Caracon Symposium 2025

The Fight Isn’t Over

October 13–17

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We are Greater Cincinnati's HIV nonprofit devoted to positively changing lives in the fight against HIV through:

Prevention

Promoting health and well-being in at-risk communities through evidence-based approaches to prevent disease and reduce the spread of HIV

Housing

Offering a variety of permanent housing support to prevent homelessness and to stabilize individuals living with HIV and their families

Care

Helping individuals living with HIV access the health care they need through medical case management and pharmacy services

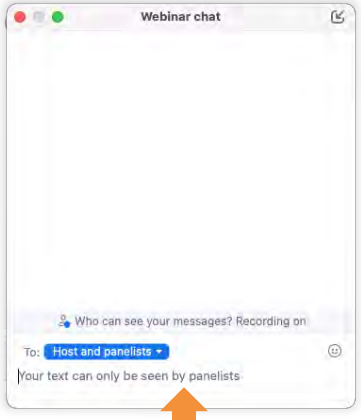
Learn more: caracole.org

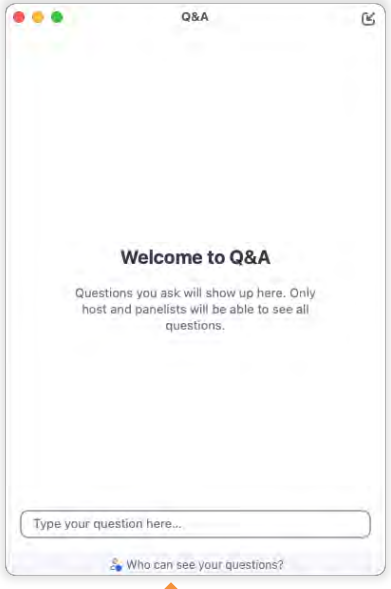
AETC AIDS Education & Training Center Program Midwest

Caracon Symposium 2025

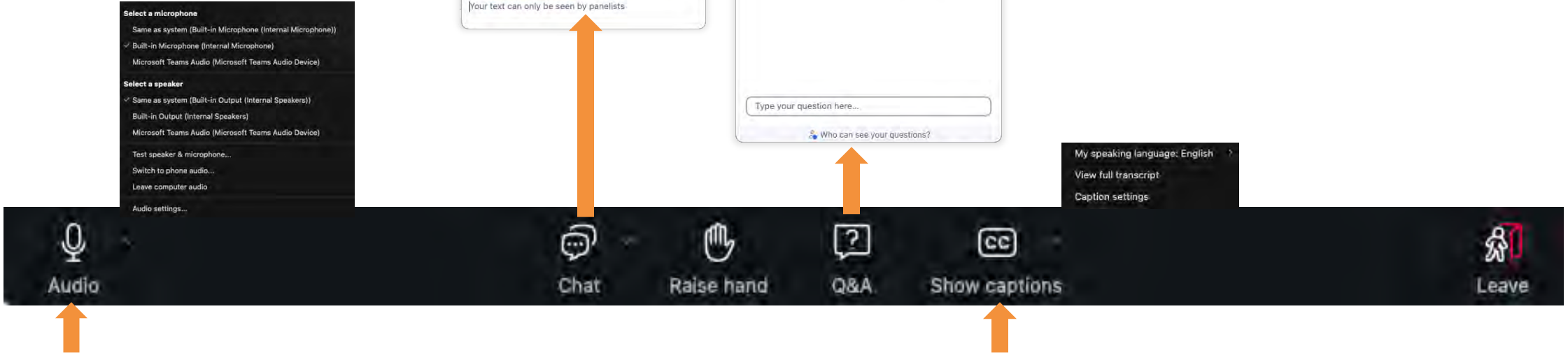
How to Use Zoom Webinar

Use Chat to converse with everyone on the webinar and for tech issue questions.





Use Q&A specifically for questions about the content. You may upvote questions from others. You may submit anonymously.



Audio Settings

Caption Settings

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Special thanks to our presenting partners:

MATEC
MIDWEST AIDS TRAINING + EDUCATION CENTER

HAMILTON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

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Special thanks to our sponsor:

GILEAD

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ViiV Healthcare

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Evaluations and Credits

Evaluations recommended for all attendees

Required for CECs

- Link in today's chat and as a post-webinar pop-up
- Must be completed by end of business day (5:00 PM ET) today

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Caracon Symposium 2025
Tuesday, October 14

Advancing Health Equity for Black SGL Men in Chicago

Presenters: Jada DeJesus and Pierre Sanders

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Advancing Health Equity for Black SGL Men in Chicago

Committed to advancing health equity among Black gay, bisexual and same gender loving men, and eliminating HIV within our community.

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus

The Caucus is the oldest and only organization in the city focused exclusively on improving the overall health and well-being of Black gay, bisexual and same-gender-loving men.

CHICAGO BLACK GAY MEN'S CAUCUS

Who We Are

Dedicated to improving health and wellness

of Black gay, bisexual, and same-gender-loving men

Rooted on the South and West sides —

Serving the heart of our community

Not a direct service site

We connect, convene, and collaborate —

Our power comes from connection, collaboration, and cultural pride

Building a thriving community

We build the spaces where care can happen together.

The mission of the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus is to advance health equity among Black gay, bisexual, and same-gender-loving men in Chicago by developing community-centered leadership and innovative programs.

Our Vision for Wellness

- **Health is more than medicine —**
  When we thrive as individuals, our whole community rises
- **We support personal growth, emotional wellness, and social connection**
  True equity means removing barriers and creating access to opportunity
- **Stability and advocacy are key to thriving.**
  When we thrive as individuals, our whole community rises
- **Every program is designed to help people feel whole and supported, and seen.**

Core Belief –
Every Connection Is a Connection to Health

All Connections Matter

Every resource, conversation, and act of care shapes overall wellness

Health ≠ Medicine & Diagnoses

Health isn't just medical – it's emotional, social, spiritual, and financial.

Programs as Pathways

Every CBGMC program is a pathway to holistic wellness, providing access, support, and connection

Community Enables Care

When someone finds community and support, they move closer to caring for themselves in every way

When someone finds community and support, they move closer to caring for themselves in every way.

How We Engage the Community

Create comfortable, relatable spaces

Where people can show up authentically and feel welcomed

Make resources visible and approachable

Use flyers, QR codes, and casual conversations to connect people to support

Use events as entry points to care and connection

Leverage social activities to build trust and facilitate access to resources

Build trust first — resources and referrals follow naturally

Prioritize establishing relationships before providing direct services

We meet people where they are — in joy, struggle, and everyday life — and create safe, affirming spaces that spark trust and curiosity.

It is in *these environments* of **trust** and **community** that care and support is most effectively offered.

Our Core Programs

- **Caucus HUB**
  Personal and professional development for growth and leadership
- **Social & Cultural Events**
  Game nights, Flix n' Chill, Book Club, and group outings (theater, Alvin Ailey, movies, etc.)
- **Safe, affirming spaces to build community and belonging**
  Creating welcoming environments for Black SGL men to connect and thrive
- **Skill-Based & Creative Series**
  Community-inspired programs: financial literacy, dance, creative expression
- **Health Access Partnerships**
  Free at-home testing, PrEP info, and consultations through partners like Onyx Medical Wellness
- **Community-Driven Design**
  Programs shaped by feedback from the Caucus Core and community members to ensure relevance, engagement, and real impact

Core Programs/Initiatives

Caucus HUB Personal and professional development for growth and leadership

Social & Cultural Events Game nights, Flix n' Chill, Book Club, and group outings (theater, Alvin Ailey, movies, etc.)

Skill-Based & Creative Series Community-inspired programs: financial literacy, dance, creative expression

Health Access Partnerships – Free at-home testing, PrEP info, consultations

Community-Driven Design Programs shaped by feedback from the **Caucus Core** and community members.

What Works for Us

Lead with trust

Build spaces that feel like home

Embed health conversations naturally

Offer support and incentives

Partner with peers and trusted leaders

Partnerships

Our Key Partners

CMTF (Caucus Methamphetamine Task Force): Substance education, harm reduction, and support

ChiWellness Circle : Holistic wellness, mental health, and community resources

Why Partnerships Matter

Expand reach to communities we can't reach alone

Provide specialized services and support

Reduce burnout by **sharing responsibility** across trusted organizations

Strengthen trust and engagement with participants

sway

HEALTH & WELLNESS CIRCLE

BLACK ALPHABET

CDPH | CHICAGO METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCE

ONYX MEDICAL WELLNESS

CCHE The Chicago Center for HIV Elimination

Together, We Thrive

Every program, partnership, and connection builds **resilient, supported communities**

When Black SGL men thrive, the **whole community thrives**

CBGMC is committed to **continuing to connect, support, and empower**