

## DAIDS Community Advisory Board (CAB)

Global (network-level) and local (site-level) Community Advisory Boards are an essential aspect of NIAID's HIV clinical research enterprise. CABs are designed to represent the interests of diverse communities impacted by HIV and give local populations a voice in the research. They help ensure that the research agenda and specific studies reflect the needs of people with HIV, and also help protect the interests of study participants.

CABs advocate for broad inclusion of diverse populations in DAIDS sponsored and/or supported clinical trials, and for innovative approaches to ensure the inclusion of those who are traditionally under-represented in studies. At the network level, the community is involved in developing research plans, setting research priorities and serving on scientific committees and protocol teams. At the site level, community-research partnerships help facilitate an exchange of information to ensure that community opinions and suggestions are discussed and addressed by the research team. Local CAB members may be called upon to articulate community perspectives relevant to protocol design and development, advise on the accrual and retention of participants, and provide input on communications pertaining to research progress and results.

Guidance on effective ways to create and maintain CABs is useful for new and established sites. We strongly encourage that investigators and site staff working with CABs, as well as CAB members themselves, to review the Recommendations for Community Engagement in HIV/AIDS Research and other training tools from DAIDS and the Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination. The Recommendations are intended to help research staff and community representatives expand and deepen existing partnerships and forge new ones, with the ultimate goal of facilitating effective community engagement in all aspects of clinical trials research. Good Participatory Practices (GPP) are also essential in working with community stakeholders; optional training and additional materials are available on the AVAC website: <https://www.avac.org/gpp-training-tools>

### **New Sites / Known to DAIDS Sites**

Sites should work closely with their affiliated Network(s) to ensure their local CAB is adequately represented and engaged in the community. Local organizations can help identify individuals who can serve as CAB members, who will in turn help facilitate communications to the broader community and other stakeholders. To support these CAB efforts, site staff and CABs should work together to establish communication pathways, develop a cadence for reoccurring meetings, construct a comprehensive community outreach plan, and identify the roles and responsibilities of the CAB and relevant staff.

## **DAIDS CAB** *continued*

### **Phase-out Sites**

Site closures have a marked impact on communities. Attendance at CAB meetings by Principal Investigators, and/or other key personnel, to discuss plans for site closure and communication with the local community during the phase-out period is essential.

### **Considerations for Effectively Communicating Site Closure to CAB**

Community engagement through the CAB and/or other engagement strategies is required while participants remain on study. If monthly meetings cannot be maintained, bi-monthly or quarterly meetings, and written communications should be considered. Site closure directly impacts study participants as well as the CAB members that have been working closely with the site. Open and ongoing communication between researchers and their CABs around site closure is critical so that there is a clear understanding of what will happen to participants on study and what future research efforts might look like at the sites. Given the importance of community participation to the success of any study, it is strongly recommended that sites remain engaged with their communities even after the transition period. If the site is interested in participating in trials at a later point in time, an informed community will be invaluable, and ongoing communication will help build future community support and trust.

### **Consider the following during phase-out:**

- Socially and culturally appropriate messaging strategies
- Expressions of sincere gratitude for the time, commitment, and energy of participants and CAB members
- Projected timeline for study closeout and CAB closeout and plan for communicating this to stakeholders
- Timelines regarding participant referral/transfer
- Plans to anticipate, monitor and address community concerns related to site closure
- Plan for continuation of CAB meetings and frequency
- Considerations for post phase-out communications with the community regarding study results and/or other communications

**Click here to see community engagement resources and related trainings on the DAIDS Learning Portal**