Elder Abuse
MDTs: Overcoming Challenges

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AGENDA

• About the EJI and the MDT TAC
• Stages of team development
• Common roles and dynamics
• Exploring common barriers and solutions
• Principals of good collaboration
• Meeting facilitation tips
WHAT IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND?

- Administrative
- Financial
- Law Enforcement
- Legal
- Medical
- Mental Health Services
- Research
- Social Work
- Victim Services
- Other (please specify)
ELDER JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The mission is to support and coordinate the Department of Justice’s enforcement and programmatic efforts to combat elder abuse, neglect, and financial fraud and scams that target older adults.

The Initiative does so by—

- Promoting justice for older adults.
- Helping older victims and their families.
- Enhancing state and local efforts through training and resources.
- Supporting research to improve elder abuse policy and practice.
ELDER JUSTICE INITIATIVE (EJI)

REPORT ABUSE OR FIND HELP

New on ElderJustice.gov

EJI launches the MDT Toolkit and Guide for elder abuse case review MDTs

Elder abuse is a complex issue that intersects with many disciplines.

Elder abuse can happen to anyone. It affects people of every ethnic background, gender, and financial status.
Our mission is to provide tools, resources, and individualized consultations to facilitate the expansion of elder abuse case review multidisciplinary teams across the Nation.
SERVICES

• Responding to requests for materials (e.g., toolkits or research)

• Phone consultations to discuss problem solving (e.g., confidentiality issues)

• In-person consultations for communities needing a more hands-on approach

• Educational opportunities such as webinars

• Newly launched MDT Guide and Toolkit
TEAM WORK FUNDAMENTALS
STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing
GAMES PEOPLE PLAY – TEAM ROLES

• **Task roles** - refer to the actions of individuals that help move the project, decision, task along.

• **Maintenance roles** - refer to the actions of individuals that help preserve the relationships in a group.

• **Hindering roles** - refer to actions of individuals that hinder the group's process and progress.

https://web.stanford.edu/group/resed/resed/staffresources/RM/training/grouproles.html#hinder
HINDERING ROLES

- Dominating
- Withdrawing
- Degrading
- Uncooperative
- Side Conversations
OVERCOMING CHALLENGES
STEP ONE: IDENTIFY THE PRESENTING PROBLEM(S)

Common MDT Challenges include:

• Members not attending meetings
• Members not bringing cases for discussion
• Members bringing inappropriate cases for discussion
• Members attending meetings, but not participating in the work of the team
• Members “participating” in meetings, but acting in ways that hinder the team’s work and goals
• Members not following through with assigned tasks related to cases
WHERE DO PROBLEMS COME FROM?

- Logistical issues – Where, when, accessibility, etc.
- Structural issues – Framework, affiliation, purpose, leadership, roles
- Procedural issues – How you work together: Mission, MOUs, Intake, case flow, how you run meetings, etc.
- “Cultural” issues - an evolving set of collective beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviors, roles and dynamics
- “Political” issues – navigating power, authority, social networks, and influencers
LOGISTICAL ISSUES

Challenges can arise around:

- Meeting location
- Meeting time
- Parking/Accessibility
- Room set up/seating arrangements
- Timeframes
- Technology
  - Remote participation
  - PowerPoint presentations
Common Challenges

- Lack of articulated mission/goals of MDT
- No dedicated coordinator
- Leadership is lacking needed skills
- Team is lacking key players
- Person attending can’t make decisions for his/her agency
Common Challenges

- Misunderstanding or disagreement about policies and procedures
- Ineffective guidelines or rules that do not meet the needs of the team
- Case referral/intake process is complicated
- No Memorandum of Understanding with partnering agencies
### “CULTURAL” ISSUES (SEE PAGE 1-2 OF CH.9 HANDOUT)

**Evolving Set of Collective:**
- Beliefs
- Values
- Attitudes
- Behaviors
- Roles
- Dynamics

- Cultural issues could be related to
  - Team culture
  - Partner agency culture
  - Larger community culture
  - Differences in professional language
  - Differences in organizational culture
  - Misunderstandings about philosophical frameworks of each other’s work
  - Misunderstandings about the mandates and limitations of each other’s work
  - Changes in population or community needs
Common Challenges

- Power imbalances among team members
- Difficult histories between agencies of team members
- Desire to use the MDT forum to serve one agency’s needs
- “Lip Service” – attend meetings so they can say they are doing something without taking an active role on the team
SCENARIO 1

Dear MDT TAC:

Our team began working together last year. Initially, it was difficult because we had trouble finding a location that was convenient for everyone. But, we finally did and people are attending the meeting regularly. However, now we are not getting enough cases and sometimes we have to cancel the meeting. We know the cases are out there. Can you help?

Sincerely,

Searching
SCENARIO 2

Dear MDT TAC:

Our team has been around forever. For the last year it seems that we are hanging on by a thread. I know that elder abuse is happening in our community, but we don’t seem to be making an impact and the team is on the brink of dissolution. What can we do to revitalize our team and meet the needs of our community in an impactful way? I fear we have run out of steam and I don’t know if I have it in me to keep trying to make this work.

Sincerely,

Frazzled
SCENARIO 3

Dear MDT TAC:

I am a new facilitator for a long-standing team. Unfortunately, our team seems to work like a dysfunctional family. One of our most needed members attends but does not participate, pokes holes in solutions offered by the team (especially if they involve his agency doing anything) and generally makes everyone uncomfortable. How should I deal with this member and how can I improve the overall functioning of my team?

Sincerely,

Frustrated
PRINCIPALS OF GOOD COLLABORATION

Or “Everything You Need to Know You Learned in Kindergarten”

• Share and be a good friend
• Say Please and Thank you
• Play nicely/don’t be mean
• Clean up your own mess and say sorry.
• Don't take things that aren't your
TRUST IS LIKE CURRENCY THAT BUYS BETTER OUTCOMES

• The more you work together → the more trust you develop → the more you learn from each other → better case outcomes

• Working cases – more efficient and proficient
  • Case from the SF Elder Abuse Forensic Center – Western Union and teamwork
CULTIVATING TRUST

• Get to know each other personally
• Have strong, clear, and agreed upon collaboration documents (MOUs, etc.), so that everyone knows what to expect and contribute.
• Active listening – try to understand one another’s perspective, clarify when needed
• Address problems and conflict head-on and promptly.
• Hold one another accountable (kindly).
• Don’t blame – focus on solutions and supporting one another’s work.
• Work cases together (homevisits).
• Remember why you are here – your clients.
## MEETING FACILITATION TIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Develop a meeting structure</th>
<th>Be mindful of everyone’s time and organizational limitations</th>
<th>Keep in mind “cultural differences” between professions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate outside of the meeting</td>
<td>Spread the kudos</td>
<td>Have clear goals and a shared vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivate respectful communication</td>
<td>Ongoing training education and refinement of procedures</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for members to get to know each other</td>
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RESOURCES

MDT Guide and Toolkit

https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice/how-use-guide

Team Building Exercises for MDTs


Games People Play

https://web.stanford.edu/group/resed/resed/staffresources/RM/training/grouproles.html#hinder

Team stages from MIT

http://hrweb.mit.edu/learning-development/learning-topics/teams/articles/stages-development
Q & A
CONTACT THE MDT TAC

For consultation referrals or to collaborate, contact:

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QUESTIONS & SUGGESTIONS

can be emailed to

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