

**Developing a Protocol Which  
Meets National Children's Alliance Accreditation Standards**

**Children's Advocacy Centers of North Carolina**

*This guide is intended to assist MDTs as they develop their protocols. No one member of the MDT is able to develop the protocol as the protocol reflects the actual day to day working of the MDT. Supervisors representing each member of the MDT should be present in order to develop a protocol that is both workable and accurate. By following the directions and answering each question a protocol should emerge that meets Accreditation Standards set by the National Children's Alliance. Please call the CACNC office if you need assistance or have questions related to the development or upgrading of your protocol.*

**I. Introduction**

- A. Define the team and describe the mission and purpose of the team.

**II. Confidentiality**

- A. Describe confidentiality procedures and how team members are able to legally share information.

**III. Intake process**

- A. Define what type of cases will be handled through the CAC using the team approach. (i.e. ages of children, type of allegation, witness to injury or violent crime, etc.)
- B. Describe who does what, when, and who calls whom; who contacts the CAC with the intake; and who schedules the interview at the CAC.
- C. Describe how you will ensure that all members of the MDT, including appropriate CAC staff, as defined by the needs of the case, are routinely involved in investigations and/or team interventions.

**IV. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)**

- A. Define the disciplines involved with the MDT.
- B. Define the process by which MDT partners review and update the written interagency agreement.
- C. Describe the process by which MDT members can provide feedback and suggestions regarding procedures/operations of the CAC/MDT.
- D. Describe how the CAC/MDT coordinates information gathering and sharing of information, whether through history taking, assessment or forensic interview(s) to avoid duplication.

**V. Cultural Competency and Diversity**

- A. Describe the provisions your CAC will provide for non-English speaking and deaf or hard of hearing children and their non-offending family members throughout the investigation process.
- B. Describe how interpreters, if necessary, are used in interviews and how communication occurs between the MDT and the interviewer.
- C. Describe how services are provided in a manner that addresses culture and development throughout the investigation, intervention and case management process.

**VI. Forensic Interview**

- A. Describe how you ensure that team interviews are routinely conducted at the CAC by the team and not conducted in the field. (Even if using a forensic interviewer.)
- B. What provisions are in place to utilize appropriate forensic interview guidelines if interviews take place outside the CAC?
- C. Describe the general interview process and methodology including the pre and post-interview information sharing and decision making and the actual interview process.
- D. Describe how you promote legally sound, non-duplicative, non-leading, and neutral interviews.
- E. Describe how you ensure that team members with investigative responsibilities are routinely present for the forensic interview.
- F. Describe how team members are able to observe the interview and their ability to communicate with the interviewer. (Either electronically or by taking breaks, etc.)
- G. Describe how the trained interviewer is chosen.
- H. Describe the use of interview aids.
- I. Describe how information is shared among team members.
- J. Describe how the team collaborates in case planning.
- K. Describe how the CAC will promote interviews that are developmentally appropriate.
- L. Describe how interviews are recorded or documented.

**VII. Victim Support/Advocacy**

- A. Describe how comprehensive, coordinated victim support and advocacy services are provided for all CAC clients, either on-site or through linkage agreements with other appropriate agencies or providers.
- B. Describe how crisis intervention and support are routinely available throughout the investigation and prosecution.
- C. Describe who provides client education regarding dynamics of abuse, the coordinated multidisciplinary response, treatment and access to services throughout the investigation and prosecution process.

- D. Describe who provides and how information is provided regarding the rights of crime victims.
- E. Describe who provides and how in regard to court preparation, court accompaniment, victims compensation and assistance with access to additional services such as how to obtain protective orders, housing, public assistance, domestic violence intervention and transportation.
- F. Describe the procedures in place to provide initial and on-going support and advocacy with the child and/or non-offending family members.

### **VIII. Medical Evaluation**

- A. Describe who completes the specialized medical evaluation, including their pediatric experience and child abuse expertise and how the medical evaluation is made available.
- B. Describe how qualified health care providers are linked to the CAC if exams are not conducted on site.
- C. Describe how the medical evaluations are made available to all CAC clients regardless of their ability to pay.
- D. Describe the circumstances under which a medical evaluation is recommended.
- E. Describe the purpose of the medical evaluation.
- F. Describe how emergency situations are addressed.
- G. Describe how multiple medical evaluations are limited.
- H. Describe how medical care is documented.
- I. Describe how the medical evaluations are coordinated with the MDT in order to avoid duplication of interviewing and history taking.
- J. If applicable, describe medical intervention in cases of suspected physical abuse and maltreatment.
- K. Describe how team members and CAC staff are trained regarding the purpose and nature of the medical evaluation and who educates clients and/or non-offending caregivers regarding the medical evaluation.
- L. Describe how the findings of the medical evaluation are shared with investigators and prosecutors on the MDT in a routine and timely manner.

### **IX. Mental Health Services**

- A. Describe how specialized trauma-focused mental health services are routinely made available either on-site or through linkage agreements with other appropriate agencies or providers for all CAC clients.
- B. Describe how mental health evaluation and treatment are made available regardless of the child/family's ability to pay.
- C. Describe the role of the mental health professional on the MDT including provisions for attendance at case review.
- D. Describe the mental health professional(s) who participate in case review.

- E. Describe the provisions regarding sharing relevant information with the MDT while protecting the clients' right to confidentiality.
- F. Describe the mental health services provided for non-offending family members and/or caregivers provided either on site or by linkages with other providers.
- G. Describe how the forensic interview and mental health treatment are kept separate.

#### **X. Case Review**

- A. Describe the criteria for case review and case review procedures that include what/how cases are chosen for review, frequency of meetings, designated attendees, designated facilitator, how agenda and/or notification of cases to be discussed is distributed, procedures for follow-up recommendations to be addressed and location of meeting.
- B. Describe if notes are kept, rosters of attendees, where notes are stored, and if a confidentiality form needs to be signed and by whom.
- C. Describe how recommendations from case review are communicated to appropriate parties for implementation.

#### **XI. Case Tracking**

- A. Describe how cases are tracked while the case is pending and at what point tracking ends or is complete.
- B. Describe what type of case tracking system is used (NCATrak, other data base, etc.) and what information is kept.
- C. Identify the position responsible for the case tracking system, entering data, collecting information, etc.
- D. Describe how team members provide specific case information and how they are able to access the tracking information.