**Addendum H**

**Children’s Advocacy Center of Kennebec and Somerset Counties Intake/Pre-Interview/Interview and Post Interview Protocol**

* The Children’s Advocacy Center of Kennebec and Somerset Counties will serve children from the ages of four through 18 and, when deemed appropriate by referring agencies, younger children or older individuals with developmental limitations that align with this age group.
* Forensic Interviews will only be conducted by MDT members who have documentation of satisfactory completion of a nationally recognized, research and evidence based training that includes a child development component.
* At this time, referrals will only come to the CAC from either DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services) or Law Enforcement.
* The Family Services Coordinator or CAC designee will complete a minimum fact information form when the referral comes to the CAC and will then schedule the CAC interview with the appropriate MDT partners, the forensic interviewer and any interpreter services within the 72 hour timeline. At a minimum the Family Services Coordinator will contact the District Attorney’s Office, law enforcement and DHHS.
* The Family Services Coordinator will contact the non-offending caregiver to confirm the interview time and ask about any special considerations for the child and/or non-offending caregiver (including need for interpreter or transportation services, and cultural considerations).
* Every effort will be made by the CAC and the referring agent to ensure that the alleged offender is not accompanying the child to the interview nor present during the visit to the CAC.
* If interpreter services are needed, the referent will be responsible for ensuring they are in place for the child and non-offending caregiver throughout the process of the investigation per the referring agency’s policies. The referent will also be responsible for any financial obligations associated with the interpreter services.
* If transportation services are needed, the Family Services Coordinator will make every effort to make arrangements with KVCAP Transportation Services. In circumstances where KVCAP is not able to provide transportation, the referent will be responsible for making transportation arrangements for the child and non-offending caregiver. If KVCAP is not available and alternative arrangements have been made, the referent is also responsible for any financial obligations associated with the transportation services.
* The interview will be conducted by the CAC forensic interviewer unless there is a conflict of interest or other extenuating circumstances. If such circumstances exist, another trained interviewer will be selected to conduct the interview by the MDT members involved in the case.
* Prior to the child interview, there will be a pre-interview meeting, in which, all MDT partners involved in the case participate, when possible. The purpose of the pre interview meeting is to inform partners, including the forensic interviewer, about information relevant to the case. The information shared may include, but is not limited to: relevant history with MDT partners, nature of disclosure, special consideration (including interpreter services and cultural considerations) for the child and an exploration of alternative hypotheses. This is also an opportunity for the MDT partners to inform the forensic interviewer about other concerns that they would like addressed during the interview, in order to minimize the likelihood that the child will have to be interviewed again.
* The Family Services Coordinator will meet the family in the lobby of MaineGeneral’s Seton Campus. The Family Services Coordinator will escort the family to the waiting area of the CACKSC. The Family Services Coordinator will have the non-offending caregiver sign the Consent to Record and answer any questions that the child or the non-offending caregiver may have at that time.
* Prior to the child interview, the non-offending caregiver will be invited to meet the MDT members and to see the CAC space. This is also an opportunity for the non-offending caregiver to ask questions about the process and for the MDT members to gather additional information that may be helpful for the interview and/or investigation.
* Only MDT members involved in the case may witness the forensic interview. This may include, but is not limited to: DHHS, Law Enforcement, Prosecution, mental health providers and medical providers. Non offending parents/caregivers will not be allowed to witness the forensic interview as it takes place at the CAC.
* The forensic interview will be conducted in a child centered, legally sound, neutral and fact finding manner. See Attached.
* During the time the child is being interviewed, the Family Services Coordinator or CAC designee will accompany the non-offending caregiver. The Family Services will provide the non-offending caregiver with information including, but not limited to: the process at the CAC, referrals to medical, mental health or confidential support/advocacy services, the Maine Crime Victim’s Compensation program and other social services or agencies that may be relevant. The Family Services Coordinator or CAC designee with also ask if there are cultural/developmental considerations with regards to any referrals made by the CAC.
* The Family Services Coordinator or CAC designee will abide by all Mandated Reporting Laws while accompanying the non-offending caregiver.
* Once the forensic interviewer has completed their portion of the interview they will request that the MDT members observing the interview provide them with additional questions related to their specific disciplines. The additional questions will be communicated to the forensic interviewer, in writing, by one of the team members observing the interview.
* Immediately following the forensic interview the MDT team will meet to discuss follow up actions, including a recommendation for a medical evaluation at the Spruwink Child Abuse Clinic, and decide on what information will be shared with the non offending caregiver.
* Following the MDT post interview meeting the MDT will invite the non offending caregiver to share additional information relevant to the case. The non offending caregiver will also be provided with an appropriate amount of information gathered during the interview and an opportunity to ask questions. The amount of information that will be shared will be decided by the MDT team, taking into consideration the safety of the child and the integrity of the investigation.
* The Family Services Coordinator or CAC designee will accompany the child while the non offending caregiver participates in the post interview meeting.
* The Family Services Coordinator or CAC designee will abide by all Mandated Reporting Laws while accompanying the child.
* The DVD of the forensic interview will be given to the lead investigator, either a DHHS representative or Law Enforcement agent, of the case by the forensic interviewer at the end of the forensic interview. No copies of the recorded forensic interview will be kept at the CAC site or in the possession of CAC or SAC&SC staff members once the interview has concluded.
* The CAC will only keep records of the initial intake information acquired at the time of the referral, releases, consent to record, consent to use the DVD for training purposes, and follow up referral forms for appropriate agencies.
* The Family Services Coordinator will make referrals (when necessary and appropriate) to outside MDT partner agencies to assist the non offending caregiver and /or the client of the CAC in their future healing. These referrals will be guided by the needs disclosed by the non offending parent/caregiver and/or child of the CAC at the time of the interview.
* The CAC will be responsible for tracking each case and follow up plans for the child and non offending parent/caregiver. The Family Services Coordinator will provide a follow up phone call with the non offending caregiver at one week and one month post interview.
* All trained forensic interviewers will participate in quarterly peer reviews and will have opportunities for ongoing trainings that may include, but are not limited to: workshops or conferences, reading current research and literature on forensic interviewing, interviewing children about non-abuse related topics, observation of interviews and ongoing supervision.
* The CAC will be responsible for tracking each case from the beginning through final disposition and follow up plans as it relates specifically to the CAC case for the child and non offending parent/caregiver. The Family Services Coordinator is not a case manager or providing clinical support, this role purely serves as a coordinator for the scheduling of the forensic interview, support during the interview process and for the purposes of referrals to MDT partners. The Family Services Coordinator will provide a follow up phone call with the non offending caregiver at one week and one month post interview.