MDT Member Recruitment and Retention: Building Trust and Traction

MARCH 9, 2018

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Elder Justice Initiative

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS
JUSTICE FOR ALL
Office for Victims of Crime

OVCTTAC
OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME Training and Technical Assistance Center
TECHNICAL OVERVIEW

- If you are experiencing any technical issues with the audio for this session, please let us know in the feedback box.
- If you have technical difficulties during the webinar, contact Jason Adams, who is providing technical support for this webinar. His email address is jadams@ovcttac.org.
- Today’s session will be recorded and made available on the training website.
- If you have questions, type them in the feedback box. We will address as many as possible throughout the webinar.
ELDER JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The mission is to support and coordinate the Department of Justice’s enforcement and programmatic efforts to combat elder abuse, neglect, and financial fraud and scams that target older adults.

The Initiative does so by—

- Promoting justice for older adults.
- Helping older victims and their families.
- Enhancing state and local efforts through training and resources.
- Supporting research to improve elder abuse policy and practice.
Elder abuse is a complex issue that intersects with many disciplines.

Elder abuse can happen to anyone. It affects people of every ethnic background, gender, and financial status.
PRESENTERS

Maro Casparian
Director of Consumer Protection
Denver District Attorney’s Office

Linda Loflin Pettit
Manager of Community and Government Relations, Prosecution and Code Enforcement Section, City and County of Denver

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Major Crimes, Fraud Unit/Special Victim’s Unit, Denver Police, City and County of Denver
Keeping Older Victims Safe Through Collaboration

Denver Forensic Collaborative for At-Risk Adults
February 2018
The Case of Jade

History of trauma

• Abandoned by mom at 1
• Raped by stepdad at 10
• Sent to live with aunt at 16
• Abused by husband in her 20s
• Spiraled into poverty
• Lost custody of children in her 30s
• Abused by boyfriend in her 40s, sustained permanent back injuries
The Case of Jade

In her 50s
• Living in a garage
• Went to college
• Got into HUD housing

In her 60s
• At 68, met Luis (age 45)
• Invited him to move in
• “Isn’t he beautiful?!“
But then:

- He invited his friends in
- Hurtful sex
- Her pain meds were missing
- He took over the bedroom, she had to sleep on the couch
- He stole her money
- Laid hands on her
- She learned about drug deals
“Snitches end up in ditches.”
Who can she call?

- Ombudsman
- Legal Services
- Aging Network
- DV/SA Victim Advocates
- Law Enforcement
- Family
- Ombudsman
- Faith Community
- Health Professionals
- Prosecutor
- Legal Services
- APS, CPS
- The VA
- Friends, Neighbors
Don’t call the police! I want him out!

“Don’t call the police!”

“Don’t tell the DA!”

Can’t tell management.

“I want him out!”

“Don’t call the police!”
Don’t call the police! I want him out!

“I use not only all the brains I have, but all I can borrow.”

- Woodrow Wilson
Denver Forensic Collaborative for At-Risk Adults

- Action-based, open case review
- Victim at increased risk of continued or future mistreatment
- Case needs immediate action or indepth case review
- Case would benefit from multidisciplinary problem solving
- Victim may or may not be receiving services
- Arrestable offense may be/is occurring
Denver Forensic Collaborative

- Act as a decisionmaking body/authority to act
- Any agency can bring a case forward with advanced notice
- All professionals, participation by invitation only
- Confidentiality agreements
- Monthly meetings
- Training and agency information sharing
Different Doors Open for Different Types of Victimization

- Emotional abuse, threats
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Financial exploitation
- Housing exploitation
Together, we can:

- Improve coordination and communication between services and systems
- Increase the “eyes and ears” of the agencies involved
- Identify patterns and tactics of abuse
- Deliver services to victims sooner
- Reduce victim isolation
- Share responsibility for identifying offenders and managing cases
But really, why attend?

- For face-to-face contact
- To give input on cases
- To educate collaborative partners
- To learn
  - Something or someone new
  - Every meeting
- To continually build relationships
Why law enforcement attends:

- To show the working community that you are dedicated to the victim, regardless of the criminal case aspect.
- To learn what the partners in your group do and CAN do for the victim and to help your case.
- To teach others in the group what law enforcement can and can’t do. Teach about the limitations of the law and what it takes to get a case accepted.
- To provide immediate help, as needed.
Why law enforcement remains:

- To build working partnerships to help with at-risk cases and other types of cases.
- Action plans!
- To maintain working relationships you need for your cases.
- To develop a better understanding of APS, what they do and can’t do, and develop a way for LE and APS to work together for victims.
- Ongoing education: you can always learn more about what different organizations do and what they can do for you.
Why APS attends:

- DFCAA fulfills the state’s requirement for an AP team
- You can bring open cases for input, referrals
- Case workers are invited to attend
- To discuss best practices, available resources
- To continually explain APS standards and core values, guardianship options
DFC e-Consultations

- Immediate feedback and suggestions
- Confidential, with case specifics given to those who can/will take action
- New (newer) case
- Participants can respond or delete
- Useful when typical response is not working/applicable
Triaging Jade’s Case

- Sent out an e-consult
- Immediate results
  - DA investigator went to speak with building management; advised a civil protection order keeping Luis off property
  - APS opened a case
  - Nonprofit advocate reached out to offer ongoing counseling, peer support groups
  - Jade pursued a temporary civil protection order
Addressing the Needs of the Victim

- Empowerment, self-determination
- Concerns about assets, financial support
- Address culture, faith concerns
- Housing options, transportation
- Pets, independence
Keys to Collaboration
### Tips and Tools for Construction

- Start by inviting—
  - Domestic violence & sexual assault victim services
  - Law enforcement
  - Prosecutors
  - Elder service providers
  - System-based advocates
  - Cultural resources
  - State real estate investigator

- Health care professionals
- Mental health
- Environmental health
- Financial exploitation investigators
- Trauma specialists
- Researchers
- Public administrator
- Civil legal services
Meet with key players in advance

“Hook” their interest

Show what’s in it for them

Offer a training session for part of the meeting so attendees can walk away with new tools or knowledge.
Tips and Tools

- Select a strong facilitator.
- If you have a major case arise in your community, use that as a reason for a kickoff event.
- Teach the new languages.
- Explain differing rules of confidentiality.
Key Ingredients

- Trust
- Open, direct communication
- Clear, realistic goals
- Clear case review guidelines
- Procedures/rules
- Conflict: expect it, embrace it
- Celebrate accomplishments
Key Ingredients

- Encourage everyone to bring cases
- Find a case tool that works for you
  - What information do you need?
  - What data can be captured?
- Sum up the action plan for every case – make the accomplishment “real”
- Collect data from day 1
Collaboration: Benefits & Results

- Victim safety
- More resources for victim
- Less “finger pointing”
- New ideas about how to approach a case
- Shared ownership and responsibility for case outcomes
Collaboration: Benefits & Results

- Shared knowledge of resources
- Shared knowledge of the individual, creating a united support system
- Learning the perspectives and strategies of other disciplines
- Offender containment from different angles
We don’t just come out of our silos once a month, we routinely *stay* out of our silos when working with these cases.
Challenges & Barriers

- Understanding each other’s framework for approaching cases
- Competing philosophies
- Information sharing, confidentiality
- Turf and egos
Challenges & Barriers

- Need for continued education and cross-training
- Trust between professions
- Confidentiality issues persist
- Frustrations linger
  - With the system
  - With clients’ decisions
  - “Just fix it!” attitudes

Make an arrest!
Charge him with a felony!
Open a case, APS!
Build on Our Differences

- Different approaches, outlooks, and roles can be a strength
- Teach and learn from each other
- Share information and resources
- Common goal: victim safety and support
The Case of Simone

- DA’s Office received call from concerned neighbor, brought case to DFCAA
- Environmental Health just received the case
- Police educate group: can’t force entry
- CA’s Office offers to draft warrant
- Mental health counselor offers to be on scene
- Doctor, hospital social worker notify hospital, work on safe discharge
The Case of Simone: Next Day

- All city agencies and mental health workers went on scene as a team
- Only one knock on the door
- Immediate medical assistance
- Mental health assistance
- APS prepared for case
- House boarded up
- Safe, coordinated hospital discharge
No.
But, it can make the job easier and help keep victims safer.
Collaboration in YOUR Community

- Who already participates?
- Who is missing?
- What exists that you can build on?
- When can you realistically start?
- What’s holding you back?
Questions?

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Q & A
QUESTIONS & SUGGESTIONS

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