

Team Around Me

Information for services and FAQs

“ It was easy to follow and allowed the client to be in control. The meeting started by acknowledging the client’s achievement and she was overwhelmed by how far she had come as she generally suffers with low self-esteem. The meeting was extremely uplifting. ”

(Feedback from Stakeholder)

What is Team Around Me?

Team Around Me (TAM) is a model for holding case conferences or multi-agency meetings for people who have support and/or care needs, which truly puts the person at the centre of their own support. Team Around Me has been designed for people experiencing multiple disadvantage – a combination of social problems such as homelessness, substance use, mental ill health which are co-occurring (all experienced at once) and mutually reinforcing (one issue makes the other worse and so on). People in this situation often have many different professionals, from different services and sectors, involved in their support – but without an agreed approach to communication, shared support planning and goal setting, people can feel confused about what is available to them, and interventions can duplicate each other or not happen at all.

The Team Around Me structure can be used for any meeting where professionals need to come together to support someone who has care and/or support needs. Different services call these meetings different things – multi-agency meetings, case conferences, professionals meetings, MDT meetings - and meetings often don’t have consistent structures or agendas. TAM provides a clear, consistent, strengths based, trauma informed and co-produced way to hold any of these meetings, in any circumstance.

Who is Team Around Me for?

Team Around Me can be used for and with any person who has care and/or support needs, who has different professionals and services involved in their support. Any service in any sector can use TAM - it is used by homelessness services, substance use services, Adult Social Care teams, domestic abuse services, and health services, for example.



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How often should a Team Around Me meeting be called?

This is up to the person, the lead professional, the other agencies involved, and the level of risk/need. It may be that one or two meetings are enough to overcome an obstacle and for a person to move forward and feel safe, and following that, they are able to engage effectively with a range of support services without those services coming together. For people who are finding engagement difficult and/or who remain in high-risk situations, it may be appropriate to hold Team Around Me meetings regularly, on an ongoing basis. Team Around Me meetings can also be held to review and celebrate progress if the person wants this – they do not need to be problem/solution focused. Frequency should be decided on a case-by-case, needs-led basis.

What about MARAC/Safeguarding?

MARAC and/or Safeguarding referrals should always be the first response if you are concerned about a person experiencing any form of abuse, but in some cases, people may also benefit from a TAM or ongoing TAMs alongside and in addition to these frameworks.

Who should attend?

The TAM framework can be used for any meeting where services come together to talk about a someone's support – they can be big 'case conference' meetings if that is necessary, or they can be smaller meetings to catch up, celebrate progress and plan next steps. A TAM meeting could be just the individual, their hostel worker, and their substance use worker, for example. There is no need to invite lots of people for the sake of it – only invite people who have current, meaningful connection with the person. The person may also want someone from their personal network to attend, such as a friend or family member.

What if the client can't or won't identify a lead professional?

If a person can't or won't identify a lead professional, for example, if they are very disengaged from all services, then the professional with the most contact with the person can call a Team Around Me meeting on their behalf.



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What about consent?

The lead professional, regardless of their agency affiliation, can only proceed with a Team Around Me meeting with the person's consent. In most cases, the person will already be engaged with the lead agency and will have signed a consent form enabling the sharing of information with other relevant agencies. If this is not the case, consent should be obtained initially before multi-agency working can occur.

Will it take up a lot of time?

No! TAM is designed to be simple and easy to use, with minutes that can consist of action-focused bullet points outlining what needs to happen next. TAM is intended for use only for and with people who need a multi-agency response. There is no need to hold TAMs plus professionals meetings plus case conferences - the TAM framework can be used for any of these meeting.

What if a system challenge/blockage cannot be overcome despite meetings?

Capturing feedback on barriers and blockages services encounter is a valuable part of the TAM process. If you can't resolve a challenge within the meeting, capture it and reflect it back to your commissioners and system leaders. Different areas will have different localised processes for doing this. By doing so, you are ensuring that the experiences of services and the people you support are captured and used to inform important funding and commissioning decisions in the future.



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