What Do Sexual Assault Cases Look Like in Our Community?

A Sexual Assault Response Team's Workbook for Case File Review

By Jessica Van Iperen and James Pittenger

2022 Revisions by Miranda Gonzalez

MNCASA
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Executive Summary

The task of ensuring safety, justice, and healing as it relates to sexual violence is daunting. A team's success rests on its ability to build on a sexual assault response team's (SART's) success in responding to victims/survivors through a case review process with an eye toward continual improvement.

This workbook is a step-by-step guide that leads SARTs through the Sexual Violence Justice Institute (SVJI) at the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) process of reviewing case files based on the criminal legal system. In this workbook, you will find an effective process for identifying areas where your SART successfully responds to victims/survivors and areas where your SART can improve. Each member of the team will learn specific information about how they can further develop or sustain their response to be the most victim/survivor-centered. Throughout the case file review process, SARTs learn about their actual criminal/legal response to victims/survivors versus what they believe is happening during the response. The workbook provides insights into how to make connections that help improve the criminal legal response for victims/survivors and agencies while also helping teams discover lots of opportunities and best practices to explore. Case file review can provide evidence to support necessary changes in policy and practice.

This workbook is divided into four chapters that contain various activities to lead the SART through the case file review process. Each of the four chapters contains activities designed to generate discussions for each step in the case review process. The basics covered in the Foundation Chapter will answer general questions related to the process. The Preparation Chapter offers guidance for teams preparing for their own case file review: creating agreements to be used during the case file review, discussing trauma-informed practices, determining which cases to review, and building confidentiality into the process. In the Case File Review Chapter, teams will practice conducting a mock review and complete a review of their own cases. The Findings and Recommendations Chapter supports teams as they assess what they learned during the process and determine how each partner will move forward.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-TA-AX-K014 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Table of Contents

Introduction

A Message to Multidisciplinary Teams and Team Leaders

You are about to embark on the exciting, informative, and energizing multidisciplinary team process known as case file review. This is a process of assessment and curiosity. Each team member will have their own insights, perspectives, and questions. Your team might answer some of these questions but should be prepared to come out of the process with even more questions. Those unanswered questions will lead your team on a path to further exploration and result in deep analysis of your community's response to victims/survivors of sexual assault.

The Sexual Violence Justice Institute at Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (SVJI at MNCASA)

This workbook is a product of the Sexual Violence Justice Institute (SVJI at MNCASA), a program of the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA). SVJI at MNCASA's mission is to create long-term, sustainable responses to sexual violence that meet the specific needs of each community. SVJI at MNCASA aims to achieve these outcomes by supporting systems change through multidisciplinary collaboration. We provide multidisciplinary teams with training, resources, and technical assistance. Our technical assistance projects include Rural Projects and National SART, which support rural project grantees and improve criminal justice response grantees, respectively. SVJI at MNCASA also supports Minnesota teams through our Minnesota SART project. Some of our resources include the Sexual Assault Team Starter Kit, Readiness Assessment Survey, Sexual Assault Team Protocol Template, and Rural Realities Blog. SVJI at MNCASA also hosts a bi-annual National Institute for SART Leaders Conference, where site coordinators across the country gather to develop skills and learn from each other. The Sexual Violence Justice Institute began case file review work in 2011 and revised this guidebook in 2018 and again in 2022.

Overview

This workbook will demonstrate case file review as an evaluative method for SARTs by highlighting the process followed, insights raised, and lessons learned from the review of three pilot sites. We at SVJI at MNCASA encourage you to use this as an evaluation for the entire SART and not a means to place blame or shame on a specific discipline. In this workbook, there are tangible steps to lead a SART through the case file review process. This workbook assumes that your team is interested in reviewing case files, which is explored further in the Foundations Chapter. Please refer to this chapter before you begin the case file review process. If, after reading through the Foundations Chapter, your team is not ready to do a case file review, there may be another form of evaluation your team may find helpful. Please see "*Are We Making a Difference?*" for other forms of evaluation. You can find this document on our website, MNCASA.org, by clicking on the "Tools and Resources" tab and searching the name of the document. Please connect with SVJI at MNCASA to discuss your SART's current work and what might fit your team's specific needs.

A Brief Overview of How This Document Is Organized

This workbook is divided into four chapters. Within each chapter are activities designed to help SARTs understand the case file review process, prepare for the case file review process, do the actual review, and reflect on what the team has learned while making recommendations for change.

The four chapters are as follows:

1. **Foundation**
2. **Preparation**
3. **Case File Review**
4. **Findings and Recommendations**

Why A Multidisciplinary Process?

The benefits of working within a multidisciplinary framework are numerous. Strong multidisciplinary teams with active participants can communicate directly and honestly with one another. These partnerships among team members facilitate the improvement of existing policy and the creation of new policy, pinpointing gaps and making system-wide improvements. This case file review process is designed to give all disciplines the opportunity to educate each other and to have significant input into the team's response. Case file review also creates space for disciplines that are not based in the criminal legal field; they will gain a firm grasp on the services provided by the criminal legal system and the limitations of the criminal legal system. When disciplines have a high degree of commitment to the case file review process, all responders and victims/survivors will benefit. Finally, a team that can hold its members accountable to a response can avoid problematic responses and produce corrective criticism and action among all disciplines.

Despite these benefits, multidisciplinary collaboration is not always easy! During the true collaboration, professionals will come together to analyze how the criminal justice system is (or isn't) working. This process naturally subjects the performance of individual agencies to criticism. Strong teams can learn how to turn any gaps within the current response into improvements without shaming or placing blame upon any one specific agency. Ultimately, involving multidisciplinary professionals in this case file review process allows all team members to benefit and learn from differing perspectives, establish good communication patterns, and develop mutual respect.

SVJI at MNCASA Experience with Case File Review

The information shared in this workbook comes from our experience leading, designing, and facilitating in-depth case file review processes with three pilot sites. Our expertise in this area also stems from technical assistance we received from Praxis International and lessons learned from working with several SARTs across the country.

Case file review, a form of text analysis, is a core activity detailed in the Praxis Institutional Analysis method. [1] Interagency teams can use this process and set of tools to analyze and reform institutional structures that create harmful outcomes in cases involving gender-based violence and other forms of oppression. Praxis extensively assesses safety and accountability in the context of domestic violence and has conducted numerous in-depth case file review projects. SVJI at MNCASA sought guidance and input from Praxis to develop strategies for case file review involving sexual assault crimes. SVJI at MNCASA appreciates the help and expertise of Praxis.

1. For more information about the Praxis Institutional Analysis method, including applied examples; related guides; and other publications, archived webinars, and current training, go to http://praxisinternational.org/institutional-analysiscommunity-assessment-2/

History of Case File Review

The development of the case file review process began in 2011. The first pilot site was a sexual assault multidisciplinary action response team (SMART) in Faribault, Minnesota, which chose to review prosecution case files. This initial case file review involved staff from SVJI at MNCASA, Praxis, and a sub-committee of the team that included members from prosecution, advocacy, medical, and law enforcement. These members reviewed 20 sexual assault prosecution case files after receiving a day-long training by Praxis on how to engage in case file review.

The second pilot site came at the request of a Minnesota police chief who wanted to conduct a law enforcement audit of their response to sexual assault. This process went beyond the review of case files to include interviews with advocates and law enforcement, data collection, and ride-alongs with law enforcement officers. A key distinction is that this site did not have a SART/SMART before initiating the case file review process. Given SVJI at MNCASA's goal to develop resources for SARTs and to ensure a holistic review during the audit, we invited subject-matter experts (SMEs) from prosecution, medical, advocacy, and law enforcement to review 45 law enforcement sexual assault case files as part of the audit.

The third pilot site was in Tooele, Utah, where they conducted a review of law enforcement case files. This case file review process involved a SART consisting of local city police and sheriff's deputies, prosecution, medical, and advocacy team members along with SMEs from AEquitas: The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women; the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN); and a chief of police. The SART, SMEs, SVJI at MNCASA staff, and the SVJI at MNCASA law enforcement consultant reviewed 28 sexual assault cases.

Thank you to the people and agencies who assisted in the case file review processes throughout the years. Without their contributions in laying the groundwork, improvements in the process would not be possible.

- Praxis International
- Lt. Ann Clancey, Duluth (MN) Police Department
- SAFEta Project Director Kim Day, , International Association of Forensic Nurses
- Former SVJI at MNCASA staff Kari Ogrodowski, Melia Garza, Laura Williams, and Sharon Haas
- Captain James Pittenger (Ret.), Rochester (MN) Police Department, SVJI at MNCASA

- Attorney Advisor John Wilkinson, Aequitas: The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women
- The Rice County SMART

A special thank you to SMEs who trained and reviewed case files in the most recent site (Tooele, Utah):

- SAFEta Project Director Kim Day, International Association of Forensic Nurses
- Captain James Pittenger (Ret.), Rochester (MN) Police Department, SVJI at MNCASA
- Chief Paul Schnell, Maplewood (MN) Police Department
- Attorney Advisor John Wilkinson, Aequitas: The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women

We want to acknowledge and thank those who agreed to share their case files in the earnest desire to learn how to improve their community's response to victims of sexual assault.

- Chief Ron Kirby, Tooele City (Utah) Police Department
- Victim Services Coordinator Lynne Mahaffey-Smith, Tooele City (UT) Police Department
- The Tooele SART

The Law Enforcement Advisory Group

The Law Enforcement Advisory Group (LEAG) consists of representatives from law enforcement agencies that have conducted a case file review, along with SVJI at MNCASA staff and consultants. The LEAG is responsible for identifying the benefits of and barriers to case file review; evaluating the law enforcement-specific contents of the case file review workbook; and developing guidance for other agencies related to the policy, training, and staffing implications of an enhanced sexual assault response.

A group of law enforcement officers from all pilot sites were invited to guide this project and assist on specific tool development. The primary focus of the LEAG was to review tools, resources, and methods developed through this project and to serve as a resource for law enforcement agencies engaging in the case file review process.

Types of Cases Reviewed

SVJI at MNCASA facilitated the case file review process for three sites. Two of those sites considered reviewing cases that were classified by law enforcement as "closed by arrest" or "open-inactive." The third site considered cases classified as closed either through a complaint filed against an offender(s) or through a decision to decline charges. This workbook is focused primarily on law enforcement cases; however, teams can review the files of other agencies if the process is in line with data privacy laws, victim confidentiality, and any requirements or stipulations specific to the participating agencies.

All case files reviewed were adult sexual assault cases. Each state has different ages of adulthood; please keep this in mind as age relates to specific data privacy laws.

2022 Revisions

Summary of Revisions

In 2022, SVJI at MNCASA recognized the need for the case file review guidebook, to better address the criminal legal response to sexual violence in marginalized and underserved communities. The revisions of this guidebook help teams center on the most marginalized victims/survivors in their community and use case file review as a method to evaluate the response specifically when a community is underserved.

This tool was also revised to become more accessible to teams. Originally, this guidebook was in the form of lesson plans for the site coordinator to facilitate team meetings. Now the guidebook has shifted to an activities-based workbook for the entire team to interact with. These activities contain the same information as previous guidebooks but focus on tangible skill-building throughout the case file review process.

Acknowledgments

Lastly, we want to thank those who were involved with the 2022 revisions to the case file review process to improve this guidebook and the review process.

SVJI Staff

- Fatima Jayoma, Rural Projects Coordinator
- Heather Blanton, National SART Coordinator
- Madison Cutler, Minnesota SART Project Coordinator
- Nigel Perrote, National State Programs Director
- Rachel Martin Asproth, Senior Communications and Design Coordinator
- Sarah Florman, National SART Coordinator
- Victoria Riechers, STOP Project Manager

Consultants

- Carol Schrader, National Technical Assistance Senior Attorney, Victim Rights Law Center
- Jon H. Kurland, Attorney Advisor, Aequitas: The Prosecutor's Resource on Violence Against Women

- Maren Woods, Program Director, Praxis International
- María Limón, Group Process Consultant
- Allison Amy Wedell, Writer and Editor, Allison the Wordsmith

Pilot Site

During the 2022 revisions process, SVJI adopted a piloting process called Usability Testing. This format helped us evaluate the revisions by testing the activities with multiple SART members. We asked site coordinators across the country to collaborate with one other team member while reviewing the revisions to the workbook. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the learnability, efficiency, memorability, errors, and satisfaction of the updated workbook. They were asked to provide written feedback as they reviewed the workbook as well as verbal feedback in a roundtable format at the end of the piloting project. In total, eight team members from four different teams participated in the piloting of the revisions. SVJI would like to thank these SART members for their time and wisdom in contributing to this project.

- University Hospitals Blair Dickey-White Sexual Assault Survivor Program, Cleveland, Ohio
- Law Enforcement Advocate Kayla Thein, Abused Adult Resource Center, Bismarck, North Dakota
- Marlana Moore, LBSW, Abused Adult Resource Center, Bismarck, North Dakota
- Director of Access to Care Alexandra Potter, MA, , Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, Cleveland, Ohio
- Shonene McLaughlin, Regional Case Manager Coordinator, Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, Cleveland, Ohio
- Lauren Spector, MSW, LSW, Regional SART Coordinator, Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, Cleveland, Ohio

No matter where your SART is, we are here to help. Please call or email us with questions so we can assist your SART in the case file review process today! Email: SVJI@mncasa.org.

Case Review Key Terms

Agency/Discipline/Organization

The field where the team member works

Agency

Describes the field of law enforcement

Discipline

Describes the field of all team members of the SART, used as an umbrella term

Case File

All legal documents and other records accumulated in response to a reported sexual assault. This can include but is not limited to reports created by law enforcement, forensic medical examinations, and prosecutorial notes as they relate to contact with the victim/survivor.

Case File Review

The systematic process of examining case files and identifying themes in the criminal legal response to determine compliance with or deviance from established policies and protocols. Case file review also can include a determination of gaps and barriers to effective community response to sexual assault

Case Study

A separate process of an in-depth review of a single case file to evaluate protocol and procedures within that specific case. When teams participate in a case study review, they review only one case at a time and focus on strengths and areas for improvement related to that specific case. Teams still reflect on the process and protocols but focus on anomalies in the response, be they strengths or barriers. Teams may use case studies when examining active cases and when engaging in acute SART work

Closed Cases

Law enforcement has made an arrest in the case or has referred the case to prosecution and the prosecutor has filed charges and the court case has been resolved through a plea deal or trial. For the purposes of case file review, we included cases that law enforcement classified as inactive with no immediate intent for follow-up as "closed cases." SVJI at MNCASA recommends reviewing closed cases

Intersectionality

An acknowledgment that social identities act on multiple levels which results in unique experiences including experiences of discrimination and oppression

Underserved Communities

Victims/Survivors who face barriers to accessing the criminal legal response to sexual violence and services that are fully accessible and responsive to their needs. These include (but are not limited to) communities as defined by geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, language spoken etc.

SART

Sexual Assault Multidisciplinary Action Response Team/Sexual Assault Response Team. A multi-disciplinary team that focuses on the response to sexual violence. There are two types of SARTs. The first is an acute response SART that focuses on individual cases with the goal of impacting those directly involved in the case. The second type of SART places emphasis on systems change. These teams focus on the overall response to sexual assaults in the community with the objective to improve the response for all victims/survivors. For the purposes of case file review, SVJI at MNCASA will use the term "SART" to mean systems change SARTs. Members of a SART include community-based advocates, victim-witness specialists, local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, medical forensic examiners, probation officers, Title IX representatives, representatives from culturally specific groups, mental health representatives, and other members of the community where there are points of disclosure of sexual violence.

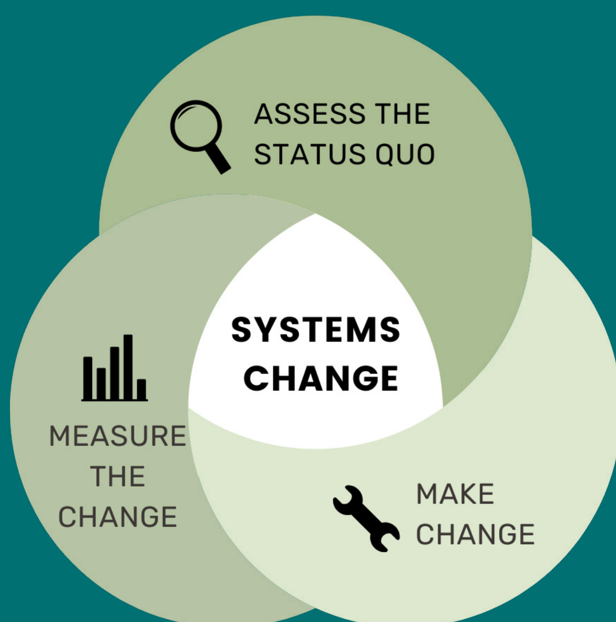
Sytems Change

Systems change happens when agency leaders, front-line practitioners, and community-based stakeholders work together to improve systems response to all sexual violence cases while also coordinating the response among systems. Systems changes SARTs focus on:

- Enhancing the strengths of practice, policy, procedures, and collaboration
- Addressing the shortcomings of practice, policy, procedures, and collaboration
- Ensuring support and engagement for victims throughout all processes
- Continuously improving as communities change over time

SVJI at MNCASA divides systems change into three phases:

1. Assess the Status Quo: Learn about the current response and experience of sexual violence in the community and develop recommendations for change.
2. Make Change: Make improvements through protocol developments, training, and the creation of other resources.
3. Measure the Change: Evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the changes made in the response to sexual violence.



Case file review is an evaluation-based process. It is exciting and potentially challenging and may take a year to complete. We recommend that SARTs are well established before beginning this process. SVJI at MNCASA recommends participating in case file review during a team's third phase of systems change–measuring the change–or during the assessing the status quo phase for teams who have completed the phases of systems change multiple times.

Victim/Survivor-Centered

By following these seven principles each time we respond to sexual violence, responders can create a victim-/survivor-centered response.

1. **Consider the victim/survivor first**: Respect that the victim's/survivor's needs are a priority and are unique to each person.
2. **Listen generously**: Listen to understand the victim/survivor's own goals for safety, healing, and seeking accountability.
3. **Promote victim/survivor independence:** Engaging, consulting, and informing a victim/survivor about decisions that will affect them and respecting their decisions will move them toward safety and healing.
4. **Coordinate and collaborate in the victim/survivor's interest:** Coordinating disparate and fractured elements of response can improve their experience and lead to increased safety and healing.
5. **Support victim-/survivor - safety:** Ensure victims/survivors have the information, resources, and support to be or move toward safety and healing. This can include access to confidential services, privacy protections, access to non-legal remedies for accountability, notification of an offender's release, and consideration of the unintended consequences to victims/survivors of the policy and procedural decisions we make.
6. **Seek just solutions for all:** Center the most marginalized communities in the response to sexual violence.
7. **Hold self and others accountable:** Acknowledge the harm that individuals and systems cause to victims/survivors, including unintentional and historical harm.

Frequently Asked Questions

What Is A Case File Review?

The systematic process of examining case files and identifying and understanding collaboration among systems from established policies and protocols. Case file review can also include a determination of gaps and barriers to an effective response to sexual assault.

What Do We Mean By "Case File"?

Any legal documents and other records accumulated in response to a reported sexual assault. This can include but is not limited to reports created by law enforcement, forensic medical examinations, and prosecutorial notes as they relate to contact with the victim/survivor.

What Is the Purpose of Case File Review?

The purpose of this process is to evaluate the system's response to victims/survivors, not to blame a particular person or organization. The SART Case File Review process is a great opportunity to learn about the SART's current response, identify practices that should continue, and learn about areas for improvement. This process allows the team to learn how sexual violence is documented by the criminal legal system. From there, the team can discuss recommendations for processes that are not producing positive outcomes. This is a way to look at the system response to victims/survivors and make victim-/survivor-centered systems change.

What Have Teams Said About the Case File Review Process?

We asked one police chief who went through SVJI at MNCASA's Case File Review process the following questions. His responses are italicized:

"What made you want to review your sexual assault case files?"

"It's no more complicated than I wanted to see where we could improve. There is nothing more important to me than doing a good investigation that serves the victim and prevents further victimization. It's personal."

"Along those lines, what were you expecting to get out of doing a case file review?"

"I thought that we were already doing a top-notch job of investigating sexual assaults—so, I figured we were just going to do a little fine-tuning."

"What did you actually get out of doing the review?"

"I got an education. My guess is that most chiefs are like me in overestimating the quality of their sexual assault investigations. This is not a criticism of the investigators. The challenge is in keeping up with new research and changes in best practices."

What Is the Time Commitment for the Case File Review Process?

SARTs often spend at least one year on the full review process. It requires a significant investment of time and energy. Teams need to allow sufficient time to discuss key principles, such as each team member's confidentiality requirements and the impact of those requirements on the case file review process. By the end of this process, team members will have a deeper understanding of one another's roles and the relationship of their agencies to each other. Many teams that have gone through the case file review process have mentioned this particular outcome as being invaluable.

What Are the Steps to Case File Review?

There are four stages to doing this review.

Stage 1: Foundation—This stage is focused on assessing the interest and readiness of our team to do this work.

Stage 2: Preparation—The SART will lay the groundwork for the actual case file review. They will get on the same page by creating a shared language, determining the cases needed for review, and embracing the confidentiality requirements of their fellow team members.

Stage 3: Case File Review—This is where the actual work of reviewing case files takes place. Teams can achieve this stage in one to three full, consecutive days or by using time set aside for monthly meetings.

Stage 4: Findings and Recommendations—Teams will agree on themes identified in the review and interpret that information. Next, the SART will turn the interpretations into recommendations and begin creating action steps for a future project.

Can This Process Be Spread Out Over Monthly Meetings?

Yes. Stages 1, 2, and 4 are typically completed during monthly meetings. Some teams meet for an extended period for the actual review. Others have reviewed one case per meeting for roughly a year during monthly 1.5-hour SART meetings. However, when teams review one case per meeting, the process will take more time.

Who Will Be Part of the Review Process?

The SART members will be a part of the review process. The team may decide to invite others from represented agencies to the case file review. For example, one team that worked with SVJI at MNCASA invited their law enforcement organization's new recruits to participate in the review process. The law enforcement agency used this process as a training method. The agencies, through their members, may reach out to the SART if they want others to participate. However, additional individuals must grasp and respect all members' confidentiality requirements during the review.

CHAPTER 1 FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Who Should Use This Document

Created for all SART members to establish or improve their case file review process, this workbook is designed to promote group discussions that lead to both the sharing of information and the collective decision-making that takes each team member's priorities into account. Each activity takes 90 minutes or less, and if the team wishes, they can conduct more than one activity during a meeting.

How to Use This Document

The chapters are set up in a workbook style and provide space for thoughts, observations, and findings, creating a historical document for the team. The format of each activity includes:

- **Background:** Any information needed to complete the activity. Not every activity requires background.
- **Objective:** The purpose and goal of the activity.
- **How to Use It:** Guidance as to how the activities are used during the case file review process.

Discussion Questions for Teams Regarding the Limitations of Case File Review

Background

Case file review is a helpful tool for a sexual assault response team. However, there are limitations to what teams can discover through the case file review process. This includes:

- Evaluating sexual violence that is not documented by the criminal legal system.
- Evaluating organizational responses to sexual violence based outside of the criminal legal system.
- Evaluating individual members of a discipline who are part of the response to sexual violence.

Case file review is an evaluation process based on qualitative data gained from written reports. The text the team explores is from law enforcement or the prosecutor's office in the form of case documentation and notes. For this documentation to exist, the victim/survivor must report the assault to law enforcement and may include information from a medical forensic exam. Case file review must include a response from law enforcement. In addition, case file review is not a helpful tool for communities that have developed a distrust of the criminal legal system. Teams must recognize that historically, with low conviction rates, the criminal legal system has not been a pathway for victims/survivors to receive justice or healing. Because of this, SVJI at MNCASA does not recommend using case file review to address barriers and obstacles to the initial reporting of sexual assault to law enforcement or cases of sexual violence that do not involve the criminal legal system.

Victims/survivors of sexual harm have rights to confidential services that will not be shared with the criminal legal system. SARTs must recognize that case file review may not encompass the entire community response, due to the protected nature of some services. However, aggregate information can be provided by community-based team members. For example, a community-based advocate may not share specific services an individual receives but may share descriptions of the services their organization offers. However, instances when the criminal legal system interacts with other community support systems may be documented. The formal linkage and protocols between the disciplines within the criminal legal system and community-based organizations may be evaluated through this process.

The case file review process examines how responders are guided to include some information and not other information in their case files. This evaluation method is not a performance review for a specific individual or organization. Rather, the case file review gives teams an overall perspective of the response to sexual assault among disciplines in their community. It is recommended that all identifying information, including the names of any law enforcement officers, medical forensic examiners, advocates, prosecutors, and other professionals, are redacted from the text analysis. The team will also agree to guidelines about discussing specific elements of the case that are not documented in the text and other potentially identifying information.

Objective

Provide a structure for teams that are discussing the possibility of case file review.

How to Use It

Teams can use the questions below to guide their discussion about whether to begin this evaluative process. There is no concrete answer or number of questions a team is required to complete before continuing with the review process. Rather, these questions can be used as a starting point for a team discussion as to whether case file review is the best process for the team. If teams are unable to answer the questions below, they may want to consider a different form of evaluation. Teams can review SVJI at MNCASA's resource, "*Are We Making a Difference?*" at mncasa.org to learn more about other forms of evaluation.

Questions for Teams

What is each team member hoping to learn from the case file review? How does the team hope to use this information? Is that hope realistic?

Are our agency leaders agreeable to this? Will they allocate resources and support to implement recommended changes?

Do we as a team recognize culturally distinct or marginalized communities? How are culturally distinct or marginalized communities represented in the planning, evaluation, and decision-making process in proportion to the system's response in our community?

How does the case file review align with the team's mission and vision?

Is case file review the most victim-/survivor-centered and trauma-informed way to learn the information we're hoping for?

Case file review takes time: 10 to 15 months. Do we all have the time available to get through this process? What methods of motivation the team will use while completing this review?

Is now the best time to do a case file review considering other initiatives, transitions, or circumstances in our community?

Remember, case file review is not the only form of evaluation. It is okay if the team determines now is not the time for case file review. It is not victim-/survivor-centered to push teams into the work they are not ready for! There are other forms of evaluation a team may use if this method is not right for them. Please reach out to SVJI at MNCASA at SVJI@mncasa.org if you have any questions

Developing Your Anchor Question

Objective

Teams will formalize the purpose of their review by developing a question to focus on during the review. Some teams may have a specific goal in conducting a case file review while others may hope to review cases in the general sense. This anchor question will be revisited several times during the review.

How to Use It

Use the three questions below as a guide in creating a specific question for the team's goals of case file review. Below each question are ideas and examples of what teams should consider when developing this anchor. Depending on your community's needs, your team might use one question or all three to formulate your anchor question.

1. What Areas of Institution-Based Practices Will We Focus On Evaluating in the Case File Review Process?

Examples

- A rural team with a geographically large service area wants to explore how their protocol decreases response time between various discipline services.
  Resulting Anchor Question: Has our response time changed since the last protocol update based on police report data?
- A team wants to discover how their most recent protocol is being implemented in their community.
  Resulting Anchor Question: How is our protocol documented in law enforcement case notes?
- A team wants to learn of barriers in the response to sexual violence that masculine identifying victims/survivors have experienced.
  Resulting Anchor Question: In the case notes, what barriers have masculine identifying victims/survivors been describing to the prosecution?

Our Team's Response:

2. Can the Team Use the Findings of this Question to Create Actionable Change That Benefits Victims/Survivors in their Community?

Examples

- A county-specific team wants to learn why many of the alcohol-facilitated sexual assault cases in the community do not move forward once they are charged in criminal court. The prosecutor on the team mentions that the laws surrounding alcohol-facilitated sexual assault are unclear.
  Resulting Anchor Question: The team realizes that there may be a larger policy issue at stake and chooses a different issue to explore.

- A team with a university in their service area uses a case file review to compare how Title IX and the criminal legal system create accountability. The site coordinator invites representatives from the local university to join in this process to ensure changes can be made after the review.
  Resulting Anchor Question: What were the outcomes of cases that went through the Title IX disciplinary system and the criminal legal system?

Our Team's Response:

3. How Will This Anchor Center Victims/Survivors from Marginalized Communities?

Examples

- An urban team wants to explore who is accessing the response to sexual violence. The team specifically focuses on how underserved communities are accessing the criminal legal system and the barriers the systematic response has created for marginalized victims/survivors.
  Resulting Anchor Question: What barriers are LGBTQIA victims/survivors describing to law enforcement?

Our Team's Response:

Our Team's Anchor Question:

Gathering Leadership Buy-In

Objective

To create a tool for members of the SART to discuss the review process with their organization's leadership.

How to Use It

Teams should start with the information listed below and customize it to fit what each member's discipline will need to know about the case file review process. Once the team has completed the following questions, members of the SART can use it as a tool to answer any questions their organization has about the process before the review begins. Team members can also refer to the Frequently Asked Questions on page 19.

What anchor question will the team focus on during the case file review process?

What support will team members need from their organization?

How will the team share the information they learn and any recommendations they make once the case file review is complete?

If an organization has more questions about the case file review process, what team member can they contact?

Is there any other information the team would like to share with leadership about the case file review process?

Readiness Assessment

Objective

To assist your SART in determining their readiness for case file review.

How to Use It

Before the SART begins preparing for case file review, use this readiness assessment to determine whether the SART is ready to begin the case file review process. If the SART is not able to check off a box, pause and ask, “What barriers are in place that keep us from checking this box? What can the team do to eliminate or reduce those barriers?” Once the team can check off each item, you are ready to begin preparing for case file review!

For the SART:

- [ ] Each member understands what sexual assault response looks like in the community. This response often takes the form of a protocol, or formalized roles and responsibilities for all responders, to guide how organizations interact with one another to remain adaptable and victim-/survivor-centered.
- [ ] Each member understands the roles of each discipline represented within the SART and confidentiality expectations for those roles.
- [ ] The team aims to identify and implement new strategies for a successful response to sexual assault within and for all members of our community.
- [ ] Each member has reviewed and discussed the limitations of case file review and how these limitations will impact the information the team wants to discover through case file review.
- [ ] Each member has reviewed the FAQs page and discussed the FAQs with their organization.

- [ ] Each member has brought any questions their organization has to the team about case file review, and these questions have been answered.
- [ ] We have determined who will provide the case files for review. This agency is ______________________________
- [ ] The team has determined the leadership roles of SART members during the case file review.
- [ ] The team is willing to commit 10¬ to 15 months to the review. This includes preparation, a mock case file review, the actual case file review, findings, and creating an action plan for the next steps.

For the Agency Providing the Cases for Review:

- [ ] The organization or office has a true desire and interest in reviewing the current response to sexual violence.
- [ ] The organization or office has a commitment from administrators and internal leadership to support the case file review process and implementation of the resulting recommendations.
- [ ] The organization or office has a strong relationship with the SART conducting the case file review.
- [ ] The organization is willing to take all necessary steps to protect confidentiality.

Congratulations!

The team is now ready to prepare for the case file review process.

CHAPTER 2
PREPARATION

Introduction

Now that the team has had an opportunity to lay the foundation for a case file review, it is time to begin preparing for the review itself! This chapter contains 11 activities for teams to use to prepare for the actual review. The first two activities are focused on determining team member roles during the review process and creating guidelines for discussion. After that, the team will create a guide for the agency in selecting cases. The team will then discuss their confidentiality standards and develop a plan as to how to uphold these standards. Next, the team will focus on communication within the team by developing a shared language, mapping out their shared values, and practicing giving and receiving feedback. The team will examine the analysis tools used during the review and modify a checklist tool and an observation form to meet their needs. Finally, they will discuss how to tend to their wellness needs for the review. By taking time and care to prepare for the review, teams will be able to focus on closely reviewing their community's response to sexual violence.

Leadership Roles in Case File Review

Background

Case file review is an exciting undertaking that requires team collaboration. Part of this collaboration is determining the responsibilities and roles of various members in the review process. Before preparing for the review, teams should divide the responsibilities of the case file review process. There may be times when an individual will take on multiple roles, but no team member should be responsible for all the roles in the review. If there are roles needed for your community that are not listed, feel free to add them.

If a change of membership in the team impacts these roles, take some time during a meeting to discuss another member who could fill the vacant role, and record this change. Some of these roles may also rotate between several team members. The team may want to document which member has that role in every meeting. Remember, this is a living historical document that may help the team in the future. Some SARTs use a subcommittee for case file review; the roles of the review should also be filled by the people on that subcommittee.

Objective

Teams will determine the roles various members will take during the case file review process.

How to Use It

Using the descriptions below, teams will determine which members will undertake each leadership role.

Facilitator

The facilitator of the review leads team meetings related to the review. This includes setting the agenda for meetings, keeping track of time during the meetings, and ensuring that the conversation is focused on the review at hand. The facilitator is also responsible for ensuring that members are actively participating and that their needs are being met through the case file review process. The facilitator maintains a victim-/survivor-centered lens but is not a representative of their own discipline. Depending on the size of the team, they may not be an active participant during the case file review process, but rather assist various members during the review process. SVJI at MNCASA recommends that the facilitator's discipline should be represented by another team member during the review.

Our facilitator for the case file review is ______________________________

____

Point of Contact for Cases

The point of contact for cases is from the law enforcement organization or prosecution office where the cases will be reviewed. This person serves as a liaison between the SART and the organization providing the cases, including bringing any questions the organization has about case file review to the SART and vice versa. The point of contact will also update their organization on the progress of case file review preparation. In addition, the point of contact ensures that the cases brought to the review include all information possible while still redacting any personally identifying information (PII) related to the individual case.

Our point of contact for providing cases for review is ______________________

____

Logistical Coordinator

The logistical coordinator ensures that the case file review process runs smoothly by planning and preparing between meetings. This can include ensuring that the team has the space and materials needed to meet and perform the case file review. The logistical coordinator reminds team members of upcoming meetings and tasks that must be completed outside of meetings. In addition, this person assists the facilitator in setting the agenda for the team meetings.

Our logistical coordinator for case file review is __________________________

____

Notetaker

The notetaker maintains the SART meeting notes; they may also be the primary individual who takes notes in this guidebook. In addition, the notetaker is responsible for bringing past notes to the team's meetings. The notetaker may be one person, or various members of the SART could rotate through the role. Include all notetakers in the space below.

Our notetaker for SART meeting and the case file review guidebook is

Agreements for Discussion

Objective

This activity will guide teams through creating agreements and guidelines they would like to use during this evaluation process.

How To Use It

Teams should take some time to brainstorm any agreements and guidelines they would like to include while going through the case file review process. Below are some examples of agreements teams have previously used. You can use these or write your own in the box provided. At the beginning of every meeting, SVJI at MNCASA suggests returning to this document. The facilitator can remind the team of the guidelines and check in with them to determine if any of the guidelines should be modified for the team's needs.

Examples of agreements and guidelines teams have previously used

- Respect each other's roles.
    - o There are different ways to do things.
    - o Be understanding of each other's ideas.
    - o Ask questions instead of assuming what someone means.

Acknowledge the hard work of the agencies involved in the cases under review.

- Allow space for different opinions and room to talk.
    - o If you're someone who tends to not speak a lot, please move up into a role of speaking more. If you tend to speak a lot, please move up into a role of listening more.
- Focus on the system response, not individuals or agencies.
- Give people the space to talk about something without viewing it as an attack on a person's experience, view, etc. Don't take things personally.
- Balance assuming positive intent with the importance of impact over the intention.
- Respect the confidentiality requirements of all team members.

Our Team's Agreements

Determining Which Cases to Review

Objective

Teams will create a guide for which types of cases should be pulled for the actual case file review. This guide will be used by the point of contact for selecting case files.

How to Use It

Use the image below as a discussion guide to determine the type of case, the number of cases, the scope of the cases, and special considerations when determining which cases in the SARTs community your team will review. Teams will then create a guide for the individuals who are responsible for pulling and redacting cases.

What does the team want to learn?

What is our anchor question?

How can we stay focused on our anchor question during case selection?

What is the structure of review?

How much variation is the team looking for in cases? Some common factors include:

- Alcohol- or drug-facilitated assaults.
- The outcome of criminal legal proceedings.
- Relationships between victim/survivor and suspect.
- The community where the assault took place.
- Barriers the victim/survivor experienced.

What systems are participating in the case?

Which agencies' and organizations' actions are documented in the case notes?

When using case file review to evaulate protocol, teams want to ensure the protocol is recorded in the case notes!

Are we using active or closed cases?

If reviewing active cases, the team may not see the full response to sexual violence documents. Some disciplines may still be creating their documentation to the response in an active case.

SVJI at MNCASA recommends using closed cases or inactive cases for the review.

How many cases will we review?

We recommend planning to spend an hour per case during the review.

Teams should pull enough cases so that they are able to find patterns, but not so many that it becomes overwhelming.

We reccomend planning on 6 to 12 cases for review.

The Team's Anchor Question:	
Parameters of Cases that Will Support the Structure of Review:	

Agencies that Should Be Mentioned in the Cases:	
Should the Cases be Active or Inactive?	
The Range of Years We Would Like for the Review:	

Confidentiality and Redaction

Background

The following activity was developed in partnership with the Victim's Rights Law Center. Teams should note that confidentiality requirements vary based on discipline, state statutes, tribal law, territorial law, grant funding requirements, and organizational policies. This activity is focused on confidentiality as it relates to the case file review discussion. For more information on confidentiality in SART work, please refer to the SVJI at MNCASA tool *"What Can We Talk About? Honoring Victim/Survivor Confidentiality in SARTs"* at mncasa.org and the Victim Rights Law Center website at https://victimrights.org/. Before completing this activity, we recommend all team members revisit their disciplines' confidentiality guidelines.

Objectives

Teams will revisit each discipline's confidentiality standards and determine how to uphold these standards during the review. Teams will then create a guide for the discipline responsible for redacting information in case files. Lastly, teams will formalize their agreements surrounding confidentiality through a Memorandum of Understanding.

How to Use It

This activity is divided into 4 sections:

1. **Revisiting Our Confidentiality Standards**
2. **What Can We Talk About?—Case File Review Edition**
3. **Creating a Guide for Redaction**
4. **Developing a Memorandum of Understanding**

Teams may spend a meeting working through each section or may combine sections based on their needs. We recommend teams use a full meeting for the first section and combine the latter three sections in a second meeting. In addition, teams may find that some tools are not applicable to their specific community. Teams should use the tools that best fit their needs as they relate to confidentiality. More specific instructions as to how to use each section can be found directly above the tool.

Revisiting Our Confidentiality Standards

After reviewing your confidentiality requirements, each team member should discuss their discipline's confidentiality requirements and answer questions related to confidentiality. The notetaker should record each discipline's answer below. A general example is also included for you to discuss.

What laws impact information that I cannot share with other team members?

Example: Community organizations that receive funding from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to provide victim services cannot share victim/survivor personally identifying information (PII) with team members unless they have a signed release of information from the victim/survivor.

Law Enforcement:

Prosecutors:

System-Based Advocates:

Community-Based Advocates

Probation and Corrections Officers:

Medical Forensic Examiners:

SART Member

SART Member:

SART Member:

What laws require me to share the information I learn with others who are not in the SART?

Example: Prosecutors may be required to share information about specific cases with defense attorneys during the discovery process.

Law Enforcement:

Prosecutors:

System-Based Advocates:

Community-Based Advocates

Probation and Corrections Officers:

Medical Forensic Examiners:

SART Member

SART Member

SART Member:

Are there any values or ethics that govern my profession pertaining to confidentiality?

Example: Attorneys abide by attorney- client privilege when there is an attorney-client relationship.

Law Enforcement:

Prosecutors:

System-Based Advocates:

Community-Based Advocates

Probation and Corrections Officers:

Medical Forensic Examiners:

SART Member

SART Member:

SART Member:

What are the practical implications of reporting requirements? How do they show up in my work?

Example: As a mandated reporter for vulnerable adult protection, when I discover an incident of abuse that meets all the statutory requirements for reporting, I report it to Adult Protection Services.

Law Enforcement:

Prosecutors:

System-Based Advocates:

Community-Based Advocates

Probation and Corrections Officers:

Medical Forensic Examiners:

SART Member

SART Member:

SART Member:

How can the team support me in upholding these confidentiality requirements?

Example: The team will neither ask nor expect me, a community-based advocate, to share any personally identifying information about any case we review unless I have a Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)-compliant release of information that allows me to share the information.

Law Enforcement:

Prosecutors:

System-Based Advocates:

Community-Based Advocates

Probation and Corrections Officers:

Medical Forensic Examiners:

SART Member

SART Member

SART Member

What Can We Talk About? Case File Review Edition

Teams will determine how they will discuss cases during the actual review. This will guide teams in determining how to uphold confidentiality for all team members during the review.

Revisiting Our Anchor Question

It is time for you to check in on your anchor question. This will remind team members of the focus of case file review and what information will be focused on when reviewing cases. This is also a good time for the facilitator to check in with the team to determine if the focus question has shifted.

Our Team's Anchor Question:

Determining How We Want to Talk About Case File Review

Based on your anchor question, you must determine if you want to focus solely on evaluating the information in the case notes, if the evaluation will include information added verbally by the team members, or if some team members without confidentiality requirements will share information while respecting the fact that not all team members may be able to share additional information. This will determine how teams ensure confidentiality is upheld during the review. Indicate what best reflect your decision below:

- ☐ Our team will not include additional information outside of the case notes in the review.
- ☐ Our team will include additional information outside of the case notes in the review.
- ☐ Some of the team will include additional information outside of the case notes in the review.

Informed Consent of Victim/Survivors in Case File Review

You may want to consider asking for informed consent of victims/survivors to review their cases. Below are some definitions of informed consent:

Survivor's Informed Consent with the Case Review

Informed consent with case review means that a victim/survivor has the opportunity to discuss what could happen during the case review process, including what information about them and their case would be shared, with whom, and the possible benefits and risks of sharing that information. It is imperative for victims/survivors to understand that case file review is not intended to change the outcome of an individual case. The victim/survivor could then give or withhold permission for their information to be shared with the team. A victim's/survivor's agreement to share specific information would be recorded in writing and signed by them. The conversation and recording would be done, directly or via interpretation and translation, in the language that is best for the victim/survivor to use. The victim/

survivor can revoke any permission given to share their information at any time.

Considerations for Teams in Determining Informed Consent

Discuss these factors when determining informed consent. You can find guidance from SVJI at MNCASA in italics below some of the questions.

Does the anchor question require the team to share PII?

- Is there a way to answer the anchor question without reviewing PII?
- What PII does it require?
- Can the team get at the answer to the anchor question without using PII?

Who Will Obtain Informed Consent from Victims/Survivors?

SVJI at MNCASA recommends that the agency providing the case file notes is responsible for obtaining informed consent. Remember, though, that other SART members may have to obtain informed consent from victims/survivors to share any of their personally identifying information.

What Support Does the Agency Obtaining Informed Consent Need from the Team?

SVJI at MNCASA recommends that the process of obtaining informed consent should include an advocate providing trauma-informed services. Being asked for informed consent may be triggering or upsetting to some victims/survivors. Including an advocate in obtaining informed consent will allow for a more victim-/survivor-centered response.

Creating A Guide for Redaction

You may also use redaction as a method to protect a victim's/survivor's confidentiality within the SART. There are pros and cons to redacting.

Reasons to redact:

- Victim service providers who receive VAWA, Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), and Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding are required to protect PII.
- Data privacy acts (look specifically to your jurisdiction's laws for guidance on this).
- Challenges associated with contacting victims/survivors to request permission to

review a case file (e.g., unable to reach a victim to request permission or, if able to reach victim, may be triggering or traumatizing for those who have moved on, etc.)
- Not everyone on a SART knows who in the community has been a victim/survivor of sexual assault. Redaction protects victim/survivor privacy among team members.
- Ability to hold the system accountable, as opposed to focusing on the specific people involved in the case.

Reasons to not redact:

- Cost of redaction (time, money, etc.).
- Closed case files are already classified as public information.
- Ability to hold all members of the response accountable (law enforcement supervisor signing off on case files, knowing which officer conducted an investigation, etc.).
- You have signed permission from a victim to review the case file. This decreases the need to redact the victims' information, but if you are looking for an assessment of the entire system, you will still want to redact the remaining personal information in the case file.

Redaction requires the agency providing the case files to remove information that would identify the individuals in the case. Which individual does the redaction may depend on the agency providing the case file. For example, if law enforcement is providing the case file, records personnel may be responsible for redacting even if they are not on the team. The team should determine what information should be redacted and modify the guide below for the agency responsible for the redaction. The point of contact will serve as a liaison between the team and the individual responsible for redacting.

Some information, like PII, may be redacted regardless of the community. Depending on the team's community there may be additional information teams may want to redact so that PII is not learned. For example, if there was one case that occurred at a local university and ended up in the news, the team may want to redact the location of all cases so the university case is not identified.

SVJI at MNCASA also recommends redacting any identifying information related to the responders of the case. This focuses the team on the discipline response as a whole instead of individual members of specific disciplines.

Identifying Information to Be Redacted in All Cases Used for Review

Place a checkmark next to information that they would like redacted from all case notes they will review.

Victim/Survivor

- [ ] Name
- [ ] Birthday
- [ ] Address
- [ ] Phone number
- [ ] Internet protocol address
- [ ] Email
- [ ] ID number (Example: Social Security number, driver license number)

Workplace

- [ ] Gender Identity

- [ ] Other identifying information

Example: Race, ethnicity, immigration status, or religious identity may be personally identifying.

Suspect

- [ ] Name
- [ ] Birthday
- [ ] Address
- [ ] Phone number
- [ ] Email
- [ ] Workplace
- [ ] ID number
- [ ] Gender Identity

- [ ] Other identifying information

Other Witnesses

- [ ] Name
- [ ] Birthday
- [ ] Address
- [ ] Phone number
- [ ] Email
- [ ] ID numbers
- [ ] Relationship to victim/survivor
- [ ] Relationship to suspect
- [ ] Workplace
- [ ] Gender Identity

- [ ] Other identifying information

Responder(s)

- [ ] Names of specific law enforcement officers
- [ ] Badge numbers of law enforcement officers
- [ ] Name of sexual assault examiner
- [ ] Name of advocate
- [ ] Names of any other responders in the report
- [ ] Gender identity of responders

- [ ] Other identifying information

Example: Police report case number

Location(s)

- [ ] Where the assault occurred
- [ ] Hospital of medical forensic exam
- [ ] School attended by the victim/survivor or suspect
- [ ] Spaces regularly attended by victim/survivor or suspect

☐ Other identifying information

Community-Specific Information

☐ Other identifying information

Example: If interpretation services are used, redact the language requested.

Developing A Memorandum of Understanding

You may want to formalize their agreements as they specifically relate to case file review and confidentiality through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Below is an outline and some language teams may use to develop such an MOU. This MOU is designed to be specific to the case file review and is not intended to replace any general or other MOU the SART has agreed to. If the team develops an MOU, ensure that a signed copy is saved along with this guidebook as part of the your historical documentation.

Introduction

An MOU is a helpful tool for recording agreements about a SART's priorities for case review, the scope of the case review work, and the various confidentiality and other legal requirements team members have for it.

The following template suggests approaches to MOUs. You should adapt it to suit your SART's needs.

Please reach out to SVJI's technical assistance team at svji@mncasa.org or VRLC's technical assistance team at TA@victimrights.org with any questions you may have about SART MOUs.

MOU Template

I. Introduction

A brief statement of why you are entering into an MOU. You might include the SART's mission, vision, and scope of work.

II. Relevant Law That Affects the MOU

SARTs may want to identify laws that inform their case review work near the beginning of an MOU, so team members know any legal basis for their MOU agreements, especially those that focus on confidentiality and privilege. If your SART decides to identify such laws, you might include the following:

a. If you have victim service providers on the SART who receive VAWA, VOCA, and/or FVSPA funding: The VAWA, VOCA, and/or FVPSA confidentiality provisions.
b. For professionals who have legally established confidentiality and privilege requirements: Those provisions. [2]
c. For professionals who have mandatory or permissive reporting requirements: Those laws. Note: Victim service providers who receive VAWA, VOCA, and/or FVPSA funding only may report when required to do so by the relevant statutes.
d. If the SART anticipates that they will serve certain groups of people (e.g., students or people living in facilities such as juvenile or immigrant detention, or assisted living), the SART might include laws that come into play when they review such cases (e.g., guardianship statutes, the Clery Act, Title IX, the Prison Rape Elimination Act).

2. VRLC has jurisdiction-specific resources that can help you identify the mandatory reporting and victim-advocate privilege laws, etc. that might be referenced here. You can contact us at TA@victimrights.org.

III. Agreements

You will have determined these SART agreements as you went through the process described previously in this handbook. Record them here.

IV. Signatures

Signatures will indicate agreement to the MOU terms. The best approach is to include the names, roles, and contact information for each signatory. Given turnover and that more than one person might represent an agency or organization, for example, including where someone works indicates that the signatory is acting on behalf of their broader organization. Signatures should include the date when signed.

This work is supported by Grant Number 2020-TA-AX-K032 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this program are those of the trainers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Getting on the Same Page: Shared Language

Background

This exercise has been modified from the Resource Sharing Project's Developing a Shared Language Activity.

Objective

Teams will work to create a shared language when discussing case file reviews and the differences in their organizations' definitions of the same terms.

How to Use It:

Teams should divide into groups of three to four people to discuss the terms on the next page. Teams can divide the terms based on the number of groups formed. Teams should then define the terms using the small-group discussion questions below as a guide for 15 to 20 minutes, recording their answers. Groups can share their definitions and continue the discussion using the large-group discussion questions and record their answers.

Terms

Implicit Bias

Culturally-Responsive Response to Sexual Violence

Consent

Accountability

Offender-Focused

Anti-Oppression

Sexual Violence

Victim/Survivor-Centered

Underserved Community

Small-Group Discussion Questions

- What does this term mean to you as a SART team member?
- How does this term show up in your discipline's work?
- What shapes your understanding of this term?
- How might this term look different to different SART members?

Large-Group Discussion Questions

For what terms does the team share definitions?

Where is there variation in definition of these terms?

How is the SART mission/values statement embodied in the definition of these terms?

Mapping the Shared Values That Guide Our Success

Background

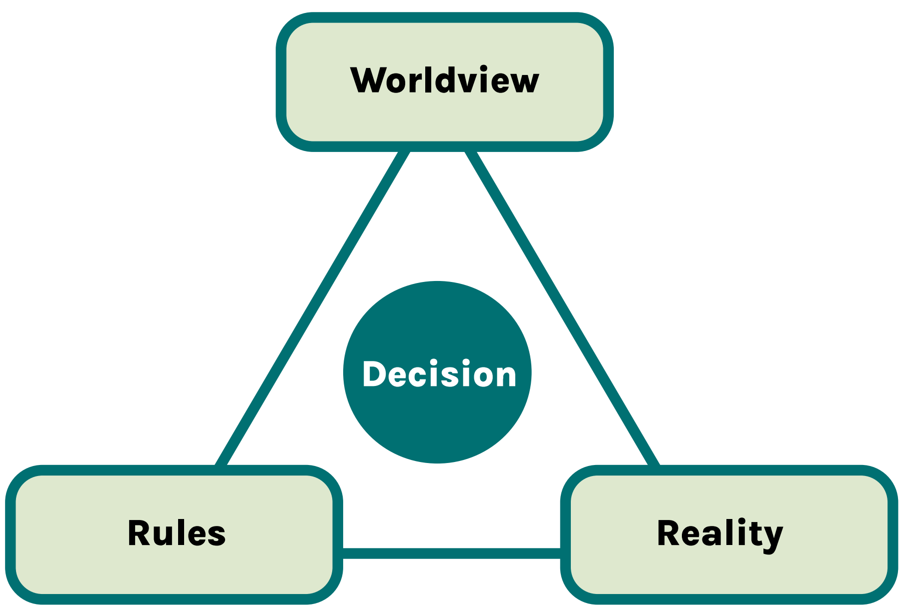
We are constantly interacting with our environment: taking in information, putting it back out, seeing the ways we interact with it and how it responds to us in turn. This is a dynamic process that occurs continually.

There are certain key elements that inform the patterns that emerge in our perspectives, which then contribute to how we make decisions. The different disciplines within a SART bring different points of view, constraints, approaches, and experiences with sexual assault survivors into the process. Ultimately, these elements are the function/result of three factors:

1. Worldview: the view of the world that we hold; our framework for understanding the world and how we discern, recognize, organize, and generalize information that we take in. This can come from discipline training and personal values/beliefs.

2. Rules: regulations by which we are bound, created in an effort to control and predict our behavior; can be formal (e.g., laws, policies, professional ethical codes) or informal (e.g., organizational or professional culture).

3. Reality: the way things are; the reality of the situation we are facing (in a moment and in general), obstacles disciplines face while doing the work.



These three factors are interdependent, and our decisions emerge from the ongoing interaction of all three.

Objective

Team members will remind each other of their discipline's roles and goals when responding to sexual violence. The team will also revisit their mission and values statement and discuss how it relates to the review. The team will discuss their success indicators as they relate to scenarios.

How To Use It

This activity is divided into two parts: Successes in a Discipline and SART Mission and Values.

Successes In A Discipline

The team will discuss how each discipline measures success when responding to sexual violence. As a reminder, different agencies within the discipline may have various methods to measure success. A representative from each discipline will share with you how their discipline measures a successful response to sexual violence in the community.

Our Team's Mission

The team will revisit their mission and vision statement. This will focus on the similarities within the team and is a helpful re-grounding tool during times of conflict. If the team does not have a mission or vision statement, the team can create one using SVJI at MNCASA's SART Mission and Vision Builder before proceeding with the case file review process. You can find it at https://mncasa.org/. Teams can then divide into two groups to discuss one of the scenarios below. Members will describe how their discipline would measure success, gaps, and areas of collaboration and how the team's mission and vision statement will be used as a tool.

Successes In A Discipline

Each discipline should answer the following question to share with the team. Use the space below to document everyone's thoughts.

How does each discipline define and measure success when responding to sexual violence?

Our Team's Mission and Vision Statement

We will revisit our mission and vision during major decision points in the case file review and in times of conflict

How do different disciplines in the team carry out the SART's mission and vision in their work?

How is this team going to define success when reviewing cases?

What are some examples of collaboration points among team members that support this mission and vision?

Teams should review the scenarios below and discuss where they see collaboration points where disciplines can work together successes in the response, and the potential gaps in the response to sexual violence. If the team is large, divide into two groups to discuss the scenarios.

Scenario 1

A SART spent two days reviewing fifteen cases. One focus area centered on the initial response to alcohol-facilitated sexual assaults. In several cases they looked at, a patrol brought the victim to the hospital for a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) exam (victim consented), without an interview or additional evidence collection. Policy is to wait until after the SANE exam or for a trained investigator. SANEs refused to do an exam in many of these cases until they considered the victim sober enough to be able to consent. Advocacy was called to wait with the victim until SANEs considered them sober enough to be about to consent. Many victims chose to not go through an exam and wanted to "just go home." When this occurred, advocacy followed up with the victim a week after the visit.

In this scenario, what were some successful aspects to this response to the sexual assaults?

What are some of the potential gaps of the response to sexual violence in this scenario? Where are the collaboration points between disciplines? When and how do they occur?

Scenario 2

The team spent one day reviewing seven closed cases. There were multiple representatives from all disciplines present. Throughout the day, the team noted some areas they could work on. They noticed several cases where advocacy wasn't regularly called, as well as times when advocates were called but didn't show up. Law enforcement noted that they could use more sensory language in their reports. Towards the end of the day, one detective expressed that it seemed pointless to put in all this energy and work when prosecution hasn't moved forward with an adult sexual assault case in almost four years and that all cases involving alcohol were closed immediately as prosecution felt they couldn't win any of those cases.

In this scenario, where are the collaboration points among disciplines?
When and how do they occur?

In this scenario, where are there areas of conflict among disciplines?
When and how do they occur?

Practicing Providing and Receiving Feedback

Objective

Team members will discuss what feedback is and review several methods for providing constructive feedback during the review. Team members will also practice receiving feedback as a representative of their discipline.

How to Use It

Team members will first review and share times when they have experienced giving and receiving feedback in the team, then review two different types of feedback methods and practice using these methods. Finally, reflect on how team members can give and receive feedback openly and honestly.

What Is Feedback?

When you provide feedback, you are sharing information about a product or behavior which is then used to improve that product or behavior. By providing and receiving feedback, teams practice their core value of improving the response to sexual violence in their community. Feedback can be both positive and, constructive, and but also harmful. It can be delivered in many forms: verbal, written, structured, and informal. Often, we give and receive feedback without even noticing!

The three types of feedback:

- **Positive feedback** focuses on strengths, contributions, and values.
- **Constructive feedback** focuses on achieving an improved outcome by providing respectful advice, comments, and suggestions for the future.
- **Harmful feedback** is an expression of dissatisfaction that can include insults, or abusive language, or involves harmful stereotypes and oppression.

As a Team, Think About and Record:

A Time A Team Member Has Shared Feedback Formally

Example: At the end of the year, team members fill out a goal planning sheet stating what they would like the team to work on next year.

A Time A Team Member Shared Positive Feedback

Example: An advocate shares that a recent training the SART hosted has been well received by several community members who are requesting the training be hosted again.

A Time A Team Member Shared Constructive Feedback

Example: A prosecutor shares that several statutory updates have not been reflected in the protocol. The prosecutor recommends updating the protocol to reflect these changes.

A Time Team Members Provided Harmful Feedback

Example: A team member states they don't refer masculine identifying victims/ survivors to the local rape crisis center, because advocates refuse to help men.

Methods of Feedback

Keep in mind no matter what method you use:

- Feedback is shared information used to improve system responses.
- We all receive feedback as part of our role in the team.
- Relational and systemic power impacts can determine whether feedback is positive, constructive, or harmful.
- Not everyone will use the same method to share feedback, which is okay!

The Sandwich Method

When using this feedback method, start the conversation by sharing a strength, then share a piece of constructive feedback, before finally sharing a positive future-oriented piece of feedback—like a sandwich.

Example: Thank you to the detective who will serve as the point person for the case file review process and for the additional work they contribute. We need to ensure that the department leadership also has bought into the review process and would invite them to the next meeting. We look forward to connecting and collaborating with the department during the review.

As a team, brainstorm examples of this feedback method:

COIN (Context, Observation, Impact, Next Steps)

Provide feedback using these four steps:

1. Context—Discuss the circumstances that you want to provide feedback about.
2. Observation—Discuss what you have observed in your role in an exploratory manner.
3. Impact—Share the effects, both positive and negative, of what you have observed.
4. Next Steps—Suggest methods of improvement and possible solutions.

Example: We are reviewing cases of sexual assault that were dismissed by the prosecution (Context). All the sexual assaults where alcohol was mentioned in the report were dismissed (Observation). The dismissal of Together these declined cases have sent a message to our community that we do not believe victims/survivors of drug- or alcohol-facilitated assault (Impact). As a team, we should connect with our local TA provider to learn how to better support these victims/survivors (Next Steps).

As a team, brainstorm examples of this feedback method:

Methods of Feedback

Before reviewing the following scenarios, team members should spend time reflecting on how they have received feedback in the past. Spend 8 -10 minutes individually reflecting on the following questions:

- Think of a time when you received feedback and did not take it well.
- How did you feel when receiving that feedback?
- What could you have done differently when receiving feedback?
- Think of a time you gave someone feedback and they did not take it well.
- How did you feel after you gave that person feedback?
- Is there anything you could have done differently to give constructive and professional feedback?
- How do you think your feedback made them feel? What might a person have been feeling when they didn't take the feedback well (defensive, angry, ashamed, hurt)?

As a team, review the following scenarios and reflect on how team members have received feedback by answering the questions below:

Scenario 1

Your team is participating in case file review, where your team's anchor question is "Where is our current protocol reflected in the police report?" Today, you divided the team into small groups across disciplines to analyze different cases, looking at what went well and what could be improved upon. After the meeting, another team member pulls you aside to tell you that in her small group, members of the team were making biased and racist comments about the perpetrator in the case. The perpetrator was a Black man, and the small group was making comments that aligned with stereotypes about Black men being violent rapists. The team member shares that as a Black woman and community-based advocate, she felt extremely uncomfortable speaking up about this during the small- group activity. She also worries that the biases shared will impact the effectiveness of the review overall.

What do you think that prompted this person giving to give this feedback might be speaking from?

How does this feedback relate to the team's values?

How would you address the concerns that were shared with you?

How would the team care for their own wellness if they experienced a similar event?

Scenario 2

Your team is participating in case file review, where your team's anchor question is "What is the relationship between language being used to describe the sexual assault and the outcome of the criminal legal proceedings?" Today, the team is reviewing their preliminary observations from the actual day of review and developing their findings. During the meeting, the prosecutor notices that several cases were dismissed due to a consent defense. The prosecutor states that in these cases, the report summarized the assault and was often not very descriptive. The prosecutor recommends including stating in the review findings that non-specific language was used in several reports. At this point, a detective stands up and is upset. They say that no one understands the challenges of law enforcement, and this review is being used to blame law enforcement for all the team's problems. Even though there are 60 minutes left of the meeting, the detective leaves the room.

How does the prosecutor's feedback relate to the team's values?

What do you think this person giving feedback might be speaking from?

How would the team care for their wellness if they experienced
a similar event was experienced?

Analysis Tool: Modifying A Checklist

Objectives

Teams will adapt this checklist-based tool to suit their needs for the actual review.

How To Use It

Now is an opportunity for teams to revisit the Foundations Chapter (Chapter 1) and review their Anchor Question. Once the team has revisited their focus, review the checklist of yes/no statements below. Add statements that teams will need to measure in their case file review. Teams will practice using this checklist during the mock review.

The Checklist

Our Team's Anchor Question:

Initial Response

Yes	No	
☐	☐	Advocacy offered and contacted
☐	☐	Sexual assault exam offered/encouraged as applicable
☐	☐	Transportation to sexual assault exam offered/determined

☐ ☐ Coordination with other community resources where applicable/ determined by protocol
☐ ☐ Report uses victim's/survivor's language and descriptive words
☐ ☐ Report describes victim's/survivor's affect
☐ ☐ Crime scene secured; proper evidence collected
☐ ☐ Services are victim-/survivor-centered
☐ ☐ Barriers experienced by victim/survivor documented where applicable
☐ ☐ SART protocol followed as intended

☐ ☐ Additional Statements:

Victim In-Depth Interview

Yes No

☐ ☐ Uses victim-/survivor-centered practices
☐ ☐ Report uses victim's/survivor's language and descriptive words as applicable/appropriate
☐ ☐ Report describes victim's/survivor affect
☐ ☐ Report captures the full context of the crime in language of non-consensual sex

- [ ] [ ] Context of force, threat, or fear victim experienced well documented in interview as applicable
- [ ] [ ] Documented unique factors that impacted victim's experience, perspective, and response (e.g., cognitive impairment, size differences, immigration status)
- [ ] [ ] SART protocol is followed as intended
- [ ] [ ] Additional statements:

Suspect In-Depth Interview

Yes	No	
☐	☐	Suspect interview attempted/accomplished
☐	☐	Report uses suspect's language as appropriate
☐	☐	Elements of voluntariness of statement highlighted (or suspect Mirandized if in custody)
☐	☐	Offender history collected/investigated as applicable
☐	☐	Suspect's role in setting up the assault (or creating the conditions of vulnerability) noted

☐ ☐ Areas of corroboration of victim's account highlighted; implausible/ absurd statements highlighted

☐ ☐ Forensic/physical exam conducted as applicable

☐ ☐ Additional statements:

Evidence Collection/Witness Identification

Yes No

☐ ☐ Information necessary to prove elements of the crime included/noted

☐ ☐ Other witnesses identified and interviewed when applicable

Interviews recorded

☐ ☐ Comprehensive evidence collection (e.g., photographs, physical/ forensic evidence from suspect, clothes)

Additional statements:

Analysis Tool: Creating An Observation Form

Objectives

The team will customize their own observation form for the actual case file review process. This form will be focused on the specific needs of the team, based on what the team is hoping to learn from the review process and will be used in small groups during the actual review process.

How to Use It

Once the team has revisited their anchor question, they may want to add more specific questions to the observation form. Below are examples of specific questions the team may find helpful to add to their observation forms. Once your team has determined these questions, add them to the bullet points below. If your team needs support in determining specific questions to ask, please reach out to SVJI at MNCASA at SVJI@mncasa.org.

Case File Review Worksheet

Our Team's Anchor Question:	
Case File ID	

How has this case been centered on the victim/survivor and their needs?

Example: What trauma-informed practices were documented in the case file?

What gaps and barriers did the victim/survivor experience in the response to sexual violence? Did the systems in the response to sexual violence create additional barriers experienced by a victim/survivor because they are a part of an underserved community?

Example: Were victims/survivors asked if they had a preferred language when speaking with a service provider?

Where were the strong points of collaboration among different disciplines?

After prosecution made a charging decision on a case, was advocacy notified of the decision?

What descriptions were used in this case? Are there any descriptions that were helpful? Are there areas where the team is concerned with the descriptions that were used?

Example: Was nonconsensual language not used to describe sexual violence?

Space for "parking lot" thoughts—questions or comments that are not centered on the team's overall question listed above.

Example:
Is there something we noticed that is not directly related to our focus during this case file review?

Tending to A Team's Wellness in the Case File Review Process

Background

Tending to a case file review team's wellbeing is an essential part of the process. Maintaining a balanced, objective perspective requires putting processes into place that support the physical, mental, and emotional needs of the team members. Reading police reports containing detailed descriptions of sexual violence can cause secondary trauma, particularly among team members from disciplines that do not require this as part of their work. Normalize the use of active listening and wellness strategies and adapt them so they best fit your team's needs. The chart below serves as an example of how a team can determine specific wellness activities they can use consistently.

Objective

Teams will create a plan for tending to their wellness during and after a case file review.

How to Use It

Below is a table the team may use as a method of creating a self-care plan for case file review. The table is divided into three sections, each representing a different aspect of self-care for the team to consider. Listed in the table is an example a team may consider as part of their self-care practices.

1. Body: Going through the case file review process may require team members to sit for long periods of time while reviewing case documents. Team members may also be asked to participate in a case file review process on a schedule after providing late-night crisis services. For example, a SANE nurse who is part of the review may have provided an exam several hours before. How can the team provide space for team members to take care of themselves?
2. Mind: Reading about sexual violence and barriers in the response is distressing. It is important to keep in mind that teams will need brain breaks during the case file

review process. In addition, teams may want to consider taking a short break from SART work once the review process is complete. How can the team create a mental break for its members?

3. Heart: As part of the case file review process team members will be asked to read detailed descriptions of sexual violence. This may be uniquely challenging for disciplines who are part of the review, but do not read case documents (like police reports) as part of their daily tasks. Teams should keep in mind that members may experience secondary trauma and re-traumatization during the case file review process. How can the team support their members' emotional needs during the case file review process?

	Body	**Mind**	**Heart**
During Case File Review	Example: Teams take a 10-minute break every hour, during which members are encouraged to take short walks around the building or outside. **Our Team's Plan:**	Example: Teams schedule case file review on a Friday so that team members have a long break before returning to work. **Our Team's Plan:**	Example: Teams encourage their members to take short, individual breaks if reviewing the case becomes overwhelming. **Our Team's Plan:**

	Body	Mind	Heart
After Case File Review	Example: Teams schedule the actual review to end an hour earlier than a typical workday, encouraging members to take the time to rest. **Our Team's Plan:**	Example: The team decides to take a month off from meetings once case file review is complete. **Our Team's Plan:**	Example: Team members can debrief with other members of their team or their supervisor once case file review is **Our Team's Plan:**

Congratulations!

The team is now prepared to complete the Case file review. The team will have an opportunity to put all their preparations in place before moving on to the review with community cases.

CHAPTER 3
CASE FILE REVIEW

Introduction

It is now time for the actual review. Before completing a review of community cases, SVJI at MNCASA recommends using a team meeting to go through a mock case to try out the team's preparations. Included in this chapter is also a sample schedule for a day of case file review. Finally, at the end of the chapter is space for teams to record patterns they find in their observations that will be developed into findings and actionable recommendations for the future.

Practicing the Structure of the Review: The Mock Case Review

Background

The mock case file review allows teams to practice participating in case file review before participating in the review themselves. Team members can read part of a mock case in the form of a police report. SVJI at MNCASA recognizes case notes may contain more information besides the police report. However, to give enough time for teams to practice with the tools, teams will solely review case notes from a police report.

Objectives

The team will practice using the analysis tools and upholding the agreements for discussion and the confidentiality of their team members.

How To Use It

This exercise includes a description of a mock case and details the tools used in the process. The section offers key points to keep in mind throughout the process. Teams will work through the mock review and use the questions to debrief below.

Mock Case File Review

A fictitious mock case file review decreases the intensity and offers an opportunity for team members to learn the process and practice giving feedback while sharing insights and identifying themes.

Agreements for Discussion

This tool guides teams through creating agreements and guidelines they would like to use during the case file review process. At the start of the meeting, teams should revisit these guidelines at the start of the mock case file review.

Once the team has reviewed the guidelines, teams should break into groups of five to seven people, not counting the facilitator. If there is more than one representative of a discipline in a team, those members should join different groups.

Analysis Tool: Modified Checklist for the Actual Case Review

Once in their small groups, review the mock case file anchor question. Team members can read the case using the checklist analysis tool as a guide. There may be some points of collaboration that team members may not be able to check off based on the case.

Analysis Tool: Creating an Observation Form

In small groups, members read the mock case file and use it while making notes on the observation form. Since this is a mock case, there may be some factors in the team's observation form that may not be able to be reviewed and some focus areas that may be different from the team's anchor question.

During the review of the mock case, the facilitator can remind the members to review "Things for Teams to Keep in Mind During the Review" below and visit every group and assist in their discussion as needed.

Things for Teams to Keep in Mind During the Review

Evaluation of System Response vs. Criticizing Individual Performance

As stated previously, the case file review focuses on improving the systems involved in addressing sexual violence rather than assigning blame for any problems or challenges a victim/survivor may confront. For example, let's say team members notice that law enforcement is not consistently noting when advocacy services were called to interviews. This observation should prompt SART members to discuss how these points of collaboration are documented. Ultimately, this is an area for excellent discussion. This topic can also turn into an unproductive discussion, though. For example, someone might say, "Well, I know for a fact that was (fill in name), who refuses to call advocates." The concept of when advocates are called during an interview is the focus of the discussion, rather than discussing individual members of law enforcement. When the team catches itself pointing out a specific person or agency, this can be a moment to remind the team to refocus on how the way the protocol and collaboration is structured that leads to this outcome in a case.

Upholding Team Members' Confidentiality Standards

Even if you follow SVJI at MNCASA's suggested redaction, it is highly probable that a review team will recognize people involved in a case they are reviewing, even if they have redacted all identifying information.

In some communities, it is safe to assume that the team knows everyone involved in the case file, which may create an environment of familiarity. In other communities, there may be less of a likelihood that the review team will know the individuals involved in the case. This may encourage the team to speak freely about the case and endanger the survivor or responder's confidentiality. A facilitator can redirect the team and remind them to maintain the confidentiality standards of all disciplines.

The insightful conversations a SART undertakes during the review is where the magic takes place. Responders may learn information that fills in critical gaps. Team members come to understand the parameters within which each agency is required to work, and they create opportunities for better communication. However, confidentiality can be compromised, even when identifying details are not included in the review.

A discussion may violate one agency's confidentiality standards and not others. While reading a file, one team member may recall a case and mention details that could disclose the persons involved. The conversation could go something like this:

"I remember this one! I think she was high. It probably won't get charged. This was like the fourth time."

A statement like this could lead to a violation of one team member's confidentiality requirements and confidentiality standards while not violating those of the person who made the comment. It could also provide insight into an agency's decision-making processes.

A separate yet related issue is the tone used while discussing victims and survivors. The tone may reflect the social norms that the movement to end sexual violence seeks to change, and this could lead to uncomfortable dynamics among group members. Team members may remind each other to remain victim-/survivor-centered in their observations.

The facilitator's role is key here. They can help the group uphold confidentiality and promote opportunities for examining the cultural norms within the response that need to change.

Losing Sight of the Goal

Case files provide opportunities for differences of opinion to surface. Members can provide feedback that is not productive during the debrief, which can be detrimental to the SART. For example, a team member might identify that a law enforcement officer did not audio record an interview. The team's anchor question was reviewing descriptive documentation by law enforcement, so while not recording an interview is considered bad practice, perhaps the officer documented the reason for not recording the interview (e.g., batteries were dead on the recorder). This is upsetting and unfortunate; yet the officer documented in the file why the recording is missing, and reviewers should look for what is documented. If the SART decides to dwell on the officer's failure to bring batteries, the facilitator should step in and remind members that, although an important step was missed, the officer documented the reason why, so there is no need to pour on the criticism. Remind them that this process is an assessment of the entire system and not an individual officer. Team members may return to anchor question at any time to refocus the feedback.

Groupthink

Sometimes in large group discussions, team members might all agree on a theme or an idea. This is great; consensus has been reached. Sometimes, however, someone in the group disagrees with an idea based on their knowledge and/or doesn't feel comfortable speaking up. Others may feel that when they do speak up, they are seen as the negative person on the team. Lastly, some team members may not speak up because of power differentials within the team. This is yet another opportunity for the facilitator to foster an environment where all team members can voice their thoughts. The facilitator should be aware of power dynamics within the team and center victim/survivor experiences and experiences of marginalized communities.

Language and Format in the Report

In this report the team will see an example of a redacted report. In addition, it's written in the language common to law enforcement. These include the terms victim and suspect. SVJI at MNCASA recognizes that these are terms law enforcement uses to describe victims/survivors and persons who cause harm. Additionally, it is important to note that this police report uses a narrative format to document the cases. Depending on the department's documentation, there may be another format the team will review when using their community's cases.

Practice Tending to A Team's Wellness

Below are graphic and detailed descriptions of sexual violence that are harmful. Team members are encouraged to practice tending to their wellness while reviewing the mock review.

Anchor Question

How does our community respond to alcohol facilitated sexual assault?

Report

Initial Report: OFFICER 1 Interview with VICTIM

On [Date] at about [Time], I was dispatched to [Victim Address] about a rape. I first met with the victim's roommate, REPORTING PARTY, who told me her roommate, VICTIM, came home at about 02:00 hours and woke her up. She said VICTIM was very upset and crying. VICTIM told her she had been raped by SUSPECT at his residence. REPORTING PARTY said she has never met SUSPECT. She said he is not her roommate's boyfriend but just a guy she knows from work. I asked REPORTING PARTY if VICTIM told her any detail about the rape. She said VICTIM just said that SUSPECT did things to her that she didn't want. I asked where VICTIM was, and REPORTING PARTY went and knocked on the door of one of the bedrooms in the apartment.

VICTIM came out of the bedroom. I asked her if she would be willing to talk with me and she said yes. I asked VICTIM to tell me what happened to her. VICTIM said she met SUSPECT at [Bar or Restaurant] for a drink after work on [Date]. She said they had several drinks while they were there. VICTIM couldn't remember how many drinks she had. She said SUSPECT was drinking beer and she was drinking "long island."

VICTIM said they left [Bar or Restaurant] about 20:15 and went to SUSPECT'S residence. SUSPECT'S roommate was there but left just after they got there. VICTIM said as soon as SUSPECT'S roommate left SUSPECT kind of changed. I asked what she meant by that, and she said that he had been very nice and funny and everything, but he suddenly got really weird. I again asked what she meant, and VICTIM said he was all over her.

VICTIM said SUSPECT kissed her and then had her sit on the sofa. He continued kissing her and started fondling her breasts. VICTIM said SUSPECT then removed her pants and performed oral sex on her. After several minutes he stood up and pulled down his pants. VICTIM said SUSPECT put his penis in her mouth and she performed oral sex on him.

VICTIM said that after several minutes SUSPECT took his penis out of her mouth and turned her over so she was lying face down on the sofa. VICTIM said SUSPECT then had vaginal intercourse with her. She thought SUSPECT ejaculated inside her.

VICTIM said SUSPECT then sat next to her on the sofa and put his arms around her. After about 30 minutes VICTIM told SUSPECT that she had to go to the bathroom. She said he got up with her and stood outside the door.

When she came out of the bathroom, SUSPECT handed her shirt and pants to her. He said she should leave because his roommate needed to come back home. VICTIM said she put on her shirt and pants. She found her purse in the living room and left SUSPECT'S residence. She called [Taxi Company] and got a ride home.

I told VICTIM that she should have an exam done at [Medical Facility]. She agreed and her roommate said she would give her a ride. I said I would meet them at [Medical Facility].

I went to [Medical Facility] and met with SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINER who said she had done a forensic exam on VICTIM. SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINER gave me the rape kit and the clothing VICTIM was wearing when she arrived at [Medical Facility]. SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINER said a victim advocate FROM A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION had met with VICTIM and that VICTIM'S roommate would give her a ride home. I turned over the rape kit and clothing to DETECTIVE 1.

Supplemental Report: OFFICER 3 Interview with INVOLVED OTHER 1

On [Date] at [Time] I responded to [Address 1]. I met OFFICER 2 there as we were attempting to locate SUSPECT who was a suspect in a reported sexual assault. OFFICER 2 and I located SUSPECT at his residence, along with his roommate, INVOLVED OTHER 1.

I spoke with INVOLVED OTHER 1 and asked him what he knew about the incident. He said SUSPECT called him about 20:00 hours last night and said he was bringing over "some girl." SUSPECT asked if he would leave the apartment. INVOLVED OTHER 1 told SUSPECT that he had to work the next day but agreed to leave. He said this was a common occurrence because SUSPECT dated a lot of different women. He (INVOLVED OTHER 1) often left the apartment when SUSPECT brought women home.

Both SUSPECT and INVOLVED OTHER 1 were told DETECTIVE 1 would be getting a search warrant for the residence. OFFICER 2 transported SUSPECT to [Law Enforcement] and INVOLVED OTHER 1 left voluntarily as he had to work. SUSPECT locked the door when we left, and I remained outside the residence to meet detectives.

Supplemental Report: OFFICER 2 Interview with SUSPECT

On [Date] at [Time], I was contacted by DETECTIVE 1 who asked me to see if SUSPECT was at his residence at [Address 1]. DETECTIVE 1 said SUSPECT was a suspect in a rape that he was investigating. I drove to the residence where I met with OFFICER 3. We located SUSPECT and his roommate, INVOLVED OTHER 1, inside the residence.

SUSPECT told me VICTIM was his girlfriend. He said they went out for drinks last night and then she came back to his residence. He said they had sex and then she went home. SUSPECT said he would be willing to go to [Law Enforcement] to talk with a detective about what happened last night. He said he didn't understand what the problem was, though. He said it was a normal night and VICTIM didn't seem mad or upset when she left.

I transported SUSPECT to [Law Enforcement] and placed him in the interview room. OFFICER 3 remained outside the residence while detectives obtained a search warrant.

Supplemental Report: Detective 1 Interview with VICTIM

On [Date] at about [Time], I was dispatched to [Medical Facility] to meet with VICTIM who was reporting a sexual assault that occurred at [Address 1]. I met with VICTIM in a private room in the trauma unit at [Medical Facility]. My interview with her was recorded and a victim advocate FROM COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION was present.

VICTIM told me she met SUSPECT for drinks at [Bar or Restaurant] on [Date]. She said they decided to meet when she saw him at her work on [Date]. VICTIM said she got off work about 17:00 and went straight to [Bar or Restaurant]. She said she left her car parked at [Victim Employer] where she works and walked to [Bar or Restaurant]. VICTIM said SUSPECT was already there when she arrived, so she joined him at the table. She said SUSPECT had a beer and had ordered a "long island" for her. She said no, but she thought it was nice that he seemed to have remembered her saying that she liked the drink.

I asked VICTIM how she knew SUSPECT. She said she first met him when she was working at [Business] in [City 1]. She said she is originally from there and worked at [Business] in high school and while she attended [College]. She said SUSPECT was [Occupation] who frequently made deliveries to [Business]. VICTIM said she moved to [City 2] about a year ago when she got a job as a [Occupation] at [Victim Employer]. She said she saw SUSPECT again when he came in to get a prescription filled.

I asked VICTIM how long she and SUSPECT were at [Bar or Restaurant]. She thought they were there for a couple hours. She thought they left around 20:15. I asked VICTIM how much she had to drink, and she said she couldn't remember. She said SUSPECT had maybe two or three beers, but he kept ordering "long islands" for her. VICTIM said she might have had four or five of them. She said that she and SUSPECT also had an order of spinach and artichoke dip while they were there. She said she felt the effects of the alcohol but didn't think she was intoxicated.

VICTIM told me she went to the bathroom as they were leaving the restaurant. She said SUSPECT was talking to somebody on his phone when she came out. He seemed kind of surprised when she walked up behind him and he told the other person that he had to go. She said SUSPECT ended his call and then opened the door of the restaurant for her.

When they got into the parking lot, SUSPECT took her hand and asked if she'd like to go see the sunset. He told her that there were good places to see the sunset at [Location 1]. VICTIM said she'd like to do that. SUSPECT walked her to his car and opened the door for her. When he got in, he said that he wanted to go to his residence to get a blanket because it might get cold when the sun went down.

SUSPECT drove to his residence. VICTIM didn't remember the address but thought it was close to [Location 2]. It later was determined that SUSPECT'S residence is [Address 1].

VICTIM said she went with SUSPECT into his residence. When they got inside, SUSPECT'S roommate was there. She said he introduced himself as INVOLVED OTHER 1. SUSPECT and INVOLVED OTHER 1 had a brief conversation that she couldn't hear and then INVOLVED OTHER 1 left the residence.

VICTIM said as soon as INVOLVED OTHER 1 left, SUSPECT grabbed her in a tight hug and started kissing her neck. He held her against him with one hand while he put his other hand between her legs. VICTIM said he started rubbing her crotch and tried to put his tongue into her mouth. She said she was very uncomfortable because she didn't know SUSPECT very well and didn't know what he would do.

I asked VICTIM what happened next. She said SUSPECT walked her backward and pushed her down onto a sofa. He let go of her when she fell back into the sofa but stood right in front of her. VICTIM said SUSPECT took off his shirt and then told her to take hers off too. VICTIM took off her shirt and then SUSPECT leaned down and took off her bra. She said SUSPECT then knelt and began kissing and stroking her breasts. She said he bit her right nipple very hard. She said it hurt, but that the bite didn't break the skin.

VICTIM said SUSPECT then unbuttoned her pants and pulled them off. I asked if she said or did anything when he was removing her pants. VICTIM said she didn't know what to do. She said she was attracted to SUSPECT at first but was kind of put off by how aggressive he was being. Then she just got really scared because he was acting so weird. She said she tried to get off the sofa, but SUSPECT was too strong. I asked VICTIM if SUSPECT said anything to her when he took off her pants. She said he didn't and that he just looked her in the eye while he was doing it.

I asked VICTIM what happened after SUSPECT took her pants off. She said he started rubbing her crotch with one hand while he squeezed her breast with the other hand. VICTIM said SUSPECT then pulled down her panties and performed oral sex on her. She asked him to stop, but he just started to do it harder and move his head back and forth. After several minutes, SUSPECT stood up and removed his pants and underwear. VICTIM said he grabbed her by the hair and pulled her head toward his groin. She said SUSPECT put his penis against her lips and she performed oral sex on him.

VICTIM said she had oral sex with SUSPECT for about five minutes when he took his penis out of her mouth. SUSPECT reached down and turned VICTIM over onto her stomach. VICTIM said she was kneeling on the floor bent over the front of the sofa. SUSPECT knelt behind her and said something about "doing it up the ass." VICTIM told me she had never done that before and that she asked SUSPECT to "please just do her pussy." SUSPECT told her okay and then proceeded to have vaginal intercourse with her. VICTIM told me it was kind of rough. She said SUSPECT held her head down against the sofa with one hand and slapped her repeatedly on the buttocks with the other hand. VICTIM said at one point SUSPECT tried to put a finger into her rectum. She thought SUSPECT ejaculated inside her.

When SUSPECT finished having sex with VICTIM, he got up and sat on the sofa next to her. VICTIM said he put his arms around her and held her very tightly. She said he would tighten his grip even more if she tried to get up. After about 30 or 45 minutes, VICTIM told SUSPECT that she had to go to the bathroom. He got up and followed her to the bathroom. She stayed inside the bathroom for about 10 minutes and when she came out, SUSPECT was still standing there. VICTIM said SUSPECT had her shirt and pants in his hands. He told her that she had to leave because INVOLVED PARTY 1 needed to come back home. VICTIM said she put on her shirt and pants. She said she couldn't find her bra or panties. VICTIM said she took her purse and left SUSPECT'S residence. She called [Taxi Service] and went to her residence.

VICTIM said she told her roommate, REPORTING PARTY, that she had been raped and that SUSPECT had done things to her that she didn't want. REPORTING PARTY said she should report what happened to the police. VICTIM told REPORTING PARTY that if she called the police, she (VICTIM) would talk with them.

Supplemental Report: DETECTIVE 1 Interview with INVOLVED OTHER 2

On [Date] at [Time] hours I went to [Bar or Restaurant] to speak with INVOLVED OTHER 2. I told him I was investigating an incident involving two people who had been at [Bar or Restaurant] yesterday evening. He said it was relatively busy last night for a Thursday, but he would do what he could to help.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 if he remembered a couple who were in the bar area about 17:00 or 17:15 last night. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said at that time there were two groups of a man and a woman and one group of two men. He asked if I meant a man and a woman. I told him I was asking about a man and a woman who were in their twenties or thirties. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said, "okay, you mean SUSPECT." He told me the other man and woman in the bar area were older, maybe in their fifties or sixties.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 how he knew SUSPECT. He said he knew him from working out at [Athletic Facility], but that he also was a regular at [Bar or Restaurant]. I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 why he considered SUSPECT a regular at [Bar or Restaurant]. He said SUSPECT came to [Bar or Restaurant] most Friday and Saturday evenings and maybe one or two other days during the week. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said SUSPECT was "pretty good with the ladies" and seemed to like bringing them to [Bar or Restaurant].

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 if he knew the woman who was with SUSPECT last night. He said he didn't know her name, but that she had been in once or twice with some people from [Victim Employer]. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said he thought she worked there and came over for a happy hour once in a while. He then said he wasn't surprised to see her with SUSPECT because she was "kind of his type." I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 what he meant by that. He said he just meant she was young and pretty. He said he never saw SUSPECT with women who appeared to be his own age and he definitely never saw him with anybody who was not attractive. I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 if he could describe the woman who was with SUSPECT last night. He said she was in her early twenties, about five feet tall and 100 pounds. He said she had shoulder-length, dark brown hair. This description matches VICTIM.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 what he remembered about SUSPECT and the woman he was with last night. He said SUSPECT was there first and ordered drinks for both of them. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said SUSPECT ordered a beer and a "long island." I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 what a "long island" was. He said it was a mixed drink made with various liquors and cola. INVOLVED OTHER 2 told me "long island" were very popular with women. He also said SUSPECT seemed to order them a lot lately when he brought women into the restaurant.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER when the woman got to [Bar or Restaurant]. He said she got there about 15 minutes after SUSPECT and about two minutes after he served the drinks. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said SUSPECT had told him to "run a tab," so he thought they might be there a while. I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 how long they stayed. He said they were there about two hours. I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 how much they had to drink. He said he couldn't remember, but that he could ask their office people for a copy of SUSPECT'S credit card receipt.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 if he heard any of the conversation between SUSPECT and the woman. He said he didn't hear a lot other than when he was serving drinks. He said it sounded like a normal conversation between acquaintances. I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 what he meant by that. He said they were just talking about their jobs and what they liked to do when they weren't working. He didn't know what they said when he was mixing drinks or serving other people.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 if he could remember anything else about SUSPECT and the woman with him. He said no, but then said what he saw was "kind of typical for SUSPECT." He said SUSPECT often brings women to [Bar or Restaurant] and ends up buying them a lot more drinks than he has himself. INVOLVED OTHER 2 said SUSPECT always seemed to be nice to the women and there never have been times when he (INVOLVED OTHER 2) felt uncomfortable about what was happening.
I asked INVOLVED OTHER 2 what time he thought SUSPECT and the woman left

RESTAURANT. He said he didn't know, but that the credit card receipt should show the time. He said they left pretty soon after SUSPECT paid.

Supplemental Report: DETECTIVE 1 Interview with INVOLVED OTHER 1

On [Date] at [Time] hours INVOLVED OTHER 1 came to the police department to be interviewed about this case. He was placed in the interview room. His interview was recorded.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 1 to tell me what he remembered about the night of [Date]. He said he was home that night. He said he got a call from SUSPECT at about 20:00 hours. SUSPECT told him he was at [Bar or Restaurant] with a girl he knew from [Victim Employer]. SUSPECT told him that the girl was really hot, and he wanted to bring her home. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said he replied by asking SUSPECT if that meant he (INVOLVED OTHER 1) had to leave. SUSPECT said yes.

INVOLVED OTHER 1 said he told SUSPECT he had to work the next day, so he didn't want to stay out all night. SUSPECT told him not to worry because he just wanted to "fuck her quick." INVOLVED OTHER 1 said before he could reply to that SUSPECT said he had to go and hung up.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 1 what happened next. He said he wasn't sure if SUSPECT and the girl were coming to the residence, so he just hung out. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said SUSPECT and the girl showed up about fifteen minutes later. He said the girl looked pretty drunk. I asked why he thought that. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said she was kind of swaying when she stood in the living room. When they introduced themselves, INVOLVED OTHER 1 said he could see that her eyes were kind of bloodshot and she had alcohol on her breath.

INVOLVED OTHER 1 told me he pulled SUSPECT aside. He told him he thought the girl was pretty drunk. SUSPECT told him not to worry about it and that she was fine with things. INVOLVED OTHER 1 then told SUSPECT he was angry about having to leave. SUSPECT told him not to worry about it. He said he would make it up to him later. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said he left the residence.

I asked INVOLVED OTHER 1 what he did after that. He said he went to get something to eat and then went to [Theater] to see a movie. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said the movie started at about 22:00 hours and ended about 00:15 hours. He said he hadn't heard anything from SUSPECT by the time the movie ended, so he texted him. SUSPECT didn't reply, so INVOLVED OTHER 1 drove to his residence and sat in his car.

INVOLVED OTHER 1 said he was parked by the main entrance for about an hour when he saw VICTIM come out. He said she got her phone out and made a call. I asked INVOLVED OTHER 1 what he did when he saw VICTIM. He said he just sat in his car and watched as she walked back and forth by the door. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said VICTIM appeared to be upset as she kept wiping her eyes. He said his window was down and it sounded like VICTIM was crying and talking to herself. INVOLVED OTHER 1 said a taxi came after about fifteen minutes and VICTIM left. He said he went into his residence but didn't talk with SUSPECT because he was in his bedroom with the door closed.

Supplemental Report: DETECTIVE 1 Interview with SUSPECT

SUSPECT was placed in the interview room when he arrived at [Law Enforcement] at about [Time] on [Date]. The audio/video recorder was activated. I advised SUSPECT of his rights. He said he understood and agreed to talk with me.

I asked SUSPECT if he was clear on why he was at [Law Enforcement]. He said there apparently were some issues between him and his girlfriend last night. SUSPECT said he just wanted to clear things up.

I asked SUSPECT to tell me what happened with him and his girlfriend last night. He said they went for drinks and then went back to his residence. SUSPECT told me they had sex and then his girlfriend went home.

I told SUSPECT that sounded relatively ordinary and asked if he had any idea why VICTIM would be upset. SUSPECT said he might have been kind of abrupt in asking her to leave. He said his roommate doesn't like to be around when he has sex with his girlfriend, so he left the apartment. SUSPECT said it was getting late and he knew INVOLVED OTHER 1 had to work the next day. He asked VICTIM to leave so INVOLVED OTHER 1 could come home and get some sleep.

I told SUSPECT that could be one reason VICTIM was upset. I asked him if it might also be because of something he did while they were having sex. SUSPECT said that could be, but he didn't think so. I asked him to tell me what they did, so we could make it really clear what happened.

SUSPECT said it was pretty normal sex. I asked what he meant by that. SUSPECT said they kissed for a while and then, "did some oral on one another" for a while. After that, they had vaginal intercourse. I asked SUSPECT if he could tell me a little bit more about what they did. SUSPECT chuckled and winked at me. He asked if I was interested in hearing all the “gritty details.” I told him I was interested in hearing more about what happened.

SUSPECT told me his girlfriend was talking suggestively to him most of the time they were having drinks and driving to his residence. He said she was “ready for it” when they got to his residence. SUSPECT said INVOLVED OTHER 1 was hardly out the door when they started grabbing one another. He said they stood for a while kissing but then she backed up and sat on the sofa.

SUSPECT said VICTIM took off her shirt, so he took his shirt off too. He said he then bent down and took off her bra. SUSPECT said he kissed VICTIM’S breasts for a while, and she was really moving around on the sofa. He thought she was getting pretty aroused, so he took off her pants and started rubbing her vagina through her underwear. He said she “really started squirming” then.

I asked about what happened next. SUSPECT said he removed VICTIM’S panties and “started licking her.” VICTIM said something to him about stopping so he thought she was ready to have intercourse. He said he “licked her” for a little while longer and then got up to take off his pants. SUSPECT said before he could get his pants all the way off VICTIM grabbed his penis and started sucking him. He said he wanted to have intercourse before he ejaculated, so he took his penis out of VICTIM’S mouth. SUSPECT said when he looked down VICTIM was lying on her stomach on the edge of the sofa. He said he asked her if she wanted to do anal sex. VICTIM said no, so he put his penis into her vagina. SUSPECT said VICTIM really encouraged him to have sex with her. I asked why he said that. SUSPECT said when he knelt down behind VICTIM, she told him “please put it in my pussy.” He said she was moving around a lot, and he was “going at it pretty good,” so he didn’t last very long. SUSPECT said he couldn’t remember if he pulled out or if he ejaculated inside VICTIM.

I told SUSPECT that based on what he described; VICTIM seemed to be pretty engaged in what was going on. I asked if he could remember anything else that might have upset her. SUSPECT said there was one time when his thumb accidently went into VICTIM’S rectum. He thought she might have been mad about that, but she didn’t say anything to him. In fact, he said, they sat and cuddled on the sofa for a long time after they had sex.

I told SUSPECT it might be reasonable to assume VICTIM would be upset about him putting his thumb into her rectum. I asked him if might have done anything else that she didn’t like. SUSPECT said he couldn’t remember anything. I asked if he might have scratched or slapped or bit VICTIM while they were having sex. SUSPECT told me the sex was "pretty hot but not too rough," so he didn't think he'd done any of those things last night. I asked SUSPECT if he'd ever done those kinds of things before and he said, "not with VICTIM."

I asked SUSPECT how long he and VICTIM had been dating. He said they'd known one another for years. When I asked if they had been dating that long, he said no. I asked SUSPECT to clarify for me how long they had been dating and what their relationship was like. SUSPECT said their relationship was "casual" and that they didn't go out exclusively with one another. When I asked SUSPECT how many times, he and VICTIM had gone on what he would consider a date, he said that last night was their first real date. I asked him what he meant by a real date. SUSPECT said he meant a time when they went out for dinner and drinks together. I asked if his definition of a real date included sex. SUSPECT said, "yeah, if things work out." I asked SUSPECT if he thought VICTIM would define a date in the same way. He said he didn't know what I meant. I then asked if he thought VICTIM would define a date as dinner, drinks, and sex. SUSPECT said, "well, she didn't tell me no."

I told SUSPECT that VICTIM couldn't remember what happened to her bra and panties. He said that she had left kind of quickly and left them behind. SUSPECT said he "put them away for her." I told him I would be getting a search warrant for his residence and asked where I might find VICTIM'S bra and panties. He said he put them in the bottom drawer of his dresser.

I told SUSPECT I wanted to check on the status of the search warrant. I asked if he would be willing to answer questions in the future. SUSPECT said he would be willing to talk with me anytime he wasn't working. I asked if he wanted to be at his residence while we executed the search warrant, and he said yes.

I ended the interview at [Time] hour. SUSPECT stayed in the interview room while I checked on the search warrant. The door of the interview room was open and unlocked.

Supplemental Report: DETECTIVE 1 Search of SUSPECT'S Residence

On [Date] at [Time], I met DETECTIVE 2, OFFICER 2, and OFFICER 3 at [Address 1]. SUSPECT unlocked the door for us. I entered the residence and cleared the area around a chair in the northeast corner of the room. I asked SUSPECT to sit in the chair while we conducted the search. OFFICER 3 remained with SUSPECT while the rest of us searched SUSPECT'S bedroom and the common areas of the residence. DETECTIVE 2 photographed each room and the items in it before we collected any evidence. OFFICER 2 served as evidence officer at the scene, so all items collected were turned over to him to be placed into evidence.

I first searched the living room area. I collected the cushions and a blanket that were on the only sofa in the residence. There was a dry, crusty patch of an off-white substance on the carpet in front of the sofa. I believed this substance might be semen or some other bodily fluid, so I used a knife to scrape the substance into a paper evidence envelope.

I next searched the only bathroom in the residence. I collected seven tissues from the wastebasket. These tissues contained a crusty, off-white substance that I believed to be semen or some other bodily fluid. Two of the tissues also had dried, reddish-brown stains on them that I believed to be blood. I also collected a small, white hand towel that was lying on the floor between the toilet and the bathtub. This towel also had patches of a crusty, off-white substance that appeared to be mixed with another dark, reddish-brown substance.

I then searched the bedroom SUSPECT identified as his. I found several items of women's undergarments in the bottom drawer of the dresser in that bedroom. There were six bras and seven panties of various sizes, colors, and styles. VICTIM later identified as hers a light blue bra and navy-blue panties that were found in the drawer.

I told SUSPECT that based on his statement, VICTIM'S statement, and the items of evidence collected at his residence, I was arresting him for [Sex Crimes]. When I told him this, SUSPECT spontaneously stated, "she never once said no, except for the anal. And I didn't do that." OFFICER 3 transported SUSPECT to jail.

Considerations When Teams Are Debriefing

- How much time did it take to review this case?
- Did everyone feel they had enough time to review the case?
- Were there any challenges with upholding confidentiality standards of team members?
- Were there any moments were the team lost focus on the anchor question? How did the team refocus?
- Did team members notice any points of groupthink? What methods did team members use to dissuade groupthink?
- Were there any challenges of the team experienced with case file review?
- Using the filled in observations and checklist forms below. What did the team find that was similar? Where were the differences?

Teams Take Aways from the Mock Review

What changes need to be made in preparation for the actual case file review?

Mock Case File Review Wrap-Up

Once teams have completed the mock review and debriefed, they may want to revisit "Agreements for Discussion" and "Tending to a Team's Wellness" and adjust based on their mock review experience. At the end of the mock review, the facilitator and logistical coordinator should use the feedback from the debrief to adjust the schedule when appropriate. This updated information can then be distributed to team members before the next meeting where the team will participate in the actual review.

The Actual Case File Review: Sample Schedule and Materials Needed

Objectives

Team members will review case files in small multidisciplinary groups based on the number of cases chosen by the teams. As part of the review, team members will record their observations using the forms the team created. Teams will begin identifying themes in their observation.

How to Use It

Below is a sample schedule for a day of reviewing cases. Teams may adjust the schedule to fit their specific needs for the review and for self-care during the review process. The schedule below assumes that a team is spending one full day reviewing case files. Listed under each action step are the materials needed.

Sample Case File Review Schedule

8:30—9:00 am: Facilitator greets the team and reminds them of case file review discussion guidelines, anchor question, and Memorandum of Understanding.

Materials Needed: Agreements for Discussion, Anchor Question, and MOU

9:00—9:15 am: The team divides into groups of three to five people, making sure team members from same or similar disciplines are in different small groups. For example, if there are two detectives on a SART, each detective should be in a different small group.

9:15—9:30 am: The point of contact for the case file review divides the case files between small groups and passes them out for each small group to review. The notetaker or facilitator passes out an observation and checklist form to each group per case.

Materials Needed: Observation Form, Modified Checklist, and Case File

9:30 am—12:30 pm: Each small group spends the rest of the morning reviewing cases and recording observations. If possible, the facilitator checks in on each small group at least once to answer any questions. Small groups take breaks every hour for 10 minutes and are encouraged to move around.
Materials needed: Observation form, case files, and pens or pencils to record information

12:30—:00 pm: Lunch

1:00—1:10 pm: Facilitator welcomes team back to review and revisits guidelines for discussion.

Materials Needed: Guidelines for Discussion

1:10—2:20 pm: The team will go back to their small groups to wrap up observations of cases.

Materials Needed: Case Files, Observation Form, Pens or Pencils to Record

2:10 pm: The facilitator asks teams to complete the review of their cases within the next 10 minutes.

2:20—2:30 pm: 10-minute all-team break

2:30—3:15 pm: The facilitator reminds the team of their "anchor question" – the information that the team wants to learn. The facilitator asks small groups to review their observations for themes and patterns related to the question. The small groups circle or highlight the observations related to each other and label that theme.

Example: The time it takes to call a community advocacy organization during a medical forensic exam, and how long it takes for an advocate to arrive may be circled in blue. The small group may label the blue observations, "Advocacy response to a medical forensic exam."

Materials Needed: Observation Form, Three Different Colored Pens, Highlighters

3:15 pm: The point of contact collects all original case files.

3:15—3:30 pm: 15-minute all-team break

3:30—4:15 pm: The team regroups and shares the three themes of the observation form. These themes should be related directly to the question the team is trying to answer. Teams use their mission and vision to guide these reflections. The notetaker records these themes below under "Preliminary Themes of Case File Review." Materials needed: Preliminary Themes of Case File Review Handout and the team's mission statement

4:15—4:30 pm: The facilitator thanks everyone for coming and reminds the team of their next meeting.

4:30—5:00 pm: The point of contact disposes of the case files in accordance with the team's confidentiality requirements.

Summary of Materials Needed

- Case File Review Guidebook
- Copy of the guidelines for discussion
- Copy of the team's Memorandum of Understanding
- Case files
- Observation form that has been modified by team
- Pens or pencils
- Highlighters or colored pens

The Actual Case File Review: Preliminary Themes

Objectives

Teams can record themes and patterns that are discovered during the debrief the day of case file review.

How To Use It

During the last hour of case file review, teams should come together as a large group to share themes they discovered in small groups. When creating these themes, it is important to keep in mind how the response is serving members of marginalized communities. The notetaker can then record these themes. These observations and themes will be discussed in the next chapter. Below is an example demonstrating how to use this document.

Example Theme:

Not communicating when language access services are needed across disciplines.

Example Observations That Support The Theme:

- Four of the cases did not document whether the victim/survivor was asked if interpretation services were needed.
- One case where interpretation services were needed was documented in the police report, but law enforcement did not document sharing information with advocacy or SANE.
- Three cases documented that the victim/survivor was asked if interpretation services were needed, and services were declined.

Theme:

Observations That Support the Theme:

Theme:

Observations That Support the Theme:

Theme:

Observations That Support the Theme:

Congratulations!

We have completed the Case file Review. Teams may want to consider taking a month off from SART work before moving onto findings and recommendations of the case file review process. The review is a time-intensive process, and team members may need a break from systems work and focus on other areas of their discipline's role. Teams who do take time off after the case file review should have a plan to come back to these very important steps after a well-deserved rest!

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In the last (but certainly not least!) section of the case file review, teams will first formalize their observations and themes into specific findings. Next, they will develop recommendations for the team to strengthen and improve the response in the future. Finally, they will create a plan to act on these recommendations in the future. These findings and recommendations will assist teams in creating changes in the community response to sexual violence.

Finalizing Our Findings

Objectives

Teams will reflect on preliminary observations and themes by organizing this information into broader focus areas they can use to create recommendations based on what was learned during the review process.

How to Use It

Teams will begin these activities by revisiting their preliminary themes and observations discussed during the review, creating an outline of their focus areas and themes.

Teams Can Take the Following Steps to Create This Outline

- Teams should spend 10 minutes reviewing the themes that were discussed during the review, with specific notice to observations directly related to the anchor question. This can be done by passing out copies of the observations and themes, or they may be sent to team members ahead of time.
- Look for three broad patterns within their primary themes that center on the team's original question when doing a case file review. Themes that support these patterns can include strengths of the response and areas for improvement. Below are some discussion questions that may guide this conversation:

    1. How do these observations relate back to our anchor question?
    2. How do these themes relate to each other?
    3. Where can we become more victim-/survivor-centered in our response?
    4. What barriers have existed in the response for marginalized victims/survivors?
    5. Do these observations reflect our current protocols?

- Once the team has determined the focus area, the notetaker should record the information in the blue header (see example).
- Teams can then add the observations that support that theme.

Focus Area: Victim-Centered Response

Theme 1

Involvement of victim advocate

Evidence

- Evidence
- Advocacy services not explained or offered by law enforcement
- Inconsistent contact with advocacy during the course of the investigation

Focus Area:

Theme 1

Evidence

Theme 2

Evidence

Theme 3

Evidence

Focus Area:

Theme 1

Evidence

Theme 2

Evidence

Theme 3

Evidence

Looking to the Future: Creating Recommendations

Objectives

Teams will form recommendations and prioritize the recommendations for the coming year.

How To Use It

Divide into three groups, one for each focus area. Each group will spend 15 to 20 minutes brainstorming recommendations for future goals based on the themes of the focus area. These recommendations should include areas of strength that the team may continue to support and areas of improvement where the team can put in some work. Below are some questions groups can use to begin their discussions.

Discussion Questions for Brainstorming Recommendations

- How well are we doing in this focus area?
- What did we learn about our system response and whom it serves?
- Is this recommendation a systemic change to the community response?
- Who is missing from the protocol that should be included in the response to sexual violence?
- What areas of the response are survivor-centered?
- How are underserved communities focused on in these themes?
- What are the strengths/areas to improve?
- Are there any questions or deviations based on the team's protocol?

Once each group has completed brainstorming, they can share their ideas for actionable recommendations back to the group. These recommendations may be recorded under "Our Team's Preliminary Recommendations." Once the team has finished brainstorming, they should determine which of these recommendations are short-term goals and which are long-term goals. Think of short-term goals as steps in the journey of long-term goals.

As team members are creating recommendations, this can be a great time to revisit their mission and vision statement to ensure that recommendations from the case file review are in alignment with their greater mission. Team members should also ask themselves “How is this recommendation centered on marginalized victims/survivors in our community?” During the brainstorming process, there may be times when team members find themselves in disagreement as to which recommendations should be prioritized. This is a natural part of SART work and the brainstorming process. Members are encouraged to ask for support from the site coordinator or facilitator for assistance in moving through any conflict.

Example:

Focus Area:

Not all agencies are calling advocates for follow up after victims/survivors show up for services.

Example Recommendation:

Revise our protocol to include timeframes for when law enforcement and hospital staff should contact advocacy services.

Example Goal Type:

Long-term goal

Our Team’s Primary Recommendations for Focus Area:

Recommendation:

Goal Type:

Recommendation:

Goal Type:

Recommendation:

Goal Type:

Our Team's Primary Recommendations for Focus Area:

Recommendation:

Goal Type:

Recommendation:

Goal Type:

Recommendation:

Goal Type:

Teams will then select three to five recommendations they would like to focus on while developing their action plan for the upcoming year. Teams can either use "dot" voting or a process of decision-making that works best for their team. To use dot voting, the facilitator should post an entire flipchart sheet that lists each recommendation. Each participant will be given three sticky dots of different colors. Each color will represent the first choice, second choice, and third choice. Ask participants to place their dots near their first, second, and third choices of recommendations to focus on. Tally up and record the results on the next page.

Recommendations We Will Prioritize:

Looking to the Future: Forming an Action Plan

Objective

Create a plan for taking concrete steps to implement recommendations. Teams will determine action steps, timelines responsibilities, and resources.

How To Use It

Teams will place the recommendations they prioritized from the last meeting for each goal. Under each goal, teams will discuss what attainable steps they will take in the upcoming year to meet these goals and the communities that will be impacted by accomplishing these goals. They will then determine what action should be taken first, create a timeline for this goal, and determine which key team members will be involved and what resources they may need to complete these goals. Team members may then share these goals and action steps with their organizations and the community. Below is an example of an action plan a team may develop.

Example Goal

The team will revise the protocol to include language access services for all disciplines described in the protocol.

Plan: What Steps Are Needed to Achieve This Goal?

- The team reviews their protocol.
- Members of the team learn what language access services are used by their discipline.
- Team members draft language to include this information.
- Drafted protocol language is reviewed by member organizations.
- Protocol is updated and reprinted.
- Updated protocol is distributed to partner organizations.
- The team hosts trainings on protocol updates.

Plan: Who Will Benefit When This Goal Is Accomplished?

- By updating our protocol, we will better serve victim/survivors who have limited English proficiency.

Action: What Is the First Step When Achieving This Goal?

- The team will review their protocol during the next team meeting.

Timeline: When Will These Steps Happen? How Long Will They Take?

- We estimate it will take approximately seven team meetings to complete this goal. Including taking time off after case file review and for holidays, we expect to complete this goal within 10 months.

Responsibility: Who From The Team Will Be Involved?

- We will need one team member from each discipline listed in the protocol.
- We may invite an individual from a language access service to train the team on their programs and considerations when writing the updated protocol.

Resources: What External Support Does The Team Need to Accomplish This Goal?

Who Needs To Be Approached/Invited To Participate Who Currently Is Not On The Team?

- The team will need the support of leadership in member organizations.
- Team members will also need connections to their language access programs so that these services are accurately described in the protocol

Goal 1

Plan: What steps are needed to achieve this goal?
Who will benefit when this goal is accomplished?

Action: What is the first step when achieving this goal?

Timeline: When will these steps happen? How long will they take?

Responsibility: Who from the team will be involved? Who needs to be approached/invited to participate who currently is not on the team?

Resources: What external support does the team need to accomplish this goal?

Goal 2

Plan: What steps are needed to achieve this goal?
Who will benefit when this goal is accomplished?

Action: What is the first step when achieving this goal?

Timeline: When will these steps happen? How long will they take?

Responsibility: Who from the team will be involved? Who needs to be approached/invited to participate who currently is not on the team?

Resources: What external support does the team need to accomplish this goal?

Goal 3

Plan: What steps are needed to achieve this goal?
Who will benefit when this goal is accomplished?

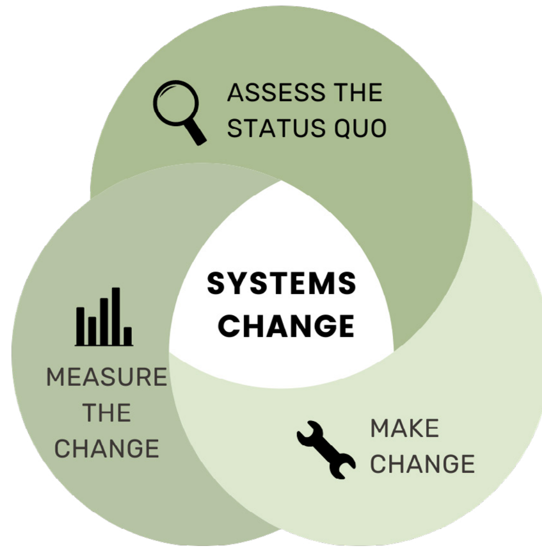
Action: What is the first step when achieving this goal?

Timeline: When will these steps happen? How long will they take?

Responsibility: Who from the team will be involved? Who needs to be approached/invited to participate who currently is not on the team?

Resources: What external support does the team need to accomplish this goal?

Congratulations!



Your case file review work is now finished, and the team has determined their next steps. The team has spent a significant amount of time evaluating their response. Through the foundations, the team determined the limitations of their review, discussed their anchor question, and created buy-in from their home disciplines. The team spent several months preparing for the review, including discussing shared language, establishing confidentiality requirements, and selecting cases. The team used a mock review to practice one last time before reviewing cases in their community. Finally, team members synthesized their findings, created recommendations, and formed an action plan centering underserved victims/survivors in their community.

Take time for your team to celebrate their efforts and reflect on the process. Once the process is completed, plan a team meeting where team members can celebrate their accomplishments! Consider inviting discipline leadership to your next meeting and let team members talk about what they learned from the process. They are likely to be relieved by the completion of the case file review, encouraged by what they've accomplished together, and inspired to make positive changes. It could prove to be very helpful if agency heads witnessed those emotions for themselves.

Of course, there is still work to do. The recommendations and related action plans form the basis for how your team will move ahead in building a more collaborative, victim-centered response to sexual assault. As coordinator, you should make sure each team member gets a copy of or online access to these documents. If any team member was unable to participate in developing the action plans, having access to the documents will help them get up to speed on what the team has decided.

Ask each team member to review the recommendations and action plans. After reviewing the documents, team members should present them to their agency administrators to assess the level of commitment the team can expect from that agency in accomplishing team goals and/or supporting the direct efforts of other agencies. As the team moves into the next phase of system change, allow team members to report back on what others can expect from them and their agencies.

About the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Our Mission

MNCASA is a statewide coalition driving transformative culture change to address sexual violence through advocacy, prevention, racial justice, and systems change.

Our Vision

We envision a world free of sexual violence in which all human beings are treated with dignity and respect and communities are transformed through safety, healing, and partnerships.

Sexual Violence Justice Institute

The Sexual Violence Justice Institute is MNCASA's state and national technical assistance provider focused on systems change and strengthening community response to sexual violence.

Learn More

Learn more about MNCASA at www.mncasa.org/about. Learn more about SVJI at www.mncasa.org/our-work/systems-change/svji-connect/.

MNCASA
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault