Building and Maintaining High Performing MDTs

Utah Children’s Justice Conference

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4 Articles Worth Reading About Teams

• The Secrets of Great Teamwork
  • Hass and Mortensen, HBR, June 2016
• Leading the Team You Inherit
  • Watkins, HBR, June 2016
• Wicked Problem-Solvers
  • Edmonson, HBR, June 2016
• How to Preempt Team Conflict
  • Toegel and Barsoux, HBR, June 2016

Setting the Conditions for Team Success

• MDTs face significant collaborative challenges due to the diversity of roles on the team, disparity, changes in the economic and agency environment, and frequent turnover.

• How do we create an environment that helps MDTs attain high performance despite those challenges?
Setting the Conditions for Team Success

- Compelling Vision
- Supportive Context
- Shared Mindset
- Evaluation and Adaptation

Setting a Compelling Direction

- Teams cannot be inspired if they don’t know what they’re working toward and don’t have explicit goals.

  - How would your MDT describe the tangible goals of the MDT’s intervention—
    - As it relates to the case?
    - As it relates to the child and family?

- Building alignment on an MDT requires team agreement on four basic questions:
  - What will the MDT accomplish? (Mission, goals, metrics)
  - Why should we do it? (Vision)
  - How will we do it? (Strategy)
  - Who will do what? (Protocols)
Foster an Adaptable Vision

- Deliberately design your MDT mission and vision with evolution in mind:
  - As members’ expertise is integrated over time, new possibilities come into focus;
  - Research will point to new directions;
  - Ensures MDTs will be able to tackle ever-changing challenges in the field;
- How do you invite input and celebrate change on your MDT?

Creating a Supportive Context

- Differences in information, resources, and support can diminish team effectiveness.
- How might investments in cross-discipline training, specialized training, or additional information technology contribute to a level playing field and team effectiveness?

Shared Mindset

- Role differences and turnover on teams make MDTs susceptible to problems of “us versus them” thinking and incomplete information.
- Teams may perceive themselves not as one cohesive group but as several smaller subgroups.
- How does your team orient new members to team processes and culture? Who is responsible for ensuring that collaborative processes are working?
Promote Psychological Safety

• Create a climate that invites participation, constructive critiques, and new ideas.

• Team members may have preconceived notions about colleagues in other disciplines, inhibiting them from directly addressing an issue.

• Encourage social bonding to build cross-industry trust in MDT.

• View diverse expertise as a source of solutions not conflict.

Key Elements of Trust on High-Performing Teams

• Confidence that all team members have the capabilities to do their jobs.

• Transparency in information-sharing.

• Belief that commitments will be honored.

• Psychological safety to express divergent options without fear of belittlement, criticism, or retribution.

• Security that confidences will be maintained.

• Unity around decisions once people agree to them.

Enable Knowledge Sharing

• Evaluate the timeliness of information-sharing.

• Evaluate the effectiveness of information-sharing.

• Encourage MDT members to share their thought processes when making decisions so that each component of the team understands their reasoning and is on the same page.
Adapting the Operating Model to Align with Goals and Metrics

- Realigning to Increase Effectiveness Might Include:
  - Increase/decrease members
  - Adapting information-sharing and/or data collection
  - Adjusting the types and frequency of meetings
  - Running meetings differently
  - New protocols for follow-up
- Is your operating model largely based on “the way we’ve always done it” rather than alignment to current goals?

Evaluating As a Team

- How do you know if your efforts are actually producing the desired results for kids and cases?
- Do you participate in OMS (Outcome Measurement System)? If so, how do you use these results to adapt your practice?

A Temperature Check for Enabling Conditions:

- Are caregivers satisfied with the services their children receive at the CAC and the MDT intervention as a whole?
- Do our team’s dynamics help us work well together?
- Are individual team members improving in knowledge, skill, and abilities?
- Do we have common goals for kids and cases that are clear, challenging (but not impossible), and consequential?
A Temperature Check for Enabling Conditions:

- Do we have the right number of members and the right mix of folks at the table, particularly for case review?
- Are there clear norms of behavior on the team?
- Do team members know the outcome of their collective work?
- Does the team have the training, information, and resources needed to reach its goals?

A Temperature Check for Enabling Conditions:

- Does the team celebrate success?
- Does the MDT have a strong common identity?

What would happen in your team if you had this discussion?