

CAB STRUCTURE

Module 2

Location—Where to Hold Site CAB Meetings

The location of site CAB meetings varies by site. There are many issues to consider when choosing a site CAB meeting location. These issues include:

- Space availability;
- Distance from public transportation;
- Parking;
- Safety; and,
- Privacy.

Space Availability

Most PHACS Site CABs meet at the clinic site. Many sites choose to hold meetings at the clinic because it is convenient and familiar for CAB members. At the clinic, the CAB may also have access to office supplies, computers, and projection equipment.

One site CAB holds its meetings at the clinic because of the availability of rooms. The CAB uses a large room for the CAB meeting that can accommodate small or large groups. The waiting area outside the room is used for dinner before the meeting. Some site CABs refrain from using public spaces like waiting rooms for confidentiality purposes.



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The waiting area is also used as a homework/play space for CAB members' children. An additional clinic room is used as a baby changing room. Many CABs recommended holding meetings in a large space. A larger room can help accommodate both CAB members and their children.

Access to Public Transportation

Choose a location that is accessible by public transportation. This is important for CAB members who primarily rely on public transportation. It is also important because many sites may have reimbursement or voucher options for public transportation to and from CAB meetings.

Parking

Just as important as access to public transportation is parking availability. Select a location with plenty of parking. If there is a fee for parking, check with your site about parking reimbursement. Many site CABs hold their meetings at the clinic because parking for clinic patrons is free.

Safety

Choose a safe location and time. This may include not holding meetings late in the evening. Many sites choose to hold their meetings at the clinic because the location is safe. Keep in mind that many CAB members may bring their children to meetings. If this is the case, choose a location that is safe for children as well as adults. If the location has parking, make sure CAB members are safe as they walk to and from the building.

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Privacy

Some participants in HIV studies may not be comfortable disclosing their HIV statuses. Therefore, it is important to choose a meeting location that does not inadvertently disclose CAB members' statuses. For example, try to choose a location that does not have HIV posters or signs.

Keep in mind that even the name of the clinic could cause inadvertent disclosure. If the clinic's name has anything to do with HIV, consider asking site staff about other locations within the institution that might be available for site CAB meetings.

It is best to consult with site CAB members about choosing a realistic location that is both convenient and private.

Meeting Frequency and Length

How often a CAB meets depends on the availability and need of the CAB members. It also depends on how often the CAB receives study updates. Many CABs meet once a month. CABs that meet monthly typically meet for 1-2 hours. On the other hand, other CABs meet 1-2 times a year. If the site CAB is only able to meet a few times a year, consider holding longer meetings to allow enough time to discuss important issues.



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Some CABs only meet when there are study updates to review. However, many CABs have noted that it is important to meet on a more regular basis. A regular schedule allows CAB members to meet and socialize in a structured way. It also allows the CAB to talk about issues that might come up unexpectedly. Hosting regularly scheduled meetings also helps the CAB to invite guest speakers for future meetings because it allows the CAB to present potential guest speakers with options for future dates. It is easier for a guest speakers to plan on attending future CAB meetings knowing that meetings take place on consistently scheduled dates. In addition, having regularly scheduled meetings helps CAB members keep in touch and stay engaged in the CAB.

It may be helpful to schedule CAB meetings around a meal, but be mindful of time. This creates a perk for CAB members and allows meetings to be scheduled during CAB members' typical breaks in the day. Many site CABs choose to meet during a weekday around lunch time. Meeting at this time allows the CAB to have lunch together. It also helps CAB members meet while children are in school. Other Site CABs meet in the evening and provide dinner to accommodate members who work.

Site CAB meetings should be held on days/times that work for the most members. It is best to consult with CAB members about scheduling regularly scheduled CAB meetings.

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Number of CAB Members

The number of CAB members in a site CAB depends on the size of the Site. PHACS site CABs currently report having as few as three members up to as many as 40 members.

One site CAB recommends smaller numbers – to this CAB, more is not always merrier. This group feels that with more CAB members, there may be more disagreements. It is harder to come to decisions with larger groups because there are more opinions to consider. Other smaller site CABs believe that smaller numbers help manage discussions.

Another site CAB recommends larger numbers. This group feels that more members allow for greater diversity. It also helps CAB members connect to a larger HIV-affected community. This allows more members to share opinions, resources, and support. Each site CAB can weigh the pros and cons and decide for itself how large or small it would like its group to be.

Activities need to be structured depending on the number of site CAB members. Smaller numbers may be better for personal and intimate discussions. Larger numbers allow for greater diversity and more connections.

It may not be possible to control the number of members in a site CAB, but it is possible to control CAB activities. Large CABs can break into smaller groups to allow for more intimate discussions. Smaller CABs can appoint representatives to serve on other CABs and committees at the site or in the community. These CAB members can report back from the other groups, allowing them to represent a larger number of community members.

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Site CAB Meeting Leader

It's up to each site CAB to determine which person will lead the meetings. At many sites, the staff CAB Liaison runs the meetings ([additional information about staff CAB Liaisons may be found on page 8](#)). Other people serving as site CAB meeting leaders might include:

- IMPAACT RCAB Representatives;
- Case managers;
- Site CAB Chair and Vice-Chair;
- Program coordinators;
- Nurses; and
- Other site staff members.

However, at most sites, running Site CAB meetings is a group effort.

At one site, the peer navigator (who is also a member of the community) leads the meetings. The program coordinator (who is also a nurse) co-leads the meetings. The program coordinator helps provide information about health services at the site. Although these two people lead the meetings, they rely on participation from all Site CAB members to set the agenda. The peer navigator truly understands the needs of the community because she is a community member herself. She encourages and inspires members to share personal information that help their voices be heard.



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One site's CAB meetings are typically run by the Study Coordinator and CAB Liaison. However, the CAB frequently invites guest speakers. The guest speakers present different topics of interest to the CAB. This CAB believes that having different presenters works very well to keep the CAB's attention. It is also helpful for skill-building among group members.

It may be very helpful to run Site CAB meetings using a team approach. Overall, it is most important to pick a site CAB leader who the CAB members trust. Some sites vote on a site CAB leader. Together, the CAB can determine how long the site CAB leader should serve. Other sites ask for volunteers to serve as site CAB leaders.

Many site CABs thrive under a CAB-appointed leader. It is important to come up with a selection process that is deemed appropriate and fair to all CAB members. Before holding an election or selecting volunteers, work with the CAB to come up with a selection process.

Ask the CAB to define the roles and responsibilities of the site CAB leader. It's helpful to ensure that potential CAB leaders understand the commitment associated with leadership roles.

CAB Chair Roles and Responsibilities

1. CAB Chair creates meeting agenda.
2. CAB Chair runs meetings.
3. CAB Chair helps recruit new members.

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CAB Liaison

Many sites have a site staff CAB Liaison. Responsibilities of the CAB Liaison vary across sites. At several sites, this is a paid position. The CAB Liaison typically acts as a:



Meeting Coordinator

At one site, the CAB Liaison is the coordinator of Site CAB meetings. The Liaison drafts the agenda and orders food for the meetings. The Liaison also sends out reminder letters, arranges for transportation, and books the meeting room. The Liaison also coordinates all other CAB special projects.

At another site, the CAB Liaison recruits site CAB members. The Liaison also coordinates the meetings with help from CAB members. The Liaison makes and sends out flyers about the meeting. She also calls CAB members to encourage them to attend the meetings and to find out if they need help with transportation.

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Intermediary

The CAB Liaison often acts as an intermediary. He/she is the connection between the CAB members and the site staff. This means that at many sites, the Liaison evaluates the needs of the CAB and larger community. He/she then communicates these needs and questions to the site staff and research team. The Liaison communicates clearly with the community and facilitates interaction with other research study groups.

Resource

The CAB Liaison might also be a resource for CAB members. At one site, the Liaison serves as a resource for CAB members by answering questions regarding the study. The Liaison has a functional understanding of the research process. She shares this information with the CAB. This Liaison also provides opportunities for CAB members to learn about health topics.

Most sites with CAB Liaisons report that they contribute to the effectiveness of the CAB. The Liaisons are able to both oversee the CAB and work with site staff. They are also able to support site CAB leadership to help CAB meetings run as smoothly as possible.

Site Staff Involvement in the CAB

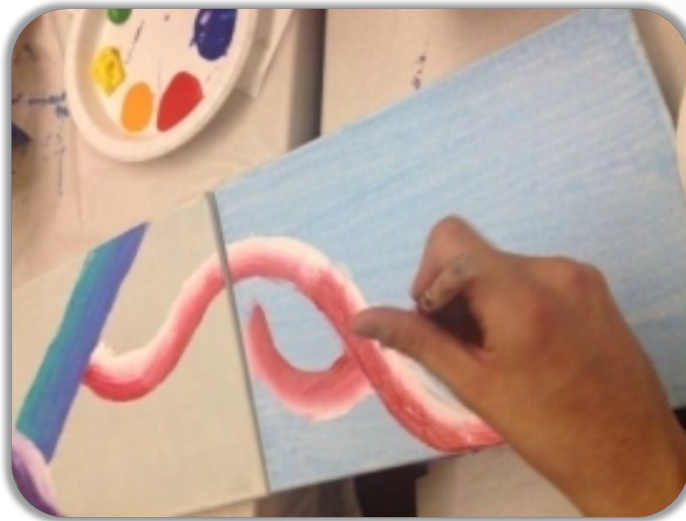
Many Site CAB members and CAB Liaisons feel that it is important for Study Coordinators and Principal Investigators to be involved in the CAB. They also believe it is important for these staff to attend site CAB meetings whenever possible.

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However, other site CABs feel that site research staff should not attend site CAB meetings. They feel that their attendance may disturb the usual flow of meetings. CAB members may feel nervous in front of the researchers and unable to speak their minds.

At most sites, the Study Coordinators and Principal Investigators do not attend every CAB meeting. At some sites, they attend meetings as needed. For instance, they might attend CAB meetings to present new results of studies when they are released.



At other sites, site staff attend CAB meetings on a more regular basis. They check in with the CAB every few meetings. This type of schedule can be helpful for CAB members because they can plan for these meetings. By knowing ahead of time when the researchers are scheduled to attend the meetings, CAB members can bring questions and come prepared.

Site staff CAB involvement may play a crucial role in:

- Dissemination of information;
- Study feedback;
- Meeting planning and coordination; and,
- Study retention.

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Dissemination of Information

At several sites, site research staff present updates and scientific information to the CAB during meetings. These researchers are able to talk about study findings in an easy to understand manner. They may present participant summaries, new protocols, health news, and/or community events. Many CAB members say they like when site staff attend meetings. This is because they have the chance to ask the site staff directly about questions they may have.

Study Feedback

At some sites, site staff attends CAB meetings in order to get feedback from the community about the study. This may include feedback about a protocol, medical procedures, and general study operations. In this way, the CAB serves as the link between the researchers and the community/study participants.

Meeting Planning and Coordination

At some sites, site staff members assist with meeting coordination. They order meals for the meetings and coordinate childcare. They also handle transportation requests, set up the meeting room, make and hand out the agenda, and remind CAB members about upcoming meetings.

Retention

Some site CAB members feel that site staff involvement is important for retention. Many CAB members enjoy interacting with their site staff members in a non-clinical setting. It helps CAB members see and feel that their thoughts and feedback are important to the researchers.

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Many site staff also believe it is helpful for site staff to attend CAB meetings. It may be helpful for the researchers to develop relationships with the site CAB. This allows CAB members to learn from the researchers and take the information back to the community. It also allows CAB members to give feedback about the study from the community directly to the researchers.



It is important to talk to CAB members about their preferences. Although it may be helpful for the CAB to learn from researchers, it may also be important for CAB members to interact among themselves.

In addition, be mindful that site staff may not be available for any or all CAB meetings. If site staff involvement is a preference for the CAB, ask CAB leaders or Liaisons to let site staff know. If they are unavailable to attend meetings, they might be willing to find an alternative way to be involved in the CAB.

If site staff are available for meetings, it is helpful to make their attendance predictable to the CAB. This can help CAB members prepare better for meetings. It may be helpful to consider asking site staff members to be present for every other meeting. This approach allows CAB members to interact with and learn from site staff, but also gives CAB members time to interact among themselves.