



CariMAN Regional Secretariat

CONCEPT NOTE

Title of Webinar -

Men's Health & Wellbeing in the Caribbean: Tackling Taboos, Improving Services, and Reducing Stigma

Date of Webinar - **29th October 2025**

Time - **10:00 AM - 11:30 AM EST (1.5 hours)**

1. Background & Rationale

The **International Day of Care and Support (October 29)** recognizes that building just, inclusive, and resilient societies requires valuing care in all its forms, self-care, community care, and caregiving for others. Within this vision, it is essential to include men and boys not as *beneficiaries*, but as *active participants* in reshaping the culture of care and wellbeing across our region.

Men in the Caribbean experience higher mortality and morbidity throughout their lives, driven by external causes such as violence and injuries, as well as cancers and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Limited engagement of men with health promotion and primary care, along with the absence of comprehensive health programs contributes to this burden. Evidence from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) shows that Caribbean men face high rates of premature death from preventable causes and lower levels of engagement with health services. Across the Americas, NCDs are the leading cause of death and are particularly severe in many Caribbean countries, where the NCD mortality rate has increased significantly since the early 21st century. Rates of NCD mortality are higher among men than women emphasizing the need to address barriers that prevent men from accessing prevention, screening and care services. Limited engagement with health systems reflects not only service gaps, but also **gender norms and social expectations** that discourage men from seeking care, acknowledging vulnerability, or prioritizing their health.

These same norms also shape men's **mental and emotional wellbeing**. Mental health issues in the Caribbean are often underdiagnosed, hidden, and underresourced. Across the region, men are less likely to seek psychological support and more likely to die by suicide (PAHO, 2020; WHO, 2021). Suicide rates are consistently higher among men. In the Caribbean, rates vary widely by



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country. Guyana, for example, reports one of the highest suicide rates in the work at about 26.8 per 100,000 for men in 2019. Other countries, such as Barbados and Grenada, report lower rates, although underreporting and stigma likely obscure the real situation. Cultural expectations, stigma and rigid gender norms discourage emotional openness and delay help-seeking behaviours. Comparative evidence across the Americas suggests that while men in many contexts experience similar challenges, these issues are intensified in the Caribbean due to small-island dynamics, limited resources, and persistent stereotypes of masculinity.

Addressing men's health through a **feminist care agenda** creates opportunities to transform and challenge harmful gender norms and expand our collective understanding of care beyond the domestic sphere. Supporting men to care for themselves and others, as fathers, partners, colleagues, and community members, strengthens family wellbeing, advances gender equality, and builds cultures of empathy and connection that benefit everyone.

This webinar provides an opportunity to reflect on evidence, lived experiences, and emerging practices that shape men's health and wellbeing, while advancing dialogue on how gender-transformative approaches can create more inclusive and sustainable pathways to health for everyone, in keeping with the spirit of the **International Day of Care and Support**.

2. Objectives

This webinar aims to:

1. Provide an overview of the current state of men's physical and mental health in the Caribbean, highlighting trends, disparities, and the intersections between gender, care, and wellbeing.
2. Explore cultural and systemic drivers of stigma and barriers to care.
3. Identify practical, context-appropriate policies and practices that advance equitable, gender-transformative approaches to health and care
4. Promote cross-sector collaboration to create supportive environments that advance men's health as part of collective wellbeing and gender equality.



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3. Proposed Agenda (90 minutes)

0–10 min — Welcome and objectives

10–55 min — Panel discussion

55–85 min — Moderated Q&A

85–90 min — Closing remarks