

Module 9: Collaborating for Maximum Impact and Wrap-Up

Time Required

2 hours

Purpose

To ensure that participants from all disciplines understand the importance of working together, and to help them visualize how they might collaborate with other organizations.

Lessons

1. The Importance of Collaboration (30 minutes)
2. A Multidisciplinary Cross-System Approach (1 hour)
3. What You Can Do *Now* (20 minutes)
4. Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

Instructor Note:

If time permits, after the training Wrap-Up (before evaluations) you may cover the Model Facilities materials and PowerPoints. These materials are included behind the Model Facilities tab in the Instructor and Participant Manuals.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Explain the benefits and challenges of collaborating with other organizations to support more effectively victims of crime with disabilities.
- Explain the purpose of a multidisciplinary cross-system team.

Participant Worksheets

- Worksheet 9.1, Potential Partners
- Worksheet 9.2, Case Study – Carolyn and Ted
- Worksheet 9.3, Taking it Back Home

Equipment and Materials

- Roll of butcher paper or multiple tear sheets taped together (about 20 feet long)

Preparation

- Label a tear sheet Benefits
- Label a tear sheet Challenges
- Label a tear sheet Establishing a Multidisciplinary Cross-System Team
- Label a tear sheet Next Steps.
- Prepare the roll of butcher paper for the “Blueprint for Collaboration” activity. Roll out about 20 feet of paper and draw a line across the bottom (long side) to represent a continuum of 3 years since the date of the crime. On the continuum, add the basic markers of the case (based on the case study of Carolyn and Ted) such as: Carolyn and Ted marry and Ted acquires a disability.



Show Visual 9-1.

Introduce Module 9 by **explaining** that the purpose of this module is to ensure that participants from all disciplines understand the importance of working together, and to help them visualize how they might collaborate with other organizations.



Show Visual 9-2.

Review the learning objectives.

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Explain the benefits and challenges of collaborating with other organizations to support more effectively victims of crime with disabilities.
- Explain the purpose of a multidisciplinary cross-system team.

1. The Importance of Collaboration (30 minutes)



Show Visual 9-3.

Paraphrase:

Because some crime victims with disabilities may have different needs than crime victims without disabilities, it's important for victim service organizations and allied professions to collaborate with disability service providers and self-advocacy organizations, i.e., an organization run for and by people with disabilities, to work together to reduce stress and anxiety, and help with trauma recovery.

Ask: How many of you are with organizations that participate in some form of multidisciplinary cross-system team? **Ask** participants who respond to briefly describe who participates in their team and how it works.



Show Visual 9-4.

Paraphrase:

There are both benefits and challenges to multidisciplinary cross-system collaboration. Although it's not always easy, the intent is to try to maximize the benefits and minimize or overcome the challenges.

Refer to the tear sheet labeled Benefits.

Ask: What are some of these benefits faced with multidisciplinary cross-system collaborations? Responses may include:

- More effective service
- Cross-training
- Enhanced expertise
- Additional resources
- Shared responsibilities
- Less duplication of work
- More expedient processes
- More satisfied/safer victims
- Better, faster communication
- Shared values, visions and missions
- Reduction in paperwork
- Ability to obtain more funding
- Improved relationships and elimination of turf wars

Refer to the tear sheet labeled Challenges.

Ask: What are some of these challenges faced with multidisciplinary cross-system collaborations? Responses may include:

- Time
- Rules of confidentiality
- Restrictions in information sharing
- Methods of communicating, including jargon
- Conflicting procedures and processes
- Lack of participation
- Ideological or philosophical conflicts

- Territorial issues and agency priorities
- Tracking follow-through
- Staff commitment
- Administrative responsibility and leadership

Paraphrase:

Although the benefits outweigh the challenges, collaborative activities can be difficult to establish. Once everyone buys in to the idea, though, many teams operate very smoothly.



Show Visual 9-5.

Introduce the activity.



Activity: Organizational Perspectives on Crime (15 minutes)

- 1. Refer participants to Worksheet 9.1, Potential Partners, in the Participant Manual.**
- 2. Tell them to work individually or, if there is more than one participant from the same organization or discipline, they may work together. When answering the questions on the worksheet, ask participants to briefly identify their agency's perspective on crime and identify ways they might work with other agencies in cases that involve crime victims with disabilities.**
- 3. Ask participants to put a star next to two agencies that they will commit to contact to collaborate with following this training.**
- 4. After they have finished, ask volunteers to share their responses with the large group.**

Debrief the activity by explaining that collaboration can involve any number of partners. To make it official, organizations may want to form a multidisciplinary cross-system team or create a Memorandum of Understanding.

2. A Multidisciplinary Cross-System Approach (1 hour)



Show Visual 9-6.

Paraphrase:

Multidisciplinary cross-system teams usually involve professionals from diverse disciplines and across agencies; they come together to provide comprehensive consultation, develop safety strategies, and provide other services that create awareness and build capacity in developing systemic change and on individual cases.



Show Visual 9-7.

Paraphrase:

Multidisciplinary cross-system teams usually carry out specific but varied functions. Some come together to discuss specific cases, while others may address only systemic problems in coordination. Ultimately, each member of the team must have the same goal – in this case, improving and enhancing service to crime victims with disabilities in a timely and appropriate manner.

Refer to the tear sheet labeled Establishing a Multidisciplinary Cross-System Team.



Show Visual 9-8.

Paraphrase:

Now that we have identified some of the challenges of collaboration, how can you structure a multidisciplinary cross-system team to avoid or overcome these challenges?

Discuss the following points if they are not mentioned by participants:

- Ensure that members of the team include people with disabilities.
- Conduct meetings that are universally accessible. At meetings, the team must:
 - ~ Arrange for interpreters or assistive listening devices.
 - ~ Ensure that individuals who use wheelchairs or have sight or developmental disabilities have access to:
 - ♦ Transportation to the meeting space.
 - ♦ The building.
 - ♦ The meeting space.

- ~ Ensure that materials are in alternative formats, such as large print or Braille.
- ~ Compile resources such as vendors and non-profit organizations that provide equipment (wheelchairs, assistive devices) and contact information.
- Identify roadblocks to information sharing and determine how to overcome them, if possible.

For example, confidentiality presents an obvious challenge. Police are prevented by law from sharing certain information; victim service providers are bound by their organization or state law from sharing certain information. Mental health professionals must observe therapist/client privilege.

Agree on confidentiality requirements such as using pseudonyms that are signed by all members.

Remember, though, that these confidentiality agreements won't supersede confidentiality laws and protect information from being subpoenaed if it is shared with a provider who doesn't have the same level of protection. In addition, some states have special immunity or information-sharing laws, which protect information disclosed at meetings from being used as evidence in civil actions. You may not be able to overcome certain confidentiality issues, but by knowing how much an agency can share, team members will have a greater understanding of the boundaries of other organizations, which can augment a good working relationship.

- Define how the agencies will work together. Examples may include:
 - ~ Sharing contact information. However, be careful about providing identifying information – it's easier to identify a crime victim who uses a wheelchair or has a service animal than a crime victim without a disability.
 - ~ Defining roles and responsibilities for each member of the team.
 - ~ Developing guidelines for referring cases to other members of the team.
 - ~ Defining circumstances in which victim and disability service providers may be asked to assist police in their investigation.
 - ~ Developing communications priorities and procedures, including whom to call and when. For example, if an individual tells his service provider that he has been the victim of a rape, the provider must follow their agency's guidelines. But remember, all crime victims have the right to report or not to report a crime to law enforcement, assuming they are over 18 and act as their own legal guardian.
 - ~ Ensuring that all agencies endorse, understand, and agree on the protocols that have been established.

~ Limiting the number of interviews with a crime victim.

Repeated interviews can be humiliating, frustrating, and disheartening for any crime victim. One goal of a cross-system team could be to advocate for reducing the number of times the crime victim must repeat his or her description of the crime. Sometimes as professionals we think we need more information than we do when working with a victim. Before asking the victim or another agency for information about the crime, ask yourself, why do I need this piece of information? What is the added value to the crime victim if I have this information?

- Most importantly, allow victims with disabilities a voice in determining how a multidisciplinary cross-system team should be established. Evaluate and revise your plan periodically as new agencies, organizations, laws, and regulations evolve.



Show Visual 9-9.

Introduce the activity.



Activity: Blueprint for Collaboration (20 minutes)

- 1. Use the roll of butcher paper prepared in advance.**
- 2. Divide participants into groups of expertise (law enforcement, disability advocates, and victim services).**
- 3. Ask participants to review Worksheet 9.2 Case Study – Carolyn and Ted, found in the Participant Manual. Explain that certain organizations, such as victim services, have been purposely omitted from the case study.**



Show Visual 9-10.

- 4. In small groups, discuss the following questions from Worksheet 9.2.**

In the context of this case study:

- Where would your organization enter the intervention process?
- What would be your role and responsibilities?
- What specific resources would be available to Ted or his family through your organization?
- What organizations could you interact with during the process to improve the effectiveness of services offered to Ted?

- Where are the biggest challenges in this case regarding interacting with other organizations?
 - What sort of information should be exchanged?
5. *As the groups finish, refer them to the roll of butcher paper that depicts the continuum of the case study. Ask participants to construct a model for effective collaboration of services throughout the timeline, given the facts of the case study and their responses to the questions.*
 6. *However, encourage them also to think creatively about new and innovative ways to collaborate, and to add these to the timeline.*
 7. *Tell the groups to represent their answers with words and pictures on the continuum. (If one group encounters another group making entries in the same area, ask participants to talk/work through how to include both views and contributions.)*
 8. *When groups have completed this process, ask the groups about potential opportunities to collaborate in the intervention process. Push groups to think about breaking new ground to build a truly collaborative effort. Have them draw the connections on the blueprint.*
 9. *When the groups have finished, have one person from each group explain their organization's part in the collaborative process, and how they would interact with others.*

After the groups have finished, **debrief** the activity by asking in the context of the blueprint:

- What differences in organizational philosophies might impact the collaboration of these agencies?
- What are some of the benefits and challenges in this situation?
- How might a collaboration between (select an agency) and (select another agency) be structured? Where are the gaps in collaboration?
- How might agency intervention early on have altered Carol and Ted's situation? What agencies would have been involved?

Paraphrase:

In many communities, organizations work parallel to each other or in “silos,” seeing a situation through the lens of the organization and the philosophy that guides it. We tend to work autonomously when collaboration could greatly enhance the benefits to the people we serve.

It may take some creative approaches, but when you return to your organizations, think carefully about how you might partner with other agencies to better support crime victims with disabilities. The information you've learned in this training can help you begin the process.

Ask if participants have any questions about collaboration or the blueprint.

3. What You Can Do *Now* (20 minutes)



Show Visual 9-11.

Refer to the tear sheet labeled Next Steps and **ask:** All of us need to improve how we work with crime victims with disabilities. What can you do right away – when you return to work – that will take you one step further down the road to collaboration? **Provide** the following tips if not covered in the responses.

- Make plans to ensure your organization is universally accessible.

Emphasize that organizations that are going to do this should work with disability service provider organizations, such as a CIL (Center for Independent Living) to assist in this process. Among other services, disability organizations can make recommendations and do accessibility audits, making sure the changes actually work for the people they're designed to assist.

- Tell your coworkers what you have learned in this training at a staff meeting, brown bag lunch, or other venue where people in your organization gather.

Ask for their recommendations on organizations they have worked with individually, and make contact with those organizations to see if some sort of partnership might be feasible.

- Enlist the people who use your services and people who have disabilities.

They can participate in policy development, decisionmaking, program development, and service delivery for crime victims with disabilities from the time of the crime through case disposition and beyond. And ensure your office is fully accessible, of course.

- Brainstorm ways to improve outreach to people with disabilities.

Brainstorm internally with your organization's staff and with staff of other organizations as well.

- Contact potential partners and cross-train with one another to build better working relationships and understand the mission and services of each organization.

- Begin collecting information about community-based organizations such as schools, social service agencies, and faith-based organizations.

Make effective use of resources and to ensure service delivery is inclusive and services and programs are accessible.

- Reach out to disability groups to recruit and train people with disabilities to become paid staff members and volunteers in victim service organizations, as well as related criminal justice areas. If you need to improve access for individuals with disabilities, make and implement a plan for doing this.

4. Wrap-Up (10 minutes)



Show Visual 9-12.

Introduce the activity.



Activity: Taking it Back Home (5 minutes)

- 1. Ask participants to take a moment to identify and write down three agencies they would like to collaborate with, and a first step they will take. They can record their answers on Worksheet 9.3, Taking it Back Home, found in the Participant Manual.*
- 2. Ask participants to consider what they can do to have universal access to their agency. Ask them to identify one short-term action they can take and two long-term actions.*
- 3. Ask volunteers to share their action plans.*



Show Visual 9-13.

Review the learning objectives and **ask** whether they were met.

- Explain the benefits and challenges of collaborating with other organizations to support more effectively victims of crime with disabilities.
- Explain the purpose of a multidisciplinary cross-system team.



Show Visual 9-14.

Thank participants for their hard work, and for making the commitment to attend the training and for contributing their thoughts, skills, and opinions.

Instructor Note:

If time permits, at this point in the training you may cover the Model Facilities materials and PowerPoints. These materials are included behind the Model Facilities tab in the Instructor and Participant Manuals.

Refer participants to the evaluation form in the Participant Manual and ask participants to complete them. Designate an area for participants to drop off their completed forms on their way out of the room or ask the room monitor to collect the forms; this helps to ensure their anonymity, encouraging participants to be frank in their assessment of the training.

As participants leave the room, **thank them again** for coming and **congratulate** them on having done excellent work.