

MINUTES
Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee
December 17, 2012

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Monday, December 17, 2012, from 2:38 p.m. to 3:27 p.m.

Statutory Members in Attendance:

Laura Cordes and Candida Fusco

Non-Statutory Members in Attendance:

Audrey Courtney and Patti LaMonica

Statutory Members Excused or Absent:

Chair Linda J. Cimino, Zoe Casey, Michelle Cruz, Marielle Daniels, Regina Owusu, Maureen Platt-Temchin, Joy Reho, and Sergeant James Thomas

OVS and SAFE Staff Present:

James Morgan, Denise S. Covington, Deborah Rubio, 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 May 21, 2012 Meeting Minutes:
Jim stated that without a quorum the minutes from May 21, 2012, cannot be approved. Committee members had no questions regarding the May 21, 2012, minutes.
3. SAFE Program Update:
Denise Covington reported that since the SAFE Program launched on December 2, 2010, there have been a total of 360 cases among the 6 participating hospitals with 197 cases since January 1, 2012.

Denise provided members with a handout of the SAFE Program statistics based on 349 completed cases from December 1, 2010, to December 1, 2012.

The statistics are as follows:

- 349 of the 384 calls received were responded to, equaling a 90.9% response percentage.
- Hartford Hospital had the highest number of cases totaling 127 cases.

- Saturdays and Sundays had the highest number of cases totaling 128 cases.
- 89 of the 349 cases were patients between the ages of 13-17.
- 239 cases were reported to the police: 153 of which were non-stranger, 80 were stranger, and 6 were unknown.
- The average time of a case (admission to discharge) is 4 to 5 hours (use of Secure Digital Forensic Imaging (SDFI) photography adds to duration).
- SDFI photography was used in 96 cases.

Members discussed the Program's statistics and response times of the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFEs).

Denise reported that there are 20 SAFEs participating in the Program, nurses are either actively precepting, working on completion of the Program's requirements, or scheduled to return from leave of absences. Denise also reported that so far there are a total of 5 nurses registered for the last SAFE training course at Quinnipiac University.

Jim explained the Program would not allow anymore leave of absences for the remainder of the grant due to monies being tied up in open purchase orders.

Denise reported that since the start of the Program, there has been a loss of 33 nurses due to either nurses leaving the Program or completing the training and then deciding not to participate in the Program. Denise explained that 7 out of the 33 nurses are planning on returning.

Denise provided members with an overview of the topics that have been presented at the Quality Assurance sessions since June 2012. Denise reported on multiple trainings and conferences that were held for law enforcement, advocates, and hospitals. Denise also reported that there was a meeting with all of the 6 participating hospitals on December 7, 2012.

Denise reported on various issues the Program has encountered, such as unconscious patients and patients who are under the influence not being able to give informed consent. Denise also reported on upcoming changes to Program admission requirements for the SAFEs and proposed changes to the sexual assault kits.

4. Clinical Coordinator Update:

Deb Rubio reported that she is currently working with Planned Parenthood to find clinical placements for the 6 nurses that have completed the SAFE training course at Quinnipiac University.

Deb reported that chart reviews were conducted for September and October 2012; there are a few areas that can be improved in documentation, but overall the SAFEs are doing a great job. Deb also reported that the SAFEs are becoming more confident and competent using the SDFI software.

Deb reported that a training refresher on the SDFI software will be provided for the SAFEs who are returning to the Program from leave of absences. Deb also reported that mandatory hospital education requirements are due for all the SAFEs and is closely working with the SAFEs to make sure requirements are met.

Deb reported that in 2013 the Program is expecting to implement the use of toluidine blue dye in order to better visualize genital injuries.

Deb also reported that the Program's first case went to trial on October 1, 2012, in New Britain Superior Court. Deb explained that the SAFE did a great job testifying and the jury found the defendant guilty.

Members discussed clinical placements at Planned Parenthood and the Program's first case to reach trial.

5. Financial Update:

Jim reported that grant funding for the SAFE Program ends on February 28, 2013 and that a budget pick-up request for state appropriations for March – June 2013 was received. Jim also reported that the Judicial Branch has submitted a full 2 year pick-up request for the July 2013 to June 2015 budget cycle.

Jim reported the Program's total expenses at the end of November 2012 are \$692,000; with \$875,000 projected by the end of the grant period. Jim explained that to date, the Program has expended \$96,000 for hospital responses and \$100,000 on call time.

6. New Business:

Laura Cordes reported that a federal grant was awarded to Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) to invest in updating training materials and technical guidelines.

7. Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting will be held on March 25, 2013, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment:

Jim adjourned the meeting at 3:27 p.m.

Katie Nesta, Recorder