

Evaluation Tool

INTRODUCTION

The benefits of MDT evaluation

The MDT approach promotes well-coordinated investigations of child abuse and neglect. These investigations benefit greatly from the input and attention of many different parties to ensure a successful conclusion to the investigation and to minimize trauma to the adolescent victim.¹ Periodic evaluation is essential if the team seeks to function effectively.²

There are several methods of evaluating team function. One method is to obtain consistent feedback from team members. Members must be honest and also constructively criticize the team's performance. This type of self-analysis can occur at regular meetings, special meetings or even during a team retreat. A questionnaire can be prepared and submitted if the team members feel particularly strongly about preserving anonymity. Each individual also needs to judge the effect of his or her own participation on the team on a regular basis.

Although self-analysis is important, there is a danger to the team that its members will not view their performance objectively. Evaluation of the team by victims, the families of victims, outside agencies, and the community is critical to proper team development and is necessary as a matter of customer service. The team should regularly

¹ Ells, Forming a MDT to Investigate Child Abuse, U.S. Dept of Justice (2000).

² Rogan, The Multidisciplinary Team Approach to Child Abuse and Neglect, *Violence Hits Home: Comprehensive Treatment Approaches to Domestic Violence* (1990).



collect, solicit and analyze input from these external sources. The most important thing is for the team to see itself as others see it.³

Surveys provide a good starting point for MDTs who seek to capitalize on their strengths and improve areas of weakness by assessing their effectiveness. Surveys are particularly suited for MDTs because they are efficient, cost-effective, can be tracked over time, and are able to sample a variety of people on diverse topics. To determine what types of issues MDTs face and the questions the surveys should include, the authors conducted research on best practices for MDT assessment. These best practices were used as a guide for developing an evaluation tool. Additionally, the evaluation tool provided in this workbook is an adaptation of the evaluation tool used by the Children's Advocacy Centers of Georgia.

Evaluation Tool: Contents

The first section contains an internal survey to be administered by the MDT itself which will assist the MDT members in determining, at a global level, how the MDT is functioning. The second section is an individual self-assessment to be administered by the MDT itself which is focused on self-assessment at an individual level. The third section contains an external survey to be provided to other MDT stakeholders including: community partners, victims of abuse and neglect and their family members, and outside agencies. The final section provides instructions to the MDT survey facilitator on what to do with the data once it has been collected.

³ Ells, Forming a MDT to Investigate Child Abuse, U.S. Dept of Justice (2000).



The sole purpose of these surveys is to provide MDTs with a tool to guide growth and improvement. Each MDT should focus on their own strengths and limitations. It follows that each MDT should be able to add to or alter these surveys as deemed appropriate by the MDT. The surveys are attached in word format which allows the greatest potential for developing questions that will be both helpful and relevant to the MDT.



MDT Internal Survey

Answer the questions on a 5 point scale by circling the most appropriate answer.

	Never describes my experience	Rarely describes my experience	Sometimes describes my experience	Often describes my experience	Always describes my experience
1. MDT meetings are effectively coordinated and arranged before the actual meeting occurs.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The atmosphere at an MDT meeting is non-threatening and conducive for working together.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The representatives for the agencies stay the same from meeting to meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
4. MDT members participate fully in the meetings and contribute to discussion about the cases.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The team shares information openly at MDT meetings. People do not “guard their own turf” at our meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our MDT handles differences of opinion and conflict in an open or direct manner without being rude or hostile to those with different opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel like my input is heard, respected, and considered by the members of the MDT.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I understand the roles of the other members of the MDT.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Team members seem to be clear on the roles they play on the MDT.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Members of the MDT are fully committed to attendance at the meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am notified of a change in MDT schedule or agenda.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know that my presence and participation is important for the MDT to function.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I believe MDT meetings are critical for protecting children	1	2	3	4	5
14. The MDT makes my job easier.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The MDT benefits the cases with which I am involved.	1	2	3	4	5



16. We make better decisions about cases as a team than we would on individually with own positions.	1	2	3	4	5
17. MDT members provide me with the information I need about the case to actively participate in the MDT meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Our MDT recognizes the contributions people make to the team.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The morale of the MDT is generally high.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I get a good understanding on where cases stand and next steps on a case at the MDT meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I have a good sense of my role and how it fits into the overall cases we discuss.					
22. Our MDT has a clear purpose.	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following questions in the space provided:
What about the MDT works best?

What is your biggest challenge or frustration with the MDT?



MDT Individual Self-Assessment

Answer the questions on a 5 point scale by circling the most appropriate answer.

	Never describes my experience	Rarely describes my experience	Sometimes describes my experience	Often describes my experience	Always describes my experience
1. I am knowledgeable about the cases the MDT is discussing.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I leave an MDT meeting, I am clear about what my “homework” is, that is, I understand what I need to do between now and the next meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I complete my “homework” before the next MDT meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel comfortable expressing my opinions at the MDT.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel comfortable asking and answering questions at the MDT meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I trust MDT members to maintain confidentiality.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I maintain MDT confidentiality.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I understand my role on the MDT.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I understand the policies and limitations that other agencies represented on the MDT deal with when handling a case.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I share all of the relevant information I have about cases with my MDT members.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I make MDT meetings a priority in my schedule.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The agency with which I am affiliated makes MDT meetings a priority for my schedule.	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following questions in the space provided:

Do you have any concerns regarding your role in the MDT?



How do you (or your organization) benefit from MDT meetings?

What could be improved about the MDT to help you (or your organization) benefit more from meetings?



MDT Stakeholders Survey

This survey is intended to assist the multidisciplinary team (MDT) in conducting an effective investigation of abuse and neglect as well as minimizing trauma to the child-victim and their family. The survey is anonymous, will remain confidential within the MDT and will be used only to improve the MDT's functioning.

My relationship with the MDT is as a (circle one that best describes you):

child or youth victim

agency providing services to victim or family

family member of victim

community member

Directions: Answer the questions on a 5 point scale by circling the most appropriate answer.

	Never describes my experience	Rarely describes my experience	Sometimes describes my experience	Often describes my experience	Always describes my experience
1. MDT meetings are effectively coordinated and arranged before the actual meeting occurs.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe MDTs are critical for protecting children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel supported by the MDT in relation to the case with which I am involved.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The MDT provides me with answers to my questions and helps me understand the case better.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The MDT has referred the child or youth victim &/or their family to appropriate crisis intervention services.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I understand the purpose of the MDT and the role of the MDT on the case in which I am involved.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The MDT has provided the victim with notice of their rights and appropriate victims services.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The MDT treated me with respect and acknowledged my comments and input.	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following question in the space provided:

What would you like the MDT to know about your experience in working with the MDT?



WHAT TO DO WITH THE SURVEY DATA

Setting the Stage for understanding and reviewing the data

Thoughtful planning is important in considering how to best utilize the information collected from the surveys. Survey results will be most useful if the right people receive the data, in a way that is easily understandable, in a supportive environment that encourages engaging in a discussion and action plan for follow-up. The following suggestions will be helpful in planning to present and review the data.

Preparing the people:

Decide who should attend the data presentation. The data review group should include all MDT members who participated in the survey as well as other interested stakeholders.

- Give invitees sufficient notice to attend the meeting.
- Inform the invitees of the meeting's purpose and anticipated outcomes.

Items to consider include: what data will be presented, how will it be presented, what will be accomplished, the role of the invitees in interpreting the data.

- Create a warm and welcoming setting for the meeting.
- Develop clear handouts of the salient points for the attendees.

Presenting the data:

- Numeric written results: A calculation of percentages for each question can provide a baseline for understanding the data.



- Preliminary summary written results: Before presenting to the MDT, one or more persons should examine the data, highlight key findings, and summarize emerging themes for each section. The summary may include items of strength or concerns.

Making an initial interpretation of the data at the meeting:

When analyzing and interpreting the data as a group, consider the following:

- Provide a comparison of different sections.
- Compare the data with recognized standards, such as those from the National Children's Alliance, for effective functioning of MDTs.
- Be sure to ask for questions or clarification during the meeting.

Moving to taking action:

Establish the purpose of the data and clarify what the MDT hopes to accomplish with the data. The data can be used for a variety of purposes including:

- Identifying success
- Documenting or validating effectiveness
- Revising structure, systems or policies
- Identifying areas for improvement
- Increasing community visibility of the team
- Educating and training other stakeholders about the MDT
- Tracking ongoing improvements.

Process for making effective use of the data



The next step is to engage in a process that brings the group to action. You may choose to use an external facilitator or allow someone on the MDT to lead the team through this process. Some of the processes which may be used include:

- A focused discussion on the data: this is a guided set of questions which is intended to enhance understanding, capture different perspectives, and engage participants with diverse learning styles.
- Development of an action plan: this is used to achieve a specific goal with tasks, assignments, and timelines.
- Planning retreat: a planning retreat is often most effective when considering major changes to your MDT.

Role of the facilitator

After deciding which process to use in reviewing the MDT survey data, it is important to determine who is the best person to facilitate the session(s) of discussion and action planning. The role of the facilitator is to serve as a process guide who works to ensure the group accomplishes its goals through the design and management of structures and processes that help the group accomplish its task(s). Specific tasks of the facilitator include:

- Encourage participation and ownership of all involved
- Focus on what needs to be accomplished
- Manage the design, flow and sequence of tasks
- Enforce the ground rules agreed on by the group
- Keeps discussions on task



- Manage the communication
- Set the physical and psychological environment.

Tracking changes over time

Your data collection and interpretation will only be as effective as your follow-up actions. Failure to assure adequate follow-up and tracking may lead to negative consequences including frustration of the MDT and stakeholders, inefficient use of people's time, and the inability of the MDT to improve.

Some suggestions for ongoing reviewing and tracking include:

- Set a time for regular review and modification of action plans.
- Hold individuals and the team accountable for follow-up.
- Develop and implement strategies for regular future assessments.
- Celebrate successful accomplishment of desired tasks.

