

MINUTES
Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee
March 27, 2012

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Tuesday, March 27, 2012, from 2:38 p.m. to 3:38 p.m.

Statutory Members in Attendance:

Candida Fusco, and Zoe Casey

Non-Statutory Members in Attendance:

Audrey Courtney, and Anna Doroghazi

Statutory Members Excused or Absent:

Chair Linda J. Cimino, Michelle Cruz, Marielle Daniels, Chief Robert J. Hoffman, Laura Cordes, Joy Reho, Maureen Platt, Regina Owusu, and Sergeant James Thomas

OVS and SAFE Staff Present:

Denise S. Covington, Deborah Rubio, James Morgan, and Katie Nesta

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions:
James Morgan called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m. and welcomed members.
2. Approval of the January 26, 2012 Meeting Minutes:
Jim stated that without a quorum the minutes from January 26, 2012, cannot be approved. Committee members had no questions regarding the January 26, 2012 minutes.
3. SAFE Program Update:
Denise Covington reported that since the SAFE Program launched on December 2, 2010, there have been 200 cases among the 6 participating hospitals. There are 18 SAFEs participating in the Program, 5 actively precepting, 2 nurses were recently awarded contracts, and 2 nurses working on completion of the Program's requirements, for a total of 27 SAFEs.

Denise reported that Elaine Pagliaro provided a presentation on DNA and Contamination at the March 26, 2012, Quality Assurance meeting. Committee members discussed possible contamination issues.

Denise also reported that due to issues the SAFE's are having regarding mandatory reporting laws, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is scheduled to speak at the April 26, 2012, Quality Assurance meeting. Denise reported that there are 10 nurses currently enrolled in the SAFE course at Quinnipiac University that began in March, with another 4-5 nurses already registered for the fall.

Denise also reported on a teleconference that was held with all but 1 of the participating hospitals. The teleconference was held on March 23, 2012; discussions included an update, how to meet hospital orientation and education requirements, use of the new database to track requirements, review of the VoiceShot activation, the need for a hospital liaison committee, and training for hospital staff in the care of sexual assault victims. A list of vital educational points will be compiled for the hospitals. Denise explained that meetings with the participating hospitals will take place quarterly, with every other meeting held via teleconference. The next meeting will be at the Office of Victim Services (OVS) in June.

Denise reported that she has received approval to train at the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) on April 24, 2012. The POST training will be co-taught with a certified POST Instructor and will focus on the investigation of sexual assault crimes. Denise also reported that there is a training scheduled for July 27, 2012 to be held at the Hartford Police Academy. Denise reported that she is working with Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) on scheduling a training on the SDFI camera system and consent forms for advocates.

4. Clinical Coordinator Update:

Deborah Rubio reported that since the SDFI camera system was implemented on February 1, 2012, it has been used in 20 out of 24 cases. The consent form for SDFI is presented at the same time as the consent form for the collection of evidence.

Deb explained that if a patient consents to SDFI with no visible injuries only the bookend and story board pictures are taken. If there are visible bodily injuries, mid-distance pictures and close-ups (with and without a measuring device) are taken.

Deb reported that after the pictures are taken they are uploaded onto the computer under a password secured file. After uploading, the pictures can be transferred to law enforcement. The SDFI pictures are not printed. Law enforcement has either 5 days or 5 attempts to retrieve the pictures before the pictures are deleted. Deb explained that there will be a training on the transfer of images scheduled for the SAFE's.

Deb reported that use of the SDFI camera system adds approximately an hour to each case. Deb provided a SDFI Audit Tool for Committee members to review.

Deb reported that chart reviews were conducted for November 2011-January 2012. An issue that came up was the legibility of the SAFE's handwriting; it was decided that all future documentation will be in print.

Deb also reported on a meeting that was held with all the preceptors. The first preceptor meeting was held last week; discussions included how to establish and maintain a supportive rapport with orientees, setting and maintaining standards for documentation, the outbound campaign, and the SDFI camera system.

5. Financial Update:

Jim reported that due to a delayed start to the on-call portion of the SAFE Program, the lower number of SAFEs on contract when the Program launched, and less nurses participating in the Quinnipiac University training program, there will be sufficient grant funds available to fund the SAFE Program as currently operational until the end of the grant period (February 28, 2013). The request to extend grant funds past that date was denied by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) because the federal grant funding that OPM awarded ends on February 28, 2013.

Jim also reported that the Judicial Branch is working with the Legislature for state appropriations for a budget pick-up request for March - June 2013 as well as a full 2 year pick-up request for the following budget cycle July 2013 to June 2015.

Anna Doroghazi reported on meetings with Representative Toni Walker, co-chair of the Appropriations Committee and House Speaker Christopher Donovan regarding continued funding for the SAFE Program.

6. New Business:

Committee members had no new business to report.

7. Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting will be held on May 21, 2012, at 2:30 p.m.

8. Adjournment:

Jim adjourned the meeting at 3:38 p.m.

Katie Nesta, Recorder