External (eg ecumenical) | None. |

1. Introduction

The policy for Pastoral Supervision (Mission Council July 2020) stated that the Ministries Committee would liaise with Synods to monitor progress regularly during the implementation period, and recommend any additional actions necessary to promote pastoral supervision further. An interim review has taken place.

2. Statistics

It is clear from the review that engaging in pastoral supervision was not a high priority for some ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers during the pandemic. For others, it offered invaluable support during a difficult time, and Ministries has received a good number of positive comments about engaging in a practice which gave a regular, intentional and boundaried space. To date, 159 ministers have engaged in pastoral supervision. which is 26.5% of the total number of active ministers in categories 1-4. As of writing, two Synods have not responded. Pastoral Supervision should be in place by 31 July 2023.

3. Outcomes of the review

3.1 Affiliation

The 2020 policy cited the lack of available accredited pastoral supervisors, yet required ministers to engage with a pastoral supervisor with accreditation to APSE (Association for Pastoral Supervision and Education) and BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy). Practicalities of available and suitably qualified pastoral supervisors dictates that:

- 3.1.1 the Association of Christian Counsellors is included in the approved list;
- 3.1.2 there is the need to build up an approved list of URC trained pastoral supervisors;
- 3.1.3 the request to use a pastoral supervisor from any other body would need prior approval from the Synod Moderator.

3.2 Training URC pastoral supervisors

- 3.2.1 To meet 3.1.2, Ministries has set up a scheme to train URC pastoral supervisors through the established scheme at Wesley House, Cambridge, taught by the Revd Bill Mullally, Wesley House, Cambridge, and the Revd Rick Mearkle, Director of Ministerial Formation at Westminster College, Cambridge.
- 3.2.2 Two Taster Days to learn about becoming a pastoral supervisor were held in September 2021 and January 2022.
- 3.2.3 The first cohort embarked on the course in November 2021. A second course was due to take place in March 2022, but was cancelled because of participants having Covid-19 prior to the course beginning. It has been rescheduled for June 2022.
- 3.2.4 The course has been funded by Ministries. The course is for URC ministers and lay people only.
- 3.2.5 It is expected that ministers and lay folk will not charge for pastoral supervision of URC ministers, and will pastorally supervise no less than six ministers per month when fully qualified.

4. Online pastoral supervision

While General Assembly expects all ministers to have six sessions per annum, Ministries had originally required that half those sessions would be in person. The pandemic meant that this was not possible. While the ideal would be all six sessions in person, Ministries accepts that effective pastoral supervision can be done online. This will also help with the capacity issue in some areas. There is, therefore, now no requirement for in person supervision, though some such sessions are encouraged.

5. Claiming for pastoral supervision

It is still hoped that the local pastorate sees the value of pastoral supervision for their minister and will pay the full cost or, failing that, at least 50% of costs. However, those pastorates which cannot afford the cost may apply for their reimbursement from Ministries. A claim for reimbursement can be made via the Ministries Office in the December of each year.

6. Additional sessions

A question has been raised as to whether a minister have more than six sessions. Funding for further sessions would need to be borne by the pastorate.