

## **Charlottesville/Albemarle Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Case Review Protocol**

### **Coordinator**

Foothills Child Advocacy Center's Program Coordinator and Family Support Specialist are the facilitators of all multidisciplinary team (MDT) meetings.

### **Location**

Charlottesville and Albemarle Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meetings are held in the ReadyKids conference rooms. If the conference room is not available, a conference room at Foothills, the Albemarle County Office Building, the Charlottesville City Hall, or another location will be arranged. The location will be communicated by e-mail to MDT members at least one day prior to the meeting.

### **Confidentiality**

The Charlottesville and Albemarle MDT adheres to the guidelines set forth in the document titled *Information Sharing and the Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team*, prepared by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, Children's Justice Act Program, April 2005. This document sites Virginia code in regard to Multidisciplinary Team information sharing.

All MDT members, within the bounds allowed by law, agree to maintain confidentiality of all records and information gathered on any cases. All personnel further agree not to release any records or information on any cases except as it relates to legitimate program operations of their agency. All agencies/organizations participating on the MDT will immediately share pertinent case information with the appropriate agency except as prohibited by law.

All members of the MDT agree to and sign the MDT Confidentiality Agreement which expires after one year. MDT members will agree to renew their Confidentiality Agreement each year. The signed forms will be kept on file and maintained by the Foothills Program Coordinator. At each MDT meeting, MDT members will also sign a sign-in sheet that reminds them of their commitment to confidentiality during MDT meetings.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

The Charlottesville members of the MDT will meet on the third Wednesday of each month or another time agreed upon by the MDT members to review cases. Member agencies of the Charlottesville MDT are Charlottesville Police Department, Charlottesville Child Protective Services, Charlottesville Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Charlottesville Victim/Witness Assistance Program, Piedmont Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), ReadyKids, Region Ten, Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA), University of Virginia Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and Foothills.

The Albemarle members of the MDT will meet on the first Thursday of each month, or another time agreed upon by the MDT members, to review cases. Member agencies of the Albemarle MDT are Albemarle Police Department, Albemarle Child Protective Services, Albemarle Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Albemarle Victim/Witness Assistance Program, Piedmont

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), ReadyKids, Region 10, Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA), University of Virginia Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and Foothills.

Both Charlottesville and Albemarle teams will meet together four times per year for MDT Process Meetings for the purpose of discussing MDT procedures, in-service training, and education; to discuss and give feedback regarding the operations of the MDT and Foothills; and to discuss and make decisions about special topics for consideration (e.g., extended forensic interviews, recording procedures, protective orders, medical exams, victim advocacy, and domestic violence).

When a designated representative from one of these agencies cannot be present at a meeting, they will designate a substitute to attend the meeting. If no one from an MDT agency can attend a meeting, the representative will give their case information to a team member who is in attendance or to the facilitator. Conference calling is also available when someone cannot be physically present at a meeting.

### **Case Selection Criteria**

Foothills will add cases to the Charlottesville and Albemarle MDT case review agenda that meet the following criteria:

- Cases involving children under 18 years of age who are alleged victims in open Charlottesville or Albemarle Police investigations and Charlottesville or Albemarle CPS family assessments or investigations;
- Cases involving children who are alleged victims of criminal
  - sexual abuse,
  - sexual assault,
  - sexual maltreatment,
  - Internet crimes against children, and
  - physical maltreatment that resulted in an injury to the child.
- On a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Charlottesville and Albemarle Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), cases can be added to the Charlottesville or Albemarle MDT case review agenda involving alleged victims of:
  - neglect that resulted in an injury to the child,
  - witness to violence, or
  - any other crime.
- All cases involving children interviewed at Foothills will be placed on the agenda for case review.

### **Procedure for Referring Cases to Charlottesville and Albemarle MDT Case Review**

The detective assigned to the case or the CPS worker (caretaker cases) will fax or send the police and/or CPS report via a password-protected e-mail to the Program Coordinator or Family Support Specialist, who will then place the case on the MDT agenda. The Program Coordinator or Family Support Specialist will e-mail the password-protected agenda to MDT members two days prior to the meeting. The following information will be included on the agenda:

- Child's initials and age,
- Alleged offender's name and relationship to the child,
- Date of the initial report,

- Type of alleged abuse,
- Lead investigators on the case and on-going worker,
- Forensic interviewer and date of the forensic interview,
- Medical provider and date of the medical evaluation,
- Criminal and CPS status,
- Safety plan, and
- Mental health providers.

The MDT meeting facilitator will document updates on the case investigation, prosecution and treatment in NCAtrak, as well as any other information that is pertinent to the case and the recommendations made by the team.

A table of contents will be distributed at the meeting that shows the child's name and page number. Everyone who attends MDT case review meetings agrees to shred their table of contents after meetings.

### **Discussion Items**

On those cases designated for review, MDT participants will discuss the status of the investigation, prosecution and treatment, any challenges they are having, and services that are needed for the family. MDT participants will give feedback regarding services needed, next steps in the investigation, and goals to be accomplished before the next meeting. The following issues are covered in the discussion of the case by the MDT:

- Interview outcomes,
- Investigation status and recommendations,
- Medical evaluations,
- Child protection and safety issues,
- Legal and evidentiary issues, including prosecution decisions,
- Emotional-psycho-social needs of the child and family,
- Mental health issues and treatment needs,
- Family's reactions and response to the child's disclosure and investigations and involvement in the criminal justice/child protection system,
- Victim services including provisions for court education and support,
- Strategies for meeting the needs of the child and family, including referrals for needed services,
- Civil and criminal case disposition, and
- Cross-cultural issues.

### **Recommendations by the MDT**

A representative from each agency will be present at each team meeting to participate in the discussion and exchange of information. Based on this discussion, the MDT will make recommendations regarding prosecution, protection, assessment, and treatment. These recommendations will be documented by the Foothills' Program Coordinator or Family Support Specialist in NCAtrak. If someone who is not present is designated to implement a recommendation, someone who is present at the meeting will be designated to communicate the recommendation to the implementer. Every team member will have the opportunity to ask

questions, address concerns, and make recommendations. No one team member will dominate the discussion.

### **Recording of Case Information**

The MDT facilitator will record information about the case during the MDT case review meeting. Information will be recorded in writing regarding the status of the investigation, prosecution, case management, and services. Any recommendations made by team members will be recorded in writing. Information regarding CPS decisions, charges, prosecution status, and service recommendations and status will be added to the MDT agenda before the next MDT meeting. Recommendations will be entered in the MDT tab on NCAtrak. Reasons for closing a case will also be recorded in NCAtrak.

### **Concluded Cases**

Cases to be concluded and taken off the agenda are those for which investigation and/or prosecution are completed and/or:

- CPS makes a finding of either founded or unfounded or transfers the case to another jurisdiction;
- Law Enforcement concludes their investigation, and the Commonwealth's Attorney makes a decision not to prosecute;
- Prosecution concludes their case with either a trial or plea, and the offender is sentenced or the charges are *nolle prossed*;
- The child and/or family is stable in treatment or does not cooperate with recommended services.

Cases can be reopened and placed back on the MDT agenda (on the same allegation) by the request of a MDT member. This may happen when barriers to treatment arise; new evidence comes to light and the case is reopened by the Police Department or CPS; or recommendations for services are needed.

### **Other Opportunities for Communication, Coordination and Decision-Making**

There are many other opportunities for MDT members to share information and make decisions regarding cases. These are included in the *Forensic Interview Protocol*. The Commonwealth's Attorney and the investigators meet prior to charging the case, during the investigation, and after charging to communicate the status of the investigation and discuss how to resolve problems, next steps in the investigation, prosecution, limitations in the investigation, and barriers to prosecution. Investigators also communicate with treatment providers and brokers about the status of services and the child's ability to testify.

### **Case Tracking**

The police detective or CPS worker will fax the police and/or CPS report or send it via a password-protected email to the Program Coordinator and Family Support Specialist, who will enter the information on the initial report in the NCAtrak database. The Program Coordinator will enter investigative information in NCAtrak on cases after the forensic interview, after MDT Case Review meetings, and other various times while the case is considered an open MDT case. The Family Support Specialist will enter mental health, victim advocacy, and any other services information in NCAtrak after MDT Case Review meetings and other various times until the child

has completed mental health services or the services are deemed untrackable. When the case is deemed concluded by the MDT members, the Program Coordinator will make sure all information has been entered on the case before closing the case in NCAtrak.

### **Information Availability to MDT Organizations**

Each representative on the MDT will receive an MDT agenda with up-to-date information each month.

Partner organizations also have their own case files. The Department of Social Services has access to information in Oasis case tracking system and Law Enforcement has access to PISTOL case tracking system. MDT members also have access to NCAtrak information. MDT members can contact the Foothills Program Coordinator or Family Support Specialist by telephone and e-mail to request case information.

### **Conflicts of interest**

If anyone present for an MDT case review meeting has a conflict of interest with any of the cases for review, that individual will step out of the room during that specific case review.