

**MINUTES**  
**Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee**  
**September 12, 2011**

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Monday, September 12, 2011, from 2:07 p.m. to 3:48 p.m.

**Statutory Members in Attendance:**

Chair Linda J. Cimino, Candida Fusco, Hakima Bey for Michelle Cruz, Marielle Daniels, Laura Cordes, and Maureen Platt

**Non-Statutory Members in Attendance:**

Anna Doroghazi and Karen Zott

**Statutory Members Excused or Absent:**

Chief Robert J. Hoffman, Joy Reho, Zoe Casey, Sharon Tarala, and Sergeant James Thomas

**OVS and SAFE Staff Present:**

Denise S. Covington, James Morgan and Katie Nesta

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Introductions  
Linda J. Cimino called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m. and welcomed members. Linda introduced new committee member Laura Cordes, Executive Director of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS).
2. Approval of the June 6, 2011 Meeting Minutes  
Linda asked for a motion to accept the minutes of June 6, 2011. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. SAFE Program Update:  
Denise Covington provided the following updates:

General Update:

Since the SAFE Program launched on December 2, 2010, there have been a total of 111 cases among the 6 participating hospitals. The Program remains operational on a 24/7 basis. There are a total of 14 SAFEs participating in the program, 10 actively precepting with 5 preceptors.

The VoiceShot notification system is being used as an outbound campaign. SAFEs who are precepting but unable to work an entire shift

can be on-call for a few hours just by turning on their phones and are called in the order of needed cases.

Denise provided members with a handout of the SAFE Statistics based on 108 completed cases from December 2, 2010, to September 3, 2011. The statistics were compiled from VoiceShot and data forms. The statistics are as follows:

- 35% of cases were seen at Hartford Hospital.
- 39% of cases were between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.
- Sundays had the highest number of cases totaling 26 cases.
- August had the highest number of cases totaling 22 cases.
- The average SAFE response time is an hour to 75 minutes.
- The average time of a case (admission to discharge) is 4 to 5 hours.
- 89% of patients are consenting to full evidence collection.
- 40% of cases are reported to the police and the offender is non-stranger.

Members discussed if patients travel farther from where they live to a participating hospital due to the Program and how that information can be tracked.

#### Issues:

The Program has been activated for patients who do not want evidence collected, patients who have not been assaulted, and for patients who want STI testing. Additional training for hospital staff is needed.

It often takes as long to discharge the patient as it does to complete the evidence collection. Multiple requests made by SAFE and advocates have done little to decrease the amount of time.

The set up of alternate light sources, refrigerators, and GynoCarts is improving. Often it would take 30 minutes to set up a room, the hospital personnel are setting up the room before the SAFE arrives.

#### SDFI Installation and Training:

SDFI training is scheduled for all 28 nurses from September 26, 2011 - September 30, 2011. Each hospital is scheduled for set up from October 1 - October 3, 2011. A special training session will be held for law enforcement, prosecutors, and other criminal justice personnel on October 4, 2011.

#### Discharge Instructions:

The section for the control number and police information from the original artwork on the discharge instructions was inadvertently left off the new

discharge instructions sheet. The correction was made and new discharge instructions were taken to the Forensic Lab to be sent out with the new kits.

4. Update Training:

Denise reported that Program updates and trainings were held at the multi-disciplinary conference “Systems in Sync: Responding to Sexual Assault in Connecticut” sponsored by CONNSACS and at Wesleyan University for their Sexual Assault Response Team training.

Denise reported that 3 classes of nurses have completed the SAFE course training and a fourth class has begun at Quinnipiac University. It is expected that there will be three courses held next year. Mary Nielson is the new course instructor.

Denise also reported that an annual conference held by the Emergency Nurse Association (ENA) will show case the SAFE Program.

5. Financial Update:

Linda provided the following updates:

Hospital Reimbursement:

- 1,157 sexual assault kits were reimbursed for fiscal year 2010-2011
- 1,290 sexual assault kits were reimbursed for fiscal year 2008-2009
- 1,140 sexual assault kits were reimbursed for fiscal year 2005-2006

Grants:

Grants are currently in the process of revision. Due to budget cuts, funds for sexual assault kit reimbursement were cut by \$120,000.

Budget Pick-Up Request:

The budget pick-up request for March - June 2013 is expected to be completed by the end of the week. After which, a full two-year pick-up request for the following budget cycle July 2013 to June 2015 will be compiled.

Members discussed the backlog at the Forensic Lab due to certification issues. Members also discussed SDFI photos being entered as evidence during trials, the photos affect on the victim, and the SDFI technology compared to regular digital photos.

6. CONNSACS Training Update:

Laura Cordes reported on the multi-disciplinary conference “Systems in Sync: Responding to Sexual Assault in Connecticut” that was held June

16-17, 2011. The conference included national speakers and gained press coverage. Materials from the conference were provided to members.

7. CONNSACS Survey:

Anna Doroghazi distributed a copy of the SAFE follow-up survey to members. Anna explained that the survey along with a note will be added to the packets that patients already receive from the SAFE at time of discharge. The data from the surveys will be collected by CONNSACS and reported to Denise on a monthly basis. The expected roll out date for the surveys is October 1, 2011. Members discussed the questions on the survey.

8. New Business:

Marielle Daniels reported that hospital trauma coordinators met and expressed interest in having someone talk to them regarding the SAFE program.

9. Next Meeting Date:

Denise addressed members regarding meeting every other month. Members agreed to meet every other month instead of quarterly. The next meeting will be held Monday, November 14, 2011, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment:

Linda adjourned the meeting at 3:48 p.m.

Katie Nesta, Recorder