National EA MDT TTA Center

Resource Brief | E-MDT Case Tracking

Why focus on case tracking?

Case tracking is the process of using data to track the status and completion of case activities. These activities may include case recommendations, the responsible person or agency, and the estimated completion date. Case tracking allows coordinators to:

1. View and follow up on action items related to each case.
2. Track tasks and adapt action items on tasks that cannot be completed.

Case Tracking Example

Below is an example of case recommendations tracked using Excel*. This hypothetical case is “Ms. R,” who is case ID number 110. Ms. R’s case was presented at a meeting held on 11/8/2022, where four recommendations were made, so four rows describe each recommendation.

- Column C describes the action to be taken
- Column D indicates who is responsible. In this example, there is a date when the E-MDT coordinator can follow up
- Column F captures the projected completion date
- Column G is the date the activity was completed
- Column H allows a description of results arising from following up on the recommendation
- Column I captures the next steps.

*Microsoft Excel is purely for illustration purposes and should not be seen as an endorsement of the software. There is other similar software available for use.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Case ID**	**Date presented**	**Reccomendation**	**Responsible person**	**Follow up date**	**Due date**
2	110	11/8/2022	Review financial statements	Financial Accountant	11/15/2022	11/22/2022
3	110	11/8/2022	Enroll Ms. R in low-income benefits	APS	11/15/2022	11/22/2022
4	110	11/8/2022	Discuss money management options with Ms. R	APS	11/15/2022	11/22/2022
5	110	11/8/2022	Arrange social connectivity outside the home	APS	11/15/2022	11/22/2022

	G	H	I
1	**Completed**	**Findings/Results**	**Next steps**
2	11/22/2022	Evidence of exploitation	Submit report to prosecutor
3		Ms. R declined benefits	
4	11/15/2022	Automatic bill-pay set up	Follow up with Ms. R - is it working?
5	11/22/2022	Made appointment for Ms. R at the senior center	Follow up with Ms. R - was there anything of interest?

To track cases, "filter" and "sort" capabilities could be used to show only those recommendations within a specific date range. The "sort" function can ensure that entries with earlier completion dates are higher up on the list. Using the same techniques, a coordinator can use the filter to show only over-due but not completed cases. This process can be used to highlight items for a follow up case review discussion.

Here is an online tutorial for using data filters in excel: https://www.excel-easy.com/data-analysis/filter.html

Distinguishing "Clients" from "Cases"

If an E-MDT reviews victim cases repeatedly, collecting data on the client separately from the case details is good practice.

Client	Case
Information that is consistent and not likely to change between case reviews, such as name, gender, ethnicity/race, and date of birth.	Information pertaining to circumstances of abuse being reviewed by the team, such as the relationship with the suspected abuser, the forms of abuse confirmed or suspected, their cohabitation status, the relationship history, and the agencies involved.
Other variables may change, such as address and contact information, but these details are best associated with the client rather than the case because they are details about the person.	Once your E-MDT has closed the case, if the victim returns to the E-MDT as a new case, a new record should be created with the new case scenario. This allows you to track "frequent fliers" and learn more about patterns of usage in your E-MDT.

The benefits of collecting case and client data separately are avoiding duplicate data entry and effectively tracking repeat referrals for E-MDT case review. Also, distinguishing "clients" from "cases" will allow you to track when E-MDT cases are closed for evaluation purposes and for tracking the volume of case completion.

Cultural and Racial Equity Considerations

Although there are standard data that a funder will expect summarized in reports, it is just as important to collect data that accurately represents the community the team serves and the services provided. For example, the community might include a large proportion of Asian-American community members. While "Asian" is a race category on your funder's report, there are many, many countries that are grouped as “Asian,” and each has their own distinct culture and customs. Therefore, it may also be valuable for the data to capture the country of origin or family origin. This will help a coordinator learn about different groups within their community and their distinct differences so that a coordinator can tailor the services and approach of an E-MDT accordingly.

To ensure an E-MDT meets the needs of victims/clients equitably, it is essential to collect data allowing a coordinator to compare sub-groups, such as race, gender, or disability status. To do this, each characteristic can be a separate data variable and captured in a column of the excel data. Here is an example of variable categories for race, gender, cognitive status, and physical functioning:

- **Race** – White, Black, or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- **Gender** – female, male, none of these
- **Ethnicity** – Hispanic, non-Hispanic
- **Cognitive Status** – Intact, mild impairment, moderate impairment, severe impairment
- **Physical Functioning** – Intact, mild impairment, moderate impairment, severe impairment)
- **Other Special Classification** – deaf, homeless, veteran, disabled

Remember that if any variable had multiple categories selected, it would make more sense to create separate columns for each category (see the example for abuse types above). A coordinator may also consider including an “Other” category for variables and an additional variable column for a text explanation or specification.

- Collecting data on the characteristics of the victims/clients whose cases are reviewed allows a coordinator to assess differences in service provision, interventions, and outcomes across groups. It is also essential to be aware of the service population in the area to ensure that the E-MDT is connecting with all groups that need help. For example, if 40% of the older people in the region are African-American, expect to see a similar proportion in the casework. If significantly more or fewer African-American older adults are being served, a coordinator can start learning about barriers to services or reasons for over-saturation.

Conclusion

Data collection systems are not just for evaluating an E-MDT; they can also enable case tracking. Evaluation results in an assessment of how the program is working overall, and tracking is the process of using data to track the status and completion of case activities. Implementing a data collection system must include variables representing the elements a coordinator plans to track, such as case recommendations, the responsible person or agency, and the estimated completion date.There are also additional supports in the elder justice field that coordinators can rely on, including peer leadership discussion platforms and national programs such as the National Elder Abuse MDT Training and Technical Assistance Center.

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Julia Martinez works with the National Center to evaluate the impact the center has on E-MDT grantees' operations and development. Julia is a research associate at the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine Department of Family Medicine, and has 15 years' experience facilitating, participating in, and evaluating E-MDTs. The content for this brief is drawn from Julia’s insights as a practitioner and researcher.

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