



## DEVELOPING BY-LAWS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB)

### THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT— POINTS TO CONSIDER

- What are the expectations of CAB members?
- How often should the CAB meet and where will it meet? In person? Virtual? Hybrid?
- Should CAB members go on at least 1 home visit?
- What is the funding sustainability plan of the host agency and how will the CAB support this plan?
- Who will staff and plan meetings? Will there be a Chair/Vice-Chair?
- Will there be subcommittees (policy, fundraising, etc.)?
- How will the CAB monitor progress and communicate successes?
- How will the CAB develop goals?
- How will you recruit new CAB members?
- Should the CAB have a Mission Statement?

### THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT— DEVELOPING BY-LAWS

#### ORIENTATION CAN BE HELPFUL

- Convene the first meeting and have prepared an orientation package including a short bio of each member, purpose, expectations, any bylaws, etc.
- Name tags are helpful- Have each member introduce themselves and describe why they joined the CAB.
- Have a structured agenda that is distributed at least one business day in advance and allow time for everybody to speak.
- Having time for board members to socialize can lead to better cohesiveness and board integration.



## **BUILDING A HIGH-FUNCTIONING COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD**

### **ONGOING MEETINGS**

Use regular CAB meetings to provide program updates, to consult with your CAB members about a specific issue or need (e.g. professional development for nurses or determining the best time for expanding capacity) and to ask members for their support with generating more eligible referrals and advocating for your program.

When soliciting advice on a specific topic:

- Generate as much discussion as possible, but not necessarily to reach consensus.
- Instead of taking a vote during a CAB meeting, consider listing all the pros and cons of any idea under discussion to help inform the decision-making process.
- Ask members to generate all the questions they can think of in reaction to a particular issue.
- Be sure that the minutes reflect all opinions, including those in the minority.
- Spend time on identifying community resources that might assist with a particular situation.
- Provide feedback on what action was finally taken and how the CAB's input was used.

### **MAINTAINING CAB MEMBERS MOTIVATED AND ENGAGED**

Chances are that all members of your CAB agreed to participate so they can contribute in some way to the mission of your Nurse-Family Partnership Program and make a difference in their communities by serving first-time mothers and their families. Keeping CAB members motivated could be easier if there are opportunities for them to:

- Provide tangible input especially when a topic entails their area of expertise.
- Consider asking CAB members to help your agency by spending a few hours consulting with you one-to-one.
- Attend community meetings and network with members of other organizations.
- Learn. Ongoing education helps to keep advisory board members active, energized and motivated. Consider setting some time aside during CAB meetings or conduct separate workshops on topics such as legislative advocacy, cultivating media relations, collaborating with managed care plans, etc. Assess the resources to which your agency has access and determine if they align with the interests of your CAB members.