



Community Action Team (CAT) Role

There is great variety in the manner in which CAT's are constructed, but the ongoing role of the CAT is to:

- Develop new and creative solutions to improve services and resources for families from the recommendations made by the case review team
- Enhance the credibility and visibility of issues related to women, infants and families within the broader community by informing the community about the need for these actions through presentations, media events and written reports
- Work with the community to implement interventions to improve services and resources
- Determine if the needs of the community are changing over time (periodically fed by the recent team finding of the CRT) and decide which interventions should be added or altered to meet them
- Safeguard successful systems changes initiated by FIMR that have been implemented from being discontinued in the future

In the course of their work, the CAT may respond to issues that are broad or politically complex, that change over time, and that require substantial time and resources to implement change.

FIMR Community Action Team Sponsor

Every successful FIMR CAT has to have a core sponsoring organization that will choose the team members, chair the meetings, and encourage team action with enthusiasm. For FIMR programs, the most common sponsor is the local health department. Others sponsors include perinatal consortia and community coalitions. A few include hospitals, universities, as well.

Community Action Team Work Plan

Goals: The goals of the community action team (CAT) are to 1) receive the findings and the recommendations from the case review team; and 2) develop an action plan based on those recommendations and implement the actions. The overall goal of the action plan should be to enhance the health and well-being of women, infants and families in your community by improving the resources and services systems available to them.

Purpose: The CAT is composed of two types of members: those who have the political will and fiscal resources to create large-scale systems change, and those who can define a community perspective on how best to create the desired change in the community. The process of the CAT should include:

1. Prioritizing recommendations. Based on the findings and recommendations presented by the case review team and review of vital statistics data, what are the overarching needs present in the community? Are there any needs particular to one or only a few cases that are so pressing they must be addressed at once?
2. Developing an action plan. How can the recommendations be addressed? What organizations represented at the CAT have jurisdictions over these issues? What issues are outside the jurisdiction of the entities present? Who else should be involved?
3. Setting a time frame. Action time frames may be short term (less than one year) or long term (more than one year)
4. Maintaining some type of work plan for action. Each year selected delegate(s) from the CAT should volunteer to complete and update the action plans as they develop.
5. Monitoring progress. Team members report to the team on progress of implementing actions at each quarterly meeting
6. Informing the larger community about the need for action and FIMR successes. When and how will the community hear about the plan for improvement?
7. Keep track of successful ongoing FIMR systems changes to see that they are sustained, as needed
8. Determining if the community's needs are changing over time and deciding which actions should be added or altered to meet them. How do current findings build on past activities? Are the community's needs changing? Or are old problems recurring?