



AHRI Hosts 2024 Community Advisory Board AGM

November 2024



Africa Health Research Institute (AHRI) recently hosted its Community Advisory Board's (CAB) three-day annual general meeting (AGM) in Durban.

All SAPRIN nodes have CAB structures, which play a key role in fostering meaningful community engagement with research participants. AHRI's Community Advisory Board (CAB) comprises 43 members, each selected through a structured process. Village headmen nominate three candidates and these nominees proceed to an electoral college where they compete for a single CAB position.

The candidate with the highest votes is elected as the primary CAB member for their village, serving a three-year term. The candidate receiving the second-highest votes becomes a standby CAB member, ready to step in should the primary member's term end prematurely. For large, sparsely populated, or geographically challenging villages, two CAB members may represent the area concurrently.

During their three-year term, AHRI CAB members contribute significantly to the ethical and scientific quality, relevance, and community acceptance of proposed research. Their guidance helps align research protocols with cultural, traditional, and community norms, ensuring that studies are both respectful and relevant.

They also actively help to shape research agendas by ensuring that the community's voice is reflected throughout



the research process. CAB members also provide vital feedback to communities, keeping them informed about ongoing research. During their term, AHRI also invests in upskilling and empowering CAB members through short-courses and workshops.

The primary objectives of the AGM were to reflect on the year's achievements, review the CAB's constitution, and propose necessary amendments. The meeting offered a platform for members to discuss their experiences, suggest improvements and strengthen their role in safeguarding ethical research practices that benefit both science and the communities involved.

