

# EFNEP PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION: A WORK GROUP PROPOSAL

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2015

**SUBJECT:** EFNEP Paraprofessional Supervision: A Work Group Proposal

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this proposal is to outline the development, structure, and goals of a national work group related to EFNEP paraprofessional supervision (PS). The ultimate goal is to advance EFNEP, enhance programmatic quality and improve employee results through PS structures. Evidence of the success of the group's work will be reflected in improved programmatic outcomes for states and universities that implement best practices and invest in PS.

**ASSUMPTION:** The quality of EFNEP is high and the capacity of the program to create changes in behavior is evident. However, this proposal posits that a commitment to the need and value of quality and effective PS will increase EFNEP's potency and significance, and potentially the opportunity to leverage resources from multiple sources.

**BACKGROUND:** EFNEP is a strong program with similarities among the states and universities. However, striking differences exist as well. One foundational aspect of EFNEP across the nation is the practice of PS.

- The contexts and structures of the states and universities are different, and continue to change even within states and universities at a rapid pace, adding complexity to program delivery.
- Increased complexity places a premium value on quality supervision of the paraprofessionals who deliver the program to clients to ensure program fidelity.
- There has been an upsurge in requests from EFNEP staff for an increased understanding of the essential elements of PS and how to operationalize those elements within EFNEP.

**DISCUSSION:** The work group will strive to answer the question: "What are the paraprofessional supervisory elements that are necessary and in what dose to have an effective EFNEP program within various contexts?" In answering this question, the work group team will:

- Adhere to a foundational principle that the objective of the national team is to assist EFNEP staff to improve their program through effective and efficient PS and understand that there are likely various ways to achieve this outcome.
- Be organized and facilitated by Helen Chipman and Deb Sellers and consist of EFNEP staff from across the nation that volunteer to commit time to this endeavor. Efforts will be made to recruit coordinators and program leaders from across the nation to ensure representation from various program models and sizes. Members will set additional goals, review existing materials pertinent to the topic, design mechanisms to facilitate input from program assistants and others as needed, and engage in tasks that advance the objective.
- Identify similarities and differences across the states and universities related to PS.
- Determine best practices of PS currently in use that are believed to increase the functionality of EFNEP.
- Illuminate the role, expectations, and contributions of the supervisor and of the paraprofessional to the effectiveness of EFNEP. Review the supervisory role to ensure a "fit" within the EFNEP model and program policies.
- Clarify additional needs and/or strategies in terms of PS that have the potential to contribute to the potency of EFNEP.
- Review and recommend existing materials and/or develop additional guidelines, materials, and tools that provide concrete operational methods for actualizing effective and efficient PS through best practices.
- Raise awareness of the importance of PS and share best practices with EFNEP program staff, FCS program leaders, and extension directors/administrators.
- Develop a tactic for sharing the results of the work of the group nationally with EFNEP program staff, FCS program leaders, and extension directors/administrators.

**RECOMMENDATION:** By 01/16, convene a work team with a preliminary commitment estimate of one year.

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