

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON JUSTICE FOR ABUSED CHILDREN

Quarterly Meeting

February 1, 2018 – 1:30PM.
Chief State Attorney's Office, Hartford, CT

Present: S. Sedensky, T. Sneed, K. Anelli, H. Bey-Coon, K. Butler-Kurth, E. Borecka, K. Clark, L. Cordes, M. Doherty, S. Kristoff, N. Nesbitt, K. Rich, S. Hamilton, F. Vos Winkel, S. Zanker-Rivera, Y. Young

Guests: P. Pisano,

Agenda Item	Discussion (<i>brief summary</i>)	Action (<i>and by whom</i>)
Meeting called to order		The meeting was called to order at 1:35PM
Approval of Minutes:	Approval of December 2017 minutes. There was an addition of 2 names of DCFSWs to the Guests section of the minutes.	There was a motion to approve the December 2017 minutes. The motion passed. Doherty/Rich M/S/P
	<p>Retreat Recommendation #1: Use the next six months to develop a framework and plans for the next federal grant application which is due May 2018. Four ad-hoc groups will be established to replace all the existing workgroups and committees as follows:</p> <p>1. MDT/CAC Evaluation & Quality Assurance (volunteer lead: Paula Schaffer) This ad-hoc group will develop a plan for how the CT and NCA standards and the MDT evaluation process can be aligned and potentially streamlined and how data is collected and utilized.</p> <p>The Evaluation Committee has reviewed the standards but there are a few issues we would like to discuss further with GTFJAC and receive feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a lot about feedback provided about not stating the age range 0-18 but instead using the word children. Discussion: <i>Concerned that all children across the state are not receiving equal access to services. If it is not spelled out the disciplines may not bring all the cases to the teams. This is a concern around the adolescent population who may not be seen at teams and this is not best practice. There was a desire from some members of the task force to align the language with the MDT contracts. There is a need to ensure that teams have capacity.</i> • When the standards are not followed is there going to be a consequence for the teams. Discussion: <i>First the issue should be sent to the team EC and then the GTFJAC should be informed. Is there a procedure that GTFJAC can not only follow up with the team and team EC on issues, but when they persist, the agency that is exhibiting the issue should be informed that they are not following the standards. This may be addressed with a letter from the chairs of GTFJAC to the team and the agency that may not be aligning with the standards. The MDT evaluation committee should create a process to follow up with team and systemic issues and bring it back to GTFJAC.</i> • Teams wanted a better definition of who should be a part of the executive team. Discussion: <i>Discussed national examples have varying models in this area. Task Force members feel that members of the team EC should be able</i> 	<p>There is a motion that the language regarding age should be consistent with the contract language. The motion passed. Vos Winkel/Hamilton M/S/P 1 opposed.</p> <p>MDT evaluation committee will develop a process and bring back a recommendation to GTFJAC.</p> <p>The motion is that teams develop a multidisciplinary(L</p>

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	<p><i>to bring information back to fiduciaries/partners if they are not the person with decision making power. Perhaps ensuring that those who have signed MOUs are more engaged and are aware of the team functioning and having the members align with the CJA Program Instruction. Of the current teams at least 13 of them have an EC with multiple members. Some areas the EC are not regular members of the team and many have different level of involvement with the team.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forensic interviewer section describes that FI must interview children regularly. It was not clear as to what regular means for a per diem forensic interviewer. Discussion: <i>Members were read the Recommendations for New Forensic Interviewers that was developed by Finding Words Committee in 2009. The MDT evaluation committee would like more feedback in this area and there are concerns around putting in a specific number or the words regularly.</i> • Minimal Facts – Hasn’t been fully defined for the teams and was not part of the MDT contracts. It should be included as Minimal Facts is best practice in this area of investigation. Discussion: <i>There was discussion around that teams should be using Minimal Facts as part of their investigations and should be in the standards. This is important to highlight as professionals are still doing interviews of children in the field vs minimal facts. This should fall within the joint investigation area of the standards. Members were concerned that there is a need to ensure Minimal Facts trainings are occurring statewide. Is there a way to tie the Minimal Facts to the statute and say that interviews of the children in the field should be avoided when possible? MDT evaluation committee can look at the section and ensure that language discourages interviews in the field.</i> <p>2. Training (volunteer lead: Margaret Doherty) The Training Committee has the following <u>responsibilities</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review specific requests for funds up to \$1,000 for training of MDT committee members to enable them to better perform their roles as MDT members and professionals within their specific disciplines. • Evaluate existing training opportunities for MDT members and evaluate the unmet needs for training of MDT members. • Make recommendations for structural and procedural changes to the Governor’s Task Force for Justice for Abused Children to most efficiently and thoroughly meet the training needs of GTFJAC members and the professionals within their disciplines. <p>Year to date accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee has reviewed 5 individual training fund requests, approved 4 and sent 1 back for additional information • With CCA, applied for & been awarded a development grant of \$10,000 from Northeast Regional Child Advocacy Center (NRCAC) to develop one-two day training broader than Minimal Facts but not exclusively focusing on the forensic interview (Finding Words) training, specific to Connecticut needs. • Developed specific recommendations for moving forward. <p>Specific recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have one “Training Committee” with one annual budget with an annual request deadline; with sub-committees for Finding Words faculty and Minimal Facts faculty and developers • Minimal Facts process and oversight needs to be reviewed and updated • GTF and CCA to develop a yearly training agenda after surveying the needs and preferences of all team members and coordinators and to revise the “training funds request form” 	<p>E, DCF, Prosecutors, Advocacy, possibly Medical and service providers including but not limited to) Executive Committee of at least 4 members that meet at least quarterly. The motion passed. Sneed/Butler-Kurth M/S/P</p> <p>There was a motion that it is the teams’ responsibility to use FIs that are proficient and meeting the team members’ expectations. The motion passed> Sedensky/Bey Coon M/S/P</p> <p>Kristen will send the training recommendations out to the full GTFJAC for review and vote at the March meeting. The GTFJAC By-laws will be sent along the document as this</p>

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	<p>Discussion: <i>At times when there are training requests and sending one person for \$1,000 vs bringing a training to Connecticut that can provide for a larger population. There are currently three committees and if this is all in one committee then the resource can be made more efficient. This change would have implications on the by-laws. This should be sent to the full GTFJAC for review and vote in March 2018.</i></p> <p>Next meeting: Mon. March 12, 2018 at CAFAF, 2189 Silas Deane Hwy, Rocky Hill, 2-4PM</p> <p>3. System Gaps & Barriers (volunteer lead: John Leventhal)</p> <p>This ad-hoc group looked at system/service gaps and barriers as well practice fidelity issues (e.g., forensic interviewers, medical interviews, etc.) that have been previously brought to GTF; develop a systemic process for GTF to discuss and track system gaps/barriers on a regular basis and; identify strategies for GTF to develop a common policy platform or agenda. – Some folks bring system gaps and issues to the GTFJAC. What are we doing to address these? Standing agenda item?</p> <p>A written report was submitted to GTFJAC and presented at the December 2017 meeting. This report was emailed out to the full GTFJAC.</p> <p>There are 8 areas that needed a further look. The following gaps and barriers were identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forensic Interviewing (FI): 2. Forensic Medicals: 3. Victim Advocacy (VA): 4. Children with Problem Sexual Behaviors: 5. Mental Health: 6. Spanish Speaking Services: 7. Law Enforcement (LE) and Prosecution: 8. Data and Quality Assurance (importance of data to help define gaps and whether progress is being made at improving services and reducing gaps) <p>Clarifying the extent of the gaps and barriers in the domains outlined above:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Workgroup proposed the following strategy: that each major gap/barrier domain have a working committee or focus group of content experts (e.g., Forensic Interviewing Gaps/Barriers Working Committee or focus Group) who would identify and prioritize 1 to 3 gaps/barriers to be monitored and addressed. 2. These gaps/barriers would, in part, be based on the state and NCA standards, but also could be proposed by local teams. 3. Data would be collected, if necessary, to quantify the extent of the gap/barrier. These data would be collected by CCA (Connecticut Children’s Alliance) based on surveys and focus groups and by the data already being collected with NCA Track and through the MDT Evaluation Committee. The Village might assist in the task of collecting new data and collating the data into a useful format. 4. Data would be collected periodically (perhaps quarterly) to monitor a change in the gap/barrier 5. The Working Committee would propose an approach to address the gap/barrier <p>Systematic approach for GTF to discuss, address, and track recommendations put forth by specific working committees regarding an approach to address the gap/barrier:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The working committee would present in writing and at a GTF meeting the proposed approach to address the gap/barrier. 2. GTF would vote on the proposal and if approved the proposal would be triaged to one of 3 Action Committees, which would work to move the proposal forward. 3. 3 Action Committees: Policy/Practice, Legislative, Funding: 	<p>change will have implications on the by-laws.</p>

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	<p>a. One committee (GTF Policy/Practice Committee) would focus on state policies/practice and would develop a plan to address the gap/barrier by changing the state’s policy or practice regarding the issue to be addressed.</p> <p>b. One committee (GTF Legislative Committee) would focus on state laws and would develop a plan to address the gap/barrier by changing the state law regarding the issue to be addressed.</p> <p>c. One committee (GTF Funding Committee) would focus on state (and perhaps grant and private) funding and would develop a plan to address the gap/barrier by identifying state or other funds regarding the issue to be addressed</p> <p>d. Each Action Committee would be developed by GTF to include professionals with expertise in the relevant area of policy/practice, legislative agenda, or funding and could include professionals not on GTF.</p> <p>e. These Action Committees are proposed as a way of helping GTF and the state to take concrete steps to move forward with an approved plan to reduce a gap or barrier.</p> <p>Next Steps for this workgroup: Discussion: <i>Peggy reviewed some areas of the previously submitted report. What is the next step for the workgroup? There are issues that are brought forward and if the GTFJAC is unable to act, then that feedback should be brought back to the entity that provided the feedback/proposal. We should also look for a local person to sit on the task force. Perhaps the gaps and barriers are looked at for trends and addressed in the MDT evaluation process. Strategic plan for GTFJAC around priorities for the next 12 months. There is also possibility of GTFJAC writing a grant for a specific issue and identify a lead agency. Perhaps this work group can convene and develop priorities. The group should email this to the coordinators for review and comment.</i></p> <p>4. Child Fatality Response (volunteer lead: Faith Vos Winkel) There is a proposal that is being completed by the Office of the Child Advocate and will be forwarded to GTFJAC in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Recommendation #2: Discuss possible restructuring of the GTF meeting schedule and agenda. Retreat participants noted several issues: there never seems to be enough time on the agenda to have substantive discussion of issues; most of the substantive discussions occur at Executive Committee; the role of the Executive Committee; frequency of GTF meetings given that if a meeting gets cancelled GTF could go for six months without meeting; system barriers need to be a standing agenda item with action and accountability; meetings should include education on emerging issues and the membership and terms of membership need to be reviewed. Should the GTFJAC full meeting do more of the substantive work?</p> <p>Discussion: <i>The Executive Committee does not include all disciplines and voices may not be heard. Perhaps having more frequent GTF meetings. The by-laws would need to be reviewed and updated if there is a change in Standing Committees for GTFJAC.</i></p>	
Budget Update	These documents were in the meeting packet. Will review at the March 2018 meeting.	
GTF Coordinator Update:	Reminder that the Three Year Assessment is due this year. Members are asked to review the document from the last Three Year Assessment and ensure that their biography is up to date and make changes to their organizations sections.	
Other Business:	March meeting to start at 1:30PM. Agenda items	Check with CSAO

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	Retreat recommendation # 2 Restructuring GTF Vacancies Workgroup Report Out Budget 30 th Anniversary of GTFJAC will occur in 2018.	
New Business:		
Announcements:		There was a motion to adjourn which was moved and properly seconded. The motion passed. Vos Winkel/NesbittM/S/P

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristen M. Clark,
GTFJAC Coordinator