

Roadmap and Toolkit to a Successful MDT

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Webinar Resources

Q&A Responses

Q: Is it the responsibility of the commonwealth attorney office to ensure MDT meetings are consistent and regularly scheduled? This is for the state of VA.

A: *This is something your community needs to identify. MDT's can be set up in various ways. The DA's office in many states can put these together; in other states it can be child welfare or others. It will depend on the goals of the group and what the group is wanting to accomplish.*

Q: How do you handle the exclusion of necessary partners. In a community where I work, a community partner is bound by very strict confidentiality and statutorily cannot provide information about clients. The remainder of the community partner do not recognize the partner's statutory obligations. It is very contentious and they are being excluded.

A: *I would start with reviewing the laws and policies of each partner to see what can and cannot be shared. But there are disciplines that cannot give certain information...those disciplines should provide a training for others as to what they can and cannot share so they are all on the same page. And have the team not leave them out but rather figure out ways to work with them.*

Q: Sometimes people disagree on each other's methods "to put the puzzle together" or to collaborate. How do we build agreements that don't ostracize disciplines from participating?

A: *We recommend strategic planning...figuring out what the group wants to accomplish and then how to get there. The planning should get to the goals, objectives, and the tasks for the group. Then also, protocols would be helpful as it plans out who is doing what.*

Q: I'm a MDT Coordinator at my CAC I'm always striving to be at least 1% better than the last meeting. I check in with my Team on a weekly and or bi-weekly time for updates, community resources, recommendations for the family and how or what the CAC can do to help with the cases. Sometimes I just check in on their mental health (The Team). This is one way I build relationships.

A: *This is great! I love that perspective! I think that it is always good to make sure folks are doing well...and also what the group can do better. The assessment of ourselves is often times the most difficult.*

Q: From a very small town where the same professional is taxed. This leads to people coming to meetings unprepared, how would you suggest handling that?

A: *The leaders of the group should set up agenda for every meeting in advance allowing folks to have a heads up on what the team will be talking about and doing. Send this out in time to give folks time to review. Also, ask for topics at the end of meetings so people can prepare starting then. Maybe even send emails of topics and get feedback prior to the meetings so folks have time to think about it. If folks are too busy to prepare then maybe they can send someone else who has more time as well.*

Q: Our MDT is field worker heavy and currently; our biggest issue is confidentiality. Any suggestions to get the admin level involved to help us get an institutionalized agreement?

A: *Great question! We see this a lot. I would ask what MOU's do you currently have between agencies? Usually there are some but folks do not know about them. If not, the group needs to be tasked with getting an MOU signed by administration. It puts the group at risk if there are not agreements in place and there are confidential items being shared. I would also ask if there has been strategic planning...because MOU's and confidentiality agreements and discussions would be first on list.*

Q: If you are wanting to have fresh blood, how do you achieve that? Do you have term limits for people to be a part of the team? How large is too large for a MDT?

A: *You can set it up how you see fit. Maybe that is the discussion at a meeting coming up...to discuss terms and limits and such and then vote on it and make it happen. But also, bring new disciplines or people on board as you all see fit or have talked about. (if you have not talked about it, then put it on the agenda! If you can get buy in from the group, that is always helpful.) As to size...that is hard to say. It will depend on what your group is wanting to do. I have some groups that function well and are structured and have a large amount of folks...but they have a plan and small meet up groups as well. Others function with smaller amount of folks because they are less organized and less formal. Either way, you have to find that sweet spot for a number. I would recommend starting smaller and then adding folks slowly and methodically. I would also set goals and objectives for the group so you know how and when to grow.*

Q: Virtual meetings have helped us coordinate, not necessarily collaborate.

A: *Make it an agenda item to talk about collaboration. Bring a definition of collaboration and then ask folks how they can "make each other stronger". Collaboration is about the give and take and making each other stronger. So, each person has wants and needs...what are they. Get the group talking about collaboration and what they think it means and looks like and what they are going to do about it.*

Q: We are currently putting together an MDT orientation. What tips do you have to include in that orientation for new people?

A: *I would put in the goals and objectives of the group. What is the group wanting to accomplish and why? How can they get involved? How often do you meet and how will communication be? Define expectations of the members. Define time commitment as well. Think of new members as opportunities to move forward and opportunities for new ideas!*

Q: What about different Tribal members collaboration in an urban setting? How do we all agree?

A: *What is the connection point or points that are bringing folks together? There will always be differences but what are the similarities? What can you all learn from each other? What can each bring to the table to help others? What is the goal and objectives of the group and what can each bring to the table to help this?*

Q: The police is really an important component of the MDT in the case of our program on national street watch crime prevention program but, however, the bad image/reputation of the police as experienced/visualized by other stakeholders, groups both in the public and private became a gap for the continuation of the program. What will you recommend if that is the situation in our country... funding is also one of the problems although some private sector is will to provide fund support provided they see changes in the police image?

A: *Each discipline has opportunity to tear the police down or build them up...we can all either take part in the negative or talk about the positive. And we can do this in every setting to assist. I would brainstorm with the group to see how you can make the police positive and focus on what they are doing well. Also, get the police at different and new functions...community policing helps bridge the gaps...police should be at events greeting folks and passing out flyers or holding meet and greets or holding "coffee with a cop"; things that get them visible and positive and building relationships and trust. I would also get information out there that the police are doing that is positive; somehow get the image more positive. There is always going to be negative or bad cops, but the majority is not that way and they want to help*