

Statewide FAST Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2010

Attendees: Terri Restelli-Deits (Solano-Napa County FAST), Connie Ruthford (Alameda County FAST), Michele McCabe (Marin County FAST), Margo Hamilton (Riverside County CARE team), Edith Chan (San Francisco County Forensic Center), Donna Anderson (San Joaquin County FAST), Chris Rodriguez (San Mateo County FAST), Valerie Smith (Santa Clara County FAST), Sandy Skezas (Santa Cruz County FAST), Kathi Topel (Stanislaus County FAST), Ronald Schuler (Stanislaus County FAST), Chris Lindholm (El Dorado County FAST), Julia Wysong (Ventura County FAST), and Lisa Nerenberg (CEJW Chair)

Julia Wysong: Ideas for our Mission? Education and resource sharing is a benefit.

Terri Restelli-Deits: Opportunities for advocacy, ways to get funding, group advocacy

Julia will coordinate the first statewide FAST, aiming for late summer / early fall 2020; Terri will coordinate the second statewide FAST (Thanks!!)

Margo Hamilton: great idea. Add to survey: how often are FAST offices manned? Helpful for referrals to other teams.

Chris Rodriguez: Could someone share a history of the coalition and its accomplishments?

Margo: It had been a gathering of those who coordinated teams. Agenda included issues, concerns, and roundtable concerns. Introductions included makeup of teams. Discussion was held on sustainability, and other areas of concerns. Annually, but very loose timing. Mostly the goal was offering support for each other.

Julia: Advocacy focuses could bring improvements to what we're able to do and make good use of the network.

Margo: back in the day, people were much challenged, just working to keep heads above water. This is why timing wasn't strict. Leadership is necessary. Kim and Joan were great, most others just trying to keep up.

Valerie Smith: fascinating—worked at APS since 1999. Now supervising FAST since 2006. Never had any funding! Fascinated that some have gotten funding. Collaborative between APS, police chief, DA, etc.

Lisa Nerenberg: Thanks for Julia's efforts. Back ground on the CEJW. Got started officially in October 2009, but was loosely working prior. Funding from Archstone EANI, who encouraged

collaboration between projects. One group began talking about advocacy, same issues began coming up, and the group was very passionate and wanted to keep the dialogue moving. Now we have been meeting for 2.5 years. Tracks issues, define and memorialized so they wouldn't be forgotten. Concerns covered a broad spectrum. Noticed opportunities to present these concerns to policy-makers. CA Dept of Aging requested testimony for its 5 year plan, mental health services. The Idea: creation of a group for advocacy to make a true impact, more proactive and sustained. Received funding from Archstone to develop a plan for advocacy. 18 month period—end of CY 2010. Lisa works 10 hours a week, Mary Counihan and Krista Brown works for one day a week. Tasks: develop a blueprint for the state for areas that need work, and advice on how to help them. How to improve state's response to elder abuse. Original group became the steering committee. Last month (April): Senior Summit in SF. Effort to take things a step further, expanding membership to other groups. Include professional associations. Protective Services Operations Committee (PSOC) and Statewide Long-Term Care Operations Committee (LTCOP's), etc. 90 attendees, half are Archstone grantees, other were reps from other advocacy groups.

4 tracts / topic areas: (1) justice systems civil and criminal, issues and problems, and how systems might work better together, for example elder courts creating a "one stop shop"; (2) Financial Abuse (FA): looking at new forms of FA (mass marketing fraud, etc), (3) Reporting concerns, problems in jurisdiction: Law Enforcement (LE) / APS / LTCO, note recent report commissioned by state assembly showing problems with LTCO difficulty in meeting obligations. (4) Safeguarding the Safety Net, recognition that to offer protection, need to work with long term care network, radical cutbacks places this system at risk, working on way to build safeguards into areas of LTC system. Ex: policy in senior centers allowing predators to infiltrate senior attendees, shows need to work more closely with these networks to protect seniors early on.

Lots of enthusiasm from Summit, small groups reported and made commitments to recommendations and projects. Will be posting lists of commitments on the wiki site (user friendly website) to show range of ideas that surfaced. POA, strengthen these. Private attorneys agreed to look at the capacity declaration. Physicians not knowing how to fill out the forms. Financial Capacity. VOCA- victims of crime act, access funding for victims of financial abuse. Need for mental health services for victims of crime, help with the devastating impact of financial crime. VOCA funds for FA victims need to be set as a state priority, already allowed by the Feds. VOCA funds pulled from white collar criminals, pot bigger than ever. Huba making Elder Abuse (EA) tweets, Social Worker (SW) created financial abuse FB page, Iris Freeman statewide coalition looking at FA in LTC institutions—jurisdictional issues.

This is the status—now wants to hear from group on issues we're hearing, what you would like to say.

Connie Ruthford (APS / Pub Guardian / FAST coordinator): problem in resolution--problem with cooperation from Banks. Trying to focus on working with banks, have a few who are

cooperating but many still who aren't. Looking into CFCIS (CA financial crimes investigation association) membership, \$50, meeting would be a good source of bank contacts.

www.cfcia.net

Lisa: good resource. Are banks reporting at all?

Connie: no, they aren't. Got a fine put on Citibank for not reporting. \$87,000 in cash given to elderly woman and abuser. Report placed, when bank account involved, need cooperation from Bank investigators. APS cannot find a bank contact....this is a problem. Have a wells Fargo contact on team who does reverse mortgages. Trying to get access to information to substantiate abuse allegations.

Chris: used to belong to that group, international association of federal crime investigators. www.iafci.org better website, also has meetings. Can give information of fraud person at banks or insurance companies. Much better resource.

Chris Lindholm: same problems with capacity declarations—doctors don't fill out correctly, if at all, hard to understand by SW. Added a page: differentiate between ability to get into financial contract and / or administer own medical consent. Additional page: dementia? When was it diagnosed? Can they make financial decisions? Do they know the consequences of the financial decisions? Useful for determining the date of loss of capacity in correlation with alleged abuse events.

Lisa: capacity a big issue, Daniel Marson developed tools for measuring financial capacity. Loosing ability to manage money is a precursor to loss of capacity. Group formed at summit to look at tool to measure capacity. Led by Erika Falk to develop a capacity assessment to reflect this info.

Ron Schuler: dementia needs to be diagnosed by doctor? This is the DA's understanding.

Lisa: Translation of clinical capacity issues into legal terms. Visit wiki site if you want to get involved.

Valerie: Question on capacity declaration...

Lisa: a few groups got them to work together, doing work with physicians (Mosqueda with UCI), possibly adding questions to capacity declaration.

Ron: questions from two pages

Alameda County did the same thing, added to capacity declaration

Probate conservatorship referral. Will email stuff to Julia to distribute to team

Lisa to Michelle McCabe: section in probate code to freeze assets, 2900. Who's using it?

Michelle: assumes in (?) county they're using it. Marin very conservative. Everyone on team is a county volunteer. Everything new to me—new FAST team. After 25 years, depends on where the public guardian located, they're able to use 2900. Also depends on cooperation between counties. In collaborative counties, it gets used.

Connie: Alameda County uses it for sure, especially in potential conservatorship cases. Problem is that there is undue influence going on, but still have capacity to make own decisions. Can't use conservatorship, can sometimes get banks to freeze assets?

Michelle: also allows them to get information. Used a lot in Marin, court proceedings, conservatorship didn't go through.

Connie: as long as intent to file conservatorship, can use 2900

Valerie: deadline for 2900? APS can try to get records or trust documents, as soon as papers together can file conservatorship. 14 day window. Same in other counties?

Lisa: noticing disparities in how counties are interpreting laws and using them. Trying to collect information on what's happening; who is using what tools and how.

Edith Chan: share SF experience. PG assists in 2900, also depends on the intention to file conservatorship, does this carefully to show if they are alone or have family, and intention to file for conservatorship. In terms of working with banks, often they refer cases to APS, will put account on hold for 10 days pending APS investigation. Will notify APS and other banks when other banks are accessed. Have relationship with bank investigators.

Lisa: Other issues, types of crimes that have been rising?

Margo: Sweepstake frauds are on the rise. CARE does community education on financial abuse, and hands on advocacy, all within the APS umbrella, does ID theft, stranger frauds, so APS SW doesn't have to. Lots of money being given by seniors to fraudsters, believing that they will receive winnings. 100K debt. They call 2, 3, sometimes 4 times a day. APS and LE have visited. Greatest challenge. Woman in foreclosure can't pay bills, comparable to addiction. Multiple cases in Riverside county, very little resolution or ability to intervene. Usually don't hear from them until it's too late.

Connie: same going on, increase over the last 6 months.

Margo: victim is indignant, doesn't return calls. Often victims would pass declarations. Ways to intervene?

Ron: FAST team includes sheriffs department has senior volunteer organization that help sheriff with duties you don't have to be a deputy to perform. Have developed a computerized scam data base—county can track scams. Hotline the elders can call to confirm if it's a scam or not. No one else is keeping this kind of data base, accessible to other counties. Talked at FAST meeting about going to senior residences to show what scams are and what to do when you get them. Email address scams@mo.com to forward scams to and research source and hopefully close account.

Margo: most of these services: CARE team does this. We have a hard time finding out who the perpetrators are. As a last resort, have warned victims that it's illegal to participate in scams and that money might be going to terrorists or drug traffickers warn that money could be traced back. Undue influence the other way. Interesting to see if it works. Elders don't want to cross law enforcement, hopefully this tactic connects with civic mindedness.

Lisa: Interested in what message goes out. Many victims feel that it's their own fault. Important to share message that callers are criminals and dangerous.

Margo: It's a fine line—CARE doesn't shame the victim, tells them it's not their fault, just illuminating potential use for the money they give away. Most of case been failures, will track results of this technique.

Connie: at last meeting, talking about the topic international scams. Scams operators more sophisticated than banks. Use micro ink, Bank can't detect that it's false. Use amounts that banks will clear without back up. Starting this year, banks fielding this info into a database. Checks look real.

? : pass them out at senior forum. Message: crooks are professionals, spend all day honing in their skill and winning the war. Trying to arm seniors with information. One crook actually called APS for welfare check because victim wouldn't call. Seniors will call the perpetrator and give new phone number after they've been

Lisa: Is anyone aware of research on this topic?

Valerie: APS knocks on door, how does an elder know this is true, know who the scammer is and isn't? Very frustrating. LE has been a great partner to confirm. It's a battle to try and get them to change. Same with hoarding and self-neglect.

Margo: Cases get closed when the coordinator has done everything, time challenge.

Valerie: Have had international lottery scams. Perpetrators are clever. Right after 911, money was coming from Canada but was tainted with anthrax. Use current events. Used patriot act to

tell them that they would get money. Hate to hear when people blame the victim's greed because scammers are so manipulative.

Lisa: research supports subtle cognitive difficulties....

?: see similar personality traits, gambling addiction, 100 cases the victim had a history of addiction.

Valerie: many people who don't have those issues who fall victim to these scams. Prestigious careers, affluent people. Also affects these people.

?: perpetrators are experts, very sophisticated techniques.

Lisa: need for mental health services for those who have been victimized.

Chris: Try to reason with victims. They didn't participate, how can they win?

?: in cases the perpetrators convince them that they've won. A victim kept going to Safeway to get party balloons because she was sure that she won. Also puts the fear into the victim to not tell LE or APS or they will take the money.

Lisa: Any other issues?

Sandy Skezas: question. Recently had a new influx of law enforcement paying attention to cases of missing seniors. FAST working well with the help of APS social workers. Resource challenges, been very successful. Had anyone heard about influx of money from the elder justice act? PG county council, DA APS on the FAST, great prosecution, has anyone heard anything?

Lisa: The bill passed, but no appropriation. Now a movement from the CA commission on aging to get the money appropriated—this comes with challenges. Issue with getting the money appropriated. Advocacy effort: write to CA lawmakers to support appropriation.

Connie: RE: other problems. Law enforcement. Police want to say every FA case is civil and won't investigate. Rotate police so if there is acknowledgement of EA as an issue,

Chris: DA, POST has no elder abuse training. No training on how to prove elder financial abuse. Very complicated, they won't over view it. Idea: FAST coalition could approach POST to put together a more comprehensive training on FA. Law enforcement would pay more attention. Not a civil problem it's a crime. HUGE Help. Peace Officer Standard Training (POST)

They know CPS stuff really well, but don't know adult abuse. Could draw on the resources of the FAST coalition

?: need to improve LE's view of APS, similar to how they respect CPS. Individual officers rotate positions, it's hard to keep up with and re-train. Once someone gets it, they move on.

Chris: POST would be a way to get them trained in the beginning.

Margo: consistency is the key. Riverside County PowerPoint on the internet on EA training for detectives. Not detailed enough. Good to get LE to make touch with MDT on FA cases. Getting feedback and follow up from CARE team. Briefing trainings twice a year in the county. Reports of contractor fraud. Co-locating is good to do with any station.

Lisa: can you share your training materials?

Margo: pulls in the DA to do this. Cops listen to the DA. Lets the DA handle the issues, has more credibility

Connie: our DA is a member of the FAST, may have materials.

Margo: have more than one DA—use a cheat sheet. Also has a flyer for patrol officer posse box with info on PC 368 on it.

Lisa: will send link to wiki site, commitments welcome.