

MINUTES
Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee
January 9, 2020

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, Fourth Floor, Room 4B, from 2:10 p.m. to 3:55 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Linda J. Cimino, Chair, Edith Atwerebour, Dr. Alexis Cordiano, Denise Covington, Heather Deming, Brittany Kaplan, Dr. Mary Nielson, Dr. Stephanie Paulmeno, DNP, Maureen Platt

Members Excused or Absent: Marielle Daniels, Beth Hamilton, Natasha Pierre, Dr. Guy Vallaro

OVS Staff: Pat Moriarty, Jean M. Weisbrod

Guests: Alexandra Arroyo, Denise Poncini

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
Chair Linda J. Cimino called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. and members introduced themselves.
2. Approval of Minutes
Linda asked for a motion to accept the minutes of October 28, 2019. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. Overview of State of Connecticut v. Jody Griswold, 160 Conn. App 528 (2015)
Alexandra Arroyo, Special Deputy Assistant States Attorney, provided an overview of State of Connecticut v. Jody Griswold, 160 Conn. App 528 (2015).

The presentation included the following:

- A review of the case
- The purpose of a forensic interview and out of court statements
- The medical exception to Hearsay Evidence and what constitutes medical diagnosis and treatment
- The role of the SAFE and the medical chain of care

The importance of documentation, word choice, and clear documentation referring to care was discussed.

In addition, the definition of how a SAFE can only be a health care provider and that SAFE's should not be relegated to forensic technicians was discussed.

4. Discussion of Public Act 19-114 Section 2
Linda read and reviewed Public Act 19-114 Section 2.

Discussion among Committee Members included the following:

- Whether the SANE-A meets the definition of a SAFE
- Whether travel nurses can practice as a SANE-A in CT
- The difference between SAFE and SANE-A
- Development of a competency day to bring current SANE-A's in compliance with the statute

Linda proposed a motion that SANE-A's complete a one-day competency training that includes the following:

- General orientation of the Sexual Assault Crisis Service Agencies and other partners
- State of Connecticut Technical Guidelines for Health Care Response to Victims of Sexual Assault (current edition)
- CT100B Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit and CT400A Toxicology Screen Evidence Collection Kit (current edition)
- Pertinent State laws

The motion was so moved and approved as presented. Linda reported that this provides compliance with Statute.

5. SAFE Program Updates
Patricia Moriarty, SAFE Program Training Manager, provided an update on the Spring 2020 SAFE Training Program.

Patricia reported:

- 42 hours Didactic Training will begin on March 23, 2020
- New speakers planned:
 - Considerations of Adolescent Patients: Judith Moskal-Kanz, APRN, Hartford Public School System
 - Prosecutor Role: Assistant State's Attorney Kelly Davis, New Haven Superior Court
 - Vicarious Trauma: TBD
 - Medical – Legal Photography: Detective Bridget Brosnahan from the New Haven Police Department and adjunct professor for the University of New Haven's Forensic Science BS and Master's Program

Denise Covington, SAFE Program Manager, provided an update on the SAFE Program. Denise reported that Winter is typically a low call volume time. She stated that there have been 16 cases and 12 responses. Denise stated that she will be contacting participating hospitals over the next few months to request training dates – particularly on parameters and eligibility requirements.

Denise reported the following on the MOA status:

- The long-term goal is to obtain ongoing MOA's with each hospital, and develop a cohort of SAFE's in each hospital.
 - Barriers include staffing issues, cost, and a resistance to the state's decisions for consistency
 - Focus is on gaining 2-3 hospital MOA's per class and marketing the training through the Connecticut Hospital Association
 - The practical limitations which include class size and resources

Increased awareness in the legal system due to a higher number of health care professionals trained to be SAFE's was discussed.

Denise discussed working with community partners, Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, and Law Enforcement.

6. New Business

No new business was discussed.

Linda adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Jean M. Weisbrod, Recorder