ROSC Resource- Meeting Facilitation

ROSC teams are expected to hold monthly meetings that engage people from the 15 sectors that can contribute to recovery support collaboration. The 15 sectors represent key community partners and perspectives that support prevention, treatment, recovery, and overall community well-being.

Meetings may be held in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format. Successful meetings provide opportunities for connection, education, discussion, and action related to substance use and mental health prevention, treatment, recovery, and support.

Elements of a Successful Meeting

1. Purpose
Every meeting should have a clear purpose and desired outcome. The purpose is to bring community partners together to identify needs, share resources, strengthen collaboration, and support community recovery.

2. Participants
Consider who needs to be involved to accomplish the meeting purpose. Provide opportunities for representatives from the 15 sectors to participate and include people with lived experience (PLE) whenever possible. When helpful, briefly identify which sectors are currently represented and which perspectives may need additional outreach.

3. Structure
Meetings can use a variety of formats and activities, including:

- Guest speakers from prevention, treatment, recovery, or community-service organizations
- PLE sharing experiences and perspectives
- Educational presentations, videos, trainings, or demonstrations
- Naloxone and risk reduction education
- Panel discussions
- Brainstorming and facilitated discussions
- Small-group or breakout activities

As participation grows, committees or workgroups may be established to address specific community needs, such as housing, transportation, drug court/deflection, education and prevention, or awareness activities.

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4. Location and Time
For in-person meetings, select a neutral, accessible location. Meetings may be 1, 1.5, or 2 hours depending on the purpose and activities. Establishing a consistent schedule, such as the second Tuesday of each month, can help participants plan ahead. Consider accessibility needs for in-person, virtual, and hybrid participants.

5. Responsibilities
Assign meeting responsibilities in advance, such as:

- Facilitator or meeting leader
- Note taker
- Host or greeter
- Technology support
- Speaker or presenter

Note: ROSC partners may provide refreshments when appropriate. ROSC grant funds should not be used for refreshments unless specifically permitted by applicable grant requirements.

6. Agenda
An agenda establishes the meeting's purpose, objectives, and direction. Whenever possible, distribute it approximately three to seven days in advance so participants can prepare and identify information they want to contribute.

Build time into the agenda to confirm next steps, identify who is responsible, and determine when follow-up will occur.

7. Outreach
Use multiple communication methods to encourage participation, including:

- Email and calendar invitations
- Meeting reminders
- ROSC social media
- Community flyers
- Partner newsletters, websites, and communication channels

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Effective Facilitation

Effective facilitation means guiding the conversation rather than dominating it. The facilitator creates an inclusive environment, encourages participation, keeps discussion connected to the meeting purpose, and helps the group move toward meaningful action.

Effective facilitators:

- Welcome participants and establish an inclusive tone.
- Invite different sectors and perspectives to contribute.
- Ask questions that identify community needs, concerns, and ideas.
- Respectfully navigate differences of opinion.
- Redirect conversations that move significantly off topic.
- Watch for confusion, disengagement, or participants needing additional explanation.
- Keep the meeting moving while allowing adequate discussion time.
- Follow the agenda while remaining flexible when productive discussion requires additional time.
- Summarize decisions, action steps, responsibilities, and deadlines before moving on.
- Document follow-up items and share them with participants after the meeting.
- Communicate clearly and avoid distracting habits that interfere with understanding.

The goal is not simply to complete the agenda. The goal is to create meaningful connections, shared understanding, collaboration, and progress toward community recovery.

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