



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

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Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking System Task Force

Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
One Ashburton Place, Room 2133
Boston, MA 02108
January 9, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Members Attending: Undersecretary Matt Moran (Chair), Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS); Lindy Aldrich, Victim Rights Law Center; Maureen Gallagher, Jane Doe, Inc.; Liam Lowney, Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance; Susie Marshall, Middlesex County District Attorney's Office; Erica Neu, Boston Police Department Crime Laboratory; Janice Peters, Massachusetts Hospitals Association; Katia Santiago-Taylor, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center; Joan Sham, Massachusetts Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program; Kristen Sullivan, Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory

Others Attending: Doug Levine, EOPSS; Samantha Frongillo, EOPSS; Michael Bishop, EOPSS; Jenny Barron, EOPSS; Lisa Sampson, EOPSS; Stephanie McCarthy, Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance; Kevin Kosiorek, Boston Police Department Crime Laboratory; Richard Powell, Senator Cynthia Creem's Office; Karen Anderson, WCVB TV

The meeting convened at 10:04am.

A motion to approve minutes from the December 5, 2018 meeting was made by Lindy Aldrich and seconded by Kristen Sullivan. The motion passed unanimously.

Members then engaged in a substantive discussion regarding a draft bulleted list of member recommendations for consideration in a statewide sexual assault evidence kit tracking system. Chairman Moran noted that MM noted we can incorporate certain recommendations in a request for response (RFR), but we may not get 100% of our wish list from a selected vendor.

General Recommendations

The members discussed a series of general recommendations including utilizing a software as a service (SaaS) product as the best option for a tracking system.

Members also discussed the importance of being able to customize a “Help” menu as well as explanatory links throughout a system’s website.

Based on the demonstration that members observed at the December 5th meeting, in response to a question about where the policy center for a tracking system would be housed, members were informed it would be at EOPSS.

Tracking Feature Recommendations

Members engaged in a discussion about various tracking features that would preferably be incorporated into a tracking system.

A conversation transpired about stakeholders (e.g., hospitals, law enforcement agencies, crime laboratories, District Attorneys’ Offices) having the ability to customize their own portal / access screens within the tracking system.

Erica Neu from indicated that the Boston Police Department Crime Laboratory has its own internal tracking system with regard to the location of kits within the Department, so they don’t necessarily need a new system to be able to have that added feature.

Members discussed how toxicology testing would be tracked, if at all, as part of an overall tracking system. Ideas were floated including creating a distinct sub-numbered system (e.g., kit 101 and toxicology testing 101T), and potentially just sub-itemizing the toxicology aspect without tracking it. Questions were raised about how a survivor would access the toxicology testing results. Members noted that even if a vendor currently couldn’t offer an option to track this separate phase of the SAEK testing process that it should nevertheless be noted as a long-term need for the Commonwealth.

Access / Privacy and Security Recommendations

Members then talked about recommendations related to access of the system as well as those related to privacy and security.

Members were informed that patient information packets are given to survivors at hospitals when a sample for a kit is taken. Some indicated that it would be helpful to have a “How to Guide” for using the tracking system incorporated into the information packet. Such a guide should include a list of resources and contact information for groups such as BARCC for a survivor to access to receive guidance for using the tracking system.

Members also noted that it would be important to have the ability to establish controls within each organization to be able to grant different levels of access to different personnel including certain users who could modify information and certain users who would have read-only access.

Other Recommendations

There was a general consensus regarding the need for the vendor to conduct training sessions for each stakeholder group, as well as long-term funding for ongoing training as users within each stakeholder group changed.

- Ideally, each stakeholder group (e.g., folks from advocacy agencies and VAWA; DAs' Offices; police departments; the Labs; etc.) would receive individualized, tailored training.
- On-line training resources would be helpful as well.
- There should also be a category on the tracking system for training purposes only that does not impact the rest of the system.

Members talked about whether it would be useful to create an instructional website for survivors apart from the survivor portal regarding the tracking system. (e.g., what does “reported” versus “unreported” kit mean?)

There was a discussion about the need for long-term funding to make advocates available to survivors to answer all tracking system-related questions.

Finally, the group briefly re-visited the topic of what information involved in the kit testing process would be available to a survivor. The consensus of the group was that it would not be appropriate to post information specific to test results (e.g., CODIS hit) on the survivor portal within tracking system. Instead, such information would be shared with a survivor by a trained advocate who could discuss the results with the survivor and answer any questions she/he may have.

The next step will be to draft a report that explains the Task Force's recommendations. Members will have an opportunity to review the report and comment on it at the next meeting.

EOPSS will then utilize the report to draft an RFR and engaged in the state procurement process to solicit prospective bids.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30am.

The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday, January 23, 2019.