

# What Do We Want Our MDT to Be?

**Each member of the MDT has a unique role to play. What, exactly, are you trying to accomplish together?** What do you want to be different by working together? How will you be interacting with each other? How will others experience the network of services, processes, or functions?

In this exercise, each MDT can decide for itself where to focus its attention, as well as how or whether to formally state its intentions with each other or on behalf of the people it serves.

You also choose the language that defines your target group:

- Older adults
- Vulnerable adults
- Disabled adults
- Something else

**1. A Vision Statement** is the MDT's view of the future. An effective vision statement concisely describes the change you wish to create for your community. It can speak specifically to vulnerable adults or to the whole population of the community. It speaks to the desired outcome as a whole, rather than focusing on a single aspect of service.

**Prompt:** Assume that in ten years, your MDT is highly successful. What is the "big picture" change that has happened?

- Our vision is a community where...
- We envision a community in which...
- Example: *We envision a caring community in which all older adults live with dignity and well-being, free from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.* (NYC Elder Abuse Center, nycea.org)

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**2. A Mission Statement** defines the MDT's contribution to achieving its vision and reflects the overall purpose of this relationship among allied professionals.

The mission statement provides guidance for the MDT in organizing its work and defines its function in terms that others can understand. It should include the target population or issue, as well as the area the MDT serves.

- The X County MDT exists to \_\_\_\_\_ the lives of vulnerable adults by \_\_\_\_\_.
- The X County MDT convenes allied professionals to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Our MDT serves the vulnerable adults of X County by \_\_\_\_\_.
- Example: *The NYC Elder Abuse Center aims to prevent abuse and assist people 60 and over who are abused or at risk of abuse—as well as their family members, friends, and neighbors. We do this by helping to improve how professionals, organizations, and systems respond to their needs—and by developing services to meet unmet needs.* (NYC Elder Abuse Center, nycea.org)
- Example: *To work as a team to acknowledge, respond, and stop elder abuse; to improve respect for elders through education, prevention, advocacy, and case review; and to hold tribal members responsible for their actions.* (The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Oregon)

The Vision and Mission Statements can be linked in one paragraph:

Our vision is a community where \_\_\_\_\_. To bring that vision into reality, we \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ (geographic service area).

(Source: “Developing an Elder Abuse Case Review Multidisciplinary Team in Your Community,” Department of Justice, Elder Justice Initiative, December 2015.)

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**3. A Value Statement** describes how the MDT will do its work. It guides the individual and collective behaviors of the MDT. While it need not be an exhaustive list of all desirable values, it is an opportunity to prioritize the ways in which MDT members will treat each other, as well as members of the community.

One strategy for eliciting these values is to fill in the blank on sentences such as these:

- After every MDT meeting, no matter what the purpose of the meeting might have been, we want to say that we \_\_\_\_\_.
- When MDT members interact with each other on behalf of a client, we want to ensure that we \_\_\_\_\_.

Use the collected phrases (for example, managed our time well, learned something new, treated each other with respect, considered the impact of our decisions on our clients, etc.) to identify the specific values desired.

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4. **Establishing Goals** will help the MDT remember its strategic focus. Goals can relate to HOW the MDT will organize itself to do its work, WHAT areas of services or processes will be strengthened, WHICH populations or vulnerabilities in the community warrant special attention, or WHERE the effort will be focused. In the beginning of the MDT, focusing on building the foundation of the team's work together makes sense (for example, defining expectations of each other and the purpose of time spent together).

Once the object of the goal is identified, attach a reasonable timeline to it and attach responsibilities as appropriate. Goals can be long- or short-term.

Goal 1:

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Goal 2:

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Goal 3:

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Goal 4:

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Goal 5:

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Identify resources you need to make these goals happen, whether they come from your community, your professional groups, the state, the School of Government, the U.S. Department of Justice, etc.

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# Multidisciplinary Teams: Moving from Goals to Objectives

After it establishes its desired goals, an MDT's next tasks are as follows.

1. **Brainstorm.** Clarify what progress toward a given goal would look like.
  - a. What new results or conditions would you like to begin to see (fewer of these bad results or more of these good ones)?
  - b. What would be happening if those new results or conditions were occurring?
  - c. How would things be different if those new conditions were in place or those new results were happening?
  
2. Of all the possible new conditions or results, identify a few that seem the most compelling—how ever that might be defined—and draft objective statements for them. Focus on a few strategic objectives rather than many comprehensive objectives.

One possible sentence structure to use for developing objectives:

To [Change]	[What]	By [Amount]	By [When]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase</li> <li>▪ Decrease</li> <li>▪ Find a solution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The desired result or condition</li> <li>▪ Might have to add "where" or "who" to be specific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Percent change</li> <li>▪ Number count</li> <li>▪ Might have to use best available proxy indicator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some future date</li> </ul>

How to draft the sentence:

- Identify the "what" you want to change, the desired condition you want to achieve.
- Specify how you want to change it:
  - Increase the "good" things that happen OR
  - Decrease the "bad" things that happen.
  - Try to express the change positively, if that is possible.
- Define a desired numeric change.
- Set a date.

Example:

Goal	To provide seamless services in support of vulnerable adults.
Strategy	To improve our collective effectiveness by discussing and learning from recent challenges or client situations.
Objective	At every meeting we will assess a specific case, identifying both our successes and the areas for future improvement.

## Logistical Next Steps

The following questions are intended to help the members of a newly formed group clarify its expectations of each other. Depending on the community, some questions might not be relevant, and other questions might need to be raised for clarification. You might want to discuss some of these issues during today's workshop or at future MDT meetings.

### Primary Concerns

1. What are our expectations and requirements for being a regular (as opposed to as needed) MDT member?
  - What will be the length of commitment for a member on the MDT?
  - What is the expected time commitment (frequency, length, and location of meetings)?
  - Are there any mandatory meeting requirements?
  - What outside-of-meeting-time commitments may exist?
  - What professional expertise, if any, must members have?
  - Do members have to undergo specific training?
  - Do members have an obligation to make case referrals to the MDT?
  - Do members have an obligation to participate in training and community awareness events?
  - Do members have an obligation to respond with case interventions?
  - Other:\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Who will coordinate and lead the MDT?
  - Who will be the MDT coordinator?
  - Will the coordinator or someone else lead the meetings?
  - What are the MDT coordinator's responsibilities?
  - What other leadership responsibilities need to be assigned?
  - Are there funding sources for this position? What sources might we identify?

### Other Details to Consider

- What other responsibilities need to be considered or assigned? For example:
  - Communicating with group members or external stakeholders
  - Implementing new or revised services or supports
  - Drafting and adopting a budget; financial management
  - Seeking external funding
  - Training, community awareness planning
  - Drafting and adopting policies and procedures
  - Drafting and adopting case referral forms
  - Drafting confidentiality agreements or memoranda of understanding

- Following up with members; ensuring accountability
- How will we conduct case reviews?
  - Referral process
  - Review process
  - Presentation of cases
  - Confidentiality
  - Follow-up
- Will the MDT conduct other activities besides case review? If so, what other types of activities? For example:
  - Education and training
  - Community awareness
  - Lobbying
  - Media outreach
  - Development of new interventions
- How will decisions be made within the group about its work?
- How will resources be shared or allocated?
- What data do you want to collect and what do you want to do with it?
- How will the group evaluate its success?

# Worksheet: Next Steps

*"Discipline is remembering what you want."*

The Thing to Do	Who Will Do It?	By When?