



Community Advisory Boards

Development & Function

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD?

A community advisory board (CAB) is a group of individuals who are brought together to guide, respond to, and make recommendations for projects that influence a community. Each CAB member brings unique knowledge and skills to the CAB.

The **mission** of the CAB is to identify problems, develop solutions, and assist, where possible, in the implementation of programs that address community problems. CABs are generally formed of people who are concerned about a community problem and may be working together to help address the problem.

CAB ROLES



Engage in both short and long-term planning of the project.



Contribute to discussions on planning and implementation.



Review and assess the project's performance.



Inform the community about the project, focusing on short- and long-term solutions.

CAB FORMATION & CHARACTERISTICS



- » Create a CAB (or capitalize on an existing CAB).
- » Select CAB members from the geographic area of the data collection site.
- » Composition of CAB members needs to represent those with vested interest in the health topic of research as this will impact engagement. For example, a research team examining care coordination among cancer survivors may want to recruit cancer survivors, caregivers, clinicians, and state or regional public health representatives.
- » Consider including diverse racial/ethnic representation.

CAB MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

CAB members have responsibilities to meet as part of their involvement in the CAB.

- » **Attend** all meetings if possible. When unable to attend, try to send an alternate.
- » **Listen** actively to the ideas and opinions expressed by CAB members, engage in constructive discussion, and be open to alternative plans.
- » **Review** and respond to information.
- » **Represent** constituencies, acknowledging and drawing on the diversity of opinions represented.
- » **Inform** community members about the process and the decisions being made. If there is dissension or concern in the community, bring those back to a CAB meeting.
- » **Commit** to working together—a successful plan depends on a good faith effort from all members.

CHAIR/CO-CHAIRS RESPONSIBILITIES

- » Lead and facilitate the CAB meeting and communication
- » Serve as a local ambassador to the project
- » Participate in events organized by the project



CAB FUNCTION



- » The CAB meets regularly throughout the research process, more frequently in the earlier years (bi-monthly) to bring members up-to-speed on the subject matter.
- » The meeting should be an opportunity for the CAB to celebrate success, review progress, and provide input on the study.
- » CAB meetings can be leveraged to build the CAB's capacity to participate in participatory approach. For example, if a CAB is advising a clinical trial and CAB members are not versed in clinical trial, the CAB meetings could cover education on this topic, human subject protection, and challenges that research teams experience during clinical trials.
- » The CAB can also provide specific suggestions about the study protocol, community facing materials, recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies, and how to disseminate research information and results.

CAB ORGANIZATION GUIDELINES



Good Communication

Positive communication skills are an asset to any group planning effort. Open communication, creative collaboration, and the freedom to suggest ideas or express questions will create a positive and productive environment.



Motivation

Keeping interest high, messages fresh and maintaining awareness is key to sustaining a CAB. CAB members should attend meetings and be the voice of the project in the community. They should be willing to share ideas and concerns.



Networking

Delivering the project goals and objectives to other community members involves working with others. CAB members should be comfortable in networking with others in the community. This is especially important in securing support for project activities.

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SIZE OF THE CAB

There is no limit to a size of the CAB, but fewer than six may be too small to capture heterogeneity of voices, while more than 20 may be too big for engage in meaningful discussions.



EFFORTS & COSTS

- » 5-10% FTE for a faculty member for overall mentorship on CAB engagement, advise the study on the creation and function of the CAB, train a research coordinator on how to recruit and engage the CAB, and provide expertise in the development of the CAB engagement materials.
- » FTE for a community engagement specialist dedicated for community engagement to assist in the development and tailoring of the CAB meeting materials, co-lead the CAB meetings together with the research team, coordinate meetings with the research team and CAB, advise the research team coordinator on specific questions to ask the CAB.
- » Food and refreshment – cover the cost of food and refreshment of the CAB meetings
- » Travel – cost to travel to the CAB meeting sites or the study sites
- » Incentive for community members for participating in the advisory board (we suggest \$25/hour)

