



Capital Area Sexual Assault Response Team (CASART)

Quarterly Report: October to December, 2023

Introduction

During this quarter, CASART continues to create a strong foundation for the team and the actions it is taking in pursuit of its goals. Engagement within CASART continues to increase, with 23 currently active members between 15 agencies.

In the spirit of maintaining accountability and creating transparency for the communities we serve, CASART will continue to release quarterly reports summarizing our activities and how these activities serve our goals and our community.

Mission Statement

CASART is a collaborative group of organizations and individuals in the Greater Lansing area who are committed to providing services, support, and advocacy related to sexual assault and survivors. CASART contributes to identifying barriers and coordinating services that address barriers for survivors of sexual assault. We promote evidence-based, trauma-informed, and survivor-centered care within all agencies and individuals we collaborate with.

CASART Goals

To better understand the work CASART is doing, it is best to first understand what the team's goals and objectives are. These goals can be broken down into four (4) categories, listed below. The goals and objectives will be included in every quarterly report as a reminder of what CASART strives for.

1. Coordinated Response: Develop a coordinated response amongst multidisciplinary partners to sexual assault within the Greater Lansing area.

Objectives:

- Build relationships between member organizations to provide holistic support to survivors and to create ease of system navigation for survivors and service providers.
- Develop and implement systems mapping of the response to sexual assault to aid in role identification and collaboration amongst member organizations.
- Strengthen the group's foundation through developing and implementing updated policies, procedures, and response protocols.

2. Community Outreach: Collaborate with community members and organizations within the Greater Lansing area to inform and engage the community on sexual assault response and available resources.

Objectives:

- Create a survivor-centered website with a self-guided, interactive, resource identification tool for use by survivors and their support systems.
- Develop and disseminate informational outreach materials on services and topics pertaining to survivors of sexual assault and their support systems.
- Develop and effectively use social media platforms to expand community awareness of member organizations and services available to survivors.
- Act as a liaison between community members and organizations and trauma-informed, survivor-centered practices and resources by inviting new partners who respond to survivors of sexual assault to join CASART.

3. Community Care: Establish a space for community care where service providers feel supported by their multidisciplinary partners in the field to mitigate the impacts of working with trauma.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement various networking events and community care opportunities for members of the group to engage in, to strengthen relationships of the team and to care for member well-being.
- Share information and resources pertaining to service providers in their work with trauma to provide community care to members. (I.e., compassion fatigue, secondary post-traumatic stress, burnout, vicarious trauma, trauma stewardship.)

4. Professional Development: Support the professional development of group members by identifying and implementing internal and external opportunities to expand on knowledge of sexual assault response. (Professional Development)

Objectives:

- Share knowledge of trainings and events related to best practices in sexual assault response with group members.
- Provide internal opportunities for professional development through the coordination of guest speakers with expertise in matters of service delivery to vulnerable populations and best practices for sexual assault response.
- Coordinate member presentations of organizational services and practices to aid in the group's shared understanding of team roles and represented systems.
- Improve the capacity of organizations that support survivors to provide affirming, equitable, and appropriate care for members of marginalized communities and identities, as well as unique intersectionalities.
- Identify and address barriers to care and gaps in services through the use of case reviews conducted quarterly.

Summary of Activities

This quarter the team has taken the time to work on goals of professional development, coordinated response, and community outreach. Through a team training on the neurobiology of trauma, members gained new knowledge or a review of knowledge that built on their capacity for supporting survivors. Meeting individually with the CASART Coordinator outside of meetings allowed members to build rapport and provide feedback on the team's structure, impacting and improving the team's collaboration in the future. Finally, publishing the quarterly report on the CASART website allows the team to maintain accountability to the community it serves and the public to understand what this team is working toward.

Bullet-Point List of Activities

- CASART had its first team training session on the neurobiology of trauma and best practices for supporting survivors.
- The team published its first quarterly report on the CASART website.
- CASART members spent December meeting individually with the CASART Coordinator to build rapport, resolve questions, and provide feedback on the team's structure.
- The Policy Review Committee met to discuss an action plan for systems mapping.
- The Spanish translations for the CASART website were completed.

- The team structure was adjusted to include more meaningful work in each meeting to support team members and foster continued engagement.

Conclusion

This quarter, CASART focused on professional development through a team training, community outreach through the publishing of its first quarterly report, and on strengthening its coordinated response to sexual assault through continued relationship-building. This next quarter, CASART will work toward professional development through another team training and agency service presentation, strengthening its coordinated response through progress in systems mapping, and begin working toward establishing community care for team members.