



# North Jersey Community Research Initiative (NJCRI)

**Project WOW! Youth Center  
Community Advisory Board  
Operational Guidance**



# Presentation Objectives

- To review the 10 articles of the CAB Operational Guidance;
- To provide participants with opportunities for discussion; and
- To increase participants understanding of the WOW's mission.

# Article I: Name

The name of the group shall be the "WOW Community Advisory Board" (WOW-CAB).

# Article II: Mission

The mission of the WOW-CAB is to inform the design, development, implementation and evaluation of HIV prevention and community building activities delivered by the NJCRI-Project WOW! Youth Center, targeting young men of color who have sex with men (YMCSM) that gather or reside in Essex County, New Jersey.

## Article II (cont'd)

The WOW-CAB is the process by which NJCRI-Project WOW! Youth Center solicits input from gatekeepers and community leaders with the goal of enhancing the effectiveness of HIV prevention services, increasing the number of YMCSM that become aware of their HIV sero-status and linking high risk and HIV positive young men to care and treatment services.

# Article II (cont'd)

This mission will be accomplished by:

- Reviewing national and local HIV/AIDS trends and epidemiological data;
- Incorporating the views and perspectives of local gatekeepers and community leaders into all stages of program planning;
- Identifying and collaborating with members of various social networks within the YMCSM community that are representative of those persons at highest risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV (intended recipients of services);

# Article II (cont'd)

- Identifying existing interventions, new strategies and approaches to be utilized to prevent the acquisition and/or transmission of HIV among YMCSM;
- Increasing the community's awareness of the availability of HIV prevention services;
- Disseminating HIV prevention information and safer sex materials in venues that attract sizable numbers YMCSM who are unaware of their HIV status and have not participated in risk reduction activities.

# Article III: Roles & Responsibilities

The role of the NJCRI-Project WOW! Youth Center is to:

- Establish and maintain an HIV prevention program targeting YMCSM who reside or convene in Essex County, New Jersey, who are at high risk for acquiring or transmitting HIV.
- Determine how best to routinely acquire community and peer input into the development and achievement of program goals and objectives.
- Identify a minimum of one (1) NJCRI employee, or a designated representative, to coordinate the community advisory board process.

## Article III: (cont'd)

- Ensure program effectiveness by soliciting and incorporating the input of community advisory board members into the design, development, implementation and evaluation of program activities and services.

# Article III (cont'd)

The role of the Community Advisory Board is to:

- Elect at least one (1) community representative to serve in the capacity of chair person, vice chair and secretary. These officers will have the additional responsibility of being the liaison between the community advisory board and NJCRI.
- Advocate for essential HIV prevention services targeting YMCSM who reside or convene in Essex County, NJ, who are at high risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV.

# Article III (cont'd)

- Inform the continued delivery of HIV prevention services (by NJCRI-Project WOW!) targeting YMCSM who reside or convene in Essex County, NJ, who are at high risk for acquiring or transmitting HIV.
- Carefully review and submit comments, questions or concerns and approve (when appropriate) materials developed or distributed by NJCRI-Project WOW! with the expressed intent of furthering the accomplishment of HIV prevention goals and objectives.
- Identify unmet HIV prevention needs within the YMCSM community.

# Article III (cont'd)

- Identify the HIV-related training or informational needs of individual members that will enhance their participation and productivity in the CAB.
- Review essential components of the New Jersey Comprehensive HIV Prevention Plan to inform CAB discussions, activities and recommendations.
- Participate (when necessary) in workshops and skills building opportunities that may enhance the individual experience in the CAB process.

# Article III (cont'd)

## **Together, NJCRI-Project WOW! and the Community Advisory Board should:**

- Develop and implement policies and procedures that clearly address and outline systems for regularly re-examining:
  - CAB composition, selection, and terms of participation to ensure that the members can effectively advocate of behalf of YMCSM (e.g., population characteristics of the epidemic in New Jersey in terms of age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, geographic distribution, and risk for HIV infection).
  - Roles and responsibilities of the CAB, its members, and its various components (e.g., committees, workgroups, etc.).
  - Methods for reaching decisions; attendance at meetings; resolution of disputes and resolution of conflict(s) of interest for members of the CAB.

# Article III (cont'd)

- Determine and use the most effective mechanisms for incorporating community level input that is reflective of the HIV prevention needs of YMCSM who reside or convene in Essex County, NJ, who are at high risk for acquiring or transmitting HIV.
- Provide an orientation for all new members, as soon as possible after selection. New members should understand:
  - the roles, responsibilities, and principles utilized by the CAB,
  - the procedures and ground rules used in all deliberations and decision making,
  - the specific policies and procedures for resolving disputes and avoiding conflict of interests that are consistent with the CAB Operational Guidance.

# Article III (cont'd)

- Consider what additional data are needed for decision-making purposes.
- Identify the training and skills building needs of the CAB to ensure the effective program design, development, implementation and evaluation of HIV prevention services provided by NJCRI-Project WOW!
- Review and inform the development of program goals and objectives proposed to enhance the effectiveness of HIV prevention services targeting YMCSM.
- Annually review the NJ Comprehensive HIV Prevention Plan.

# Article III (cont'd)

- Inform NJCRI-Project WOW! brokerage of comprehensive HIV prevention services and programs within the area. The following are services to consider:
  - HIV prevention interventions;
  - Early intervention, primary care, and other HIV-related services;
  - STD, TB, and substance abuse prevention and treatment;
  - Mental health services; and
  - Other public health needs.
- Evaluate annually the CAB process to ensure its stated goals and objectives are met.

# Article IV: Membership

The Planning Group shall consist of no less than seven (7) members and no more than fifteen (15) members. In the event that there is a vacancy in the membership which results in having fewer members than allowed by the Operational Guidance, the CAB will convene a membership committee to be charged with the identification, recruitment, coordination of the new member election process and CAB orientation. The vacancy will be filled within two regular meetings of the CAB after such vacancy occurs.

## Article IV (cont'd)

In order to continue to conduct business, the CAB meeting agenda for the 2nd month following the vacancy shall begin with the election of new members. In order to fill vacancies, the CAB shall maintain a Membership Committee, subject to all the requirements of standing committees as outlined in Article V. At least one of the CAB's elected officers will be designated to be a member of the Membership Committee.

## Article IV (cont'd)

Before each nomination process, the chair of membership committee shall be responsible to ensure that an open nomination process (that the CAB has approved, by majority vote) occurs. Under this process the Membership Committee will actively solicit applications for membership to the CAB, particularly members of community considered to be under-represented on the group.

## Article IV (cont'd)

Except to maintain the minimum and maximum number of CAB members, the number of vacancies to be filled shall be at the discretion of the Membership Committee, or as determined by a majority vote of the CAB. To ensure that all CAB members have the opportunity to participate in the open nominations process, there shall be written notification (via the CAB yahoo group) prior to all meetings at which this open nominations process will be implemented.

# Article IV (cont'd)

The Membership Committee will meet and review the previously filed applications, and bring nominations to the CAB. One nomination will be brought to the CAB for each vacancy.

Nominations to fill vacancies can also come from the floor during CAB meetings, but all nominations from the floor must have a second and must have completed an application and indicated a willingness to serve as a member of the CAB before their nomination is put to a vote of the group.

# Article IV (cont'd)

New members will be added by the CAB by majority vote of the members present and voting. Abstentions shall be counted as non votes.

A member–elect is a new member who has not yet attended an orientation and consequently cannot vote. Members-elect shall not have the privilege to vote on any matter or make a motion or second a motion until they have attended a CAB Orientation. After being elected, the member will have to attend a CAB Orientation.

# Article IV (cont'd)

If the member is unable to attend an Orientation, the member will be considered a non-voting member until such time the orientation has been completed.

A member in good standing is a member who has fulfilled their main meeting attendance requirements and continues to demonstrate ideal stewardship during the CAB meetings and in the community they represent.

## Article IV (cont'd)

NJCRI acknowledges that individual participation in the CAB process is voluntary, may be subject to various conditions and may conclude at anytime. Therefore, NJCRI reserves the right to terminate an individual's membership in the CAB when a conflict of interest has been identified.

# Article IV (cont'd)

At the conclusion of service in the CAB, it is requested that outgoing members participate in an exit interview. Although an individual's experience may be unique, the experience itself has the potential to inform the further development of the process by which community gatekeepers and stakeholders provide input towards the future direction of programming and the provision of services.

At least one (1) officer of the CAB will meet with the outgoing member to review the experiences acquired during the term of service.

# Article IV (cont'd)

An Exit Interview Tool will be used to ensure uniformity in the process. The meeting shall be convened within thirty (30) days of notice to resign their responsibilities.

The CAB has the right to remove members for good cause. Any member can be removed from service with a majority vote of significant cause to terminate participation in the CAB.

# Article IV (cont'd)

Cause for removal shall consist of but not limited to:

- repeatedly neglecting the responsibilities of membership;
- failure to meet the attendance requirements of the CAB according to the Operational Guidance; and
- failure to maintain stewardship or act in such a manner that is in direct conflict with established goals of the group and tarnishes the reputation of NJCRI, the CAB and/or YMCSM, as an agent of the community.

# Article V: Governance

The elected representative shall provide written notification of each meeting of the Group at least one week in advance of the meeting. The notice shall include a draft agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting. Items to be included on the agenda shall be determined by the membership, in consultation with the NJCRI staff if desired. Parliamentary procedure shall be followed at all meetings, according to Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised, as needed.

# Article V (cont'd)

Members are expected to attend all CAB meetings. Any absences from CAB meetings must be in compliance with the established policy.

For an excused absence, members should call or leave a message with the NJCRI staff or submit notification of absence to the CAB Yahoo Group prior to the start of the CAB meeting.

## Article V (cont'd)

A simple majority (more than half) of the total current voting membership of the CAB shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business at a meeting. Each member of the CAB shall have one vote on any matter before the group. A simple majority of members present and voting is required to pass regular matters before the CAB.

# Article VI: Conflicts of Interests

A conflict of interest occurs when a CAB member knows that the conduct and actions of the group on a specific issue is likely to have a direct negative impact on an individual member, group or agency.

These guidelines are intended to safeguard the CAB's actions and recommendations from potential conflict of interest on the part an individual member.

A member with a conflict of interest is required to identify the conflict before discussion on a conflicting issue. Any CAB member that perceives a conflict of interest on the part of another member should identify the perceived conflict of interest.

# Article VI (cont'd)

On issues where CAB members have a conflict of interest, that member may not participate in discussion or vote; however, he/she may attend the discussion and may answer specific questions that are posed to him/her.

A group member cannot lobby for a program that would directly benefit him/her or any organization in which he/she is an employee or has significant interest. A group member cannot be paid for services rendered to the group.

## Article VI (cont'd)

The CAB meeting minutes and record will reflect those members that have expressed a perceived conflict of interest.

After a dispute over conflict of interest arises, the matter may be openly reviewed in a CAB meeting. If the conflict is of a more personal nature, the CAB may convene an Ethics Committee to review the issue and make recommendations accordingly.

# Article VII: Books & Records

The CAB and associated committees shall keep minutes of all proceedings and other books and records as may be required for the proper conduct of its business and affairs. These documents will be considered the property of NJCRI and will be used to inform the continued design, development, implementation and evaluation of HIV prevention services.

# Article VIII: Amendments

The Operational Guidance is considered a live document that may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the CAB, but not by a committee, ad-hoc committee or task force. Written notice of the proposed revision shall be delivered to each member (via email) prior to the date of the meeting. All proposed changes shall be considered an individual revision and requires a vote accordingly.

# Article IX: Ratification

This Operational Guidance goes into effect upon a majority vote by the CAB members.

# Article X: Grievances

A grievance committee shall be convened (as needed) to review actions that have an impact on any member of the CAB. The committee chair will meet with the individual CAB member registering a grievance within ten (10) business days of the grievance being submitted in writing to any officer of the CAB. At the conclusion of the meeting, the CAB officer will meet with the grievance committee to share details of the meeting and to make a recommendation to the CAB in an attempt to resolve the issue.

# The End

Cuthbert E. Ashby; Compliance Manager  
North Jersey Community Research Initiative  
[c.ashby@njcri.org](mailto:c.ashby@njcri.org)