



Iowa Department of Human Services

Child Abuse and Dependent Adult Abuse
Multidisciplinary Team Practice Guidance

Overview

Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) are to be used for consultation during the course of abuse assessments to discuss assessment, diagnosis, coordination of services, possible referrals, and disposition. MDTs are defined under the following:

- Iowa Code 232.71(B), 235A.13(8), and 235B.1
- 441 Iowa Administrative Code 175.32(3), 175.36(235A), and 176.15(235B)

Form 470-2328 is the *Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Agreement* for the Iowa Department of Human Services. This form is specifically for use with MDTs defined under the Code citations above. Please note that there are different types of multidisciplinary teams outlined in other Iowa Code sections. Form 470-2328 and affiliated protocols are not transferrable to other types of MDTs outlined in other sections of the Iowa Code or Administrative Rules. The Department is not bound by MDT recommendations.

MDTs are composed of team members outlined in the code citations mentioned above. Members of a team shall include, but are not limited to professionals practicing in the disciplines of:

- Medicine,
- Nursing,
- Public health,
- Mental health,
- Social work,
- Domestic violence,
- Child development,
- Education,
- Law,
- Probation, or
- Other disciplines relative to serving children or dependent adults.

The members serve voluntarily and must be approved by the Department.

Foundational Elements

- MDTs shall be developed in county or multicounty areas in which more than 50 child abuse cases are received annually. Local or regional teams, according to service area, can be used to include dependent adult protective assessments as well. MDTs may contain some of the same core members for either child abuse or dependent adult abuse consultation.

- According to Iowa Code, MDTs for dependent adults must include the:
 - Area Agencies on Aging (also now the Aging and Disability Resource Centers),
 - County attorneys,
 - Health care providers, and
 - Other persons involved in advocating or providing services to dependent adults.
- MDT members are selected and established by the Department through execution of the *Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Agreement*, form 470-2328. The team is considered approved by the service area manager (SAM) or designee as evidenced by signature on the *Agreement* annually, on or before July 1 of each year. Members can also be added on an ad hoc basis as needed with approval from the Department.
- MDTs shall be convened at the Department's request during the course of an abuse assessment or evaluation.
- The specific function of the MDT is to assist the Department during the course of abuse assessments and evaluations only. No case specific information can be discussed outside the scope of the abuse assessment or evaluation.
- The Department is not bound by the team's recommendations.
- Any written information distributed by the Department to the MDT should be collected upon termination of the meeting.
- Team recommendations or consultation should be documented in the contacts portion of the assessment or evaluation.
- Copies of renewed *MDT Agreements* should be forwarded July 1 of each year to program managers for child abuse and dependent adult abuse. Please include any ad hoc additions to your teams.

Multidisciplinary Team Establishment

- Every service area must have MDTs available to child abuse and dependent adult abuse protective workers. The teams must consist of standing members who can be convened during an assessment. Ad hoc members can be asked to participate as needed but must be approved by the Department. Ad hoc members must also sign form 470-2328 when attending the MDT.
- Each service area needs to identify and mobilize local efforts to recruit professionals to participate in and sustain MDTs. The Department is required to have MDTs per Iowa Code.
- Identifying an MDT coordinator for each service area is recommended, but not required.

- MDTs may be used for both children and dependent adults. Please use the MDT core members page to indicate those people who will attend both types of MDT. Core members would include:
 - County attorneys,
 - The Department of Human Services,
 - A medical professional,
 - Public health or nursing,
 - A mental health professional,
 - A service provider, and
 - Law enforcement.
- **Child MDTs** require a different core group composition than dependent adults. You may invite Juvenile Court Services, Area Education Agencies, or other service providers.
- **Dependent Adult MDTs** require core group inclusion of the Area Agencies on Aging. You may invite other community agencies such as the Office of the Substitute Decision Maker, a Consumer-Directed Attendant Care (CDAC) provider, or other adult service providers.

Procedures

- Team members must know what is expected of them. Each discipline has an area of expertise and the Department must clearly express the expectations of each member for an effective group process.
- Going over the *MDT Agreement* as a group is recommended to establish the scope of the team's role and expectations of the members.
- Multidisciplinary Team members have immunity from civil or criminal liability for aiding and assisting the Department in an abuse investigation.
- The frequency of the meetings is as needed during abuse assessments. There is no minimum or maximum frequency or duration specified as long as a meeting does not occur outside the scope of an abuse assessment.
- Cases to be presented are selected by the Department. If a case is put forth for discussion by another team member, the Department must decide if the case can be reviewed by the team.
- Cases can be presented to the team in the way determined most efficient *for the worker* seeking consultation.
- Ad hoc members must sign in every time they are in attendance. The SAM or the SAM's designee should receive a copy of ad hoc member attendance.
- No visitors are permitted to attend Multidisciplinary Teams. Confidentiality concerning child abuse and dependent adult abuse laws prevent anyone who is not a team member from attending. An exception to this is of course, the Department social worker presenting the case.
- Each *Agreement* must be renewed on or before July 1 of each year. A copy must be sent to Central Office. Each service area can retain copies at their discretion.