Clinical Trials Recruitment: Making the most of what’s in your tool-belt.

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Get to know your audience!

- Characteristics of your target population
  - Likes/dislikes; Cultural norms and rituals
  - How is leisure time spent? What locations do they frequent? What transportation do they use?
  - Preferred media channels
    - Appropriate timing of media
- What are methods of getting to know your target population?
Create messages that appeal to NEEDS/WANTS

- Apply need-based sales strategies
  - Identify their wants and needs?
  - Recognize barriers/obstacles to achieving those wants and needs
- Incorporate solutions to their needs into development of recruitment plan

Image source: salesrecruitmentblog.com
Back-to-basics Reminders

- Always be open to change
- Prospecting– set aside time
- You are always “on”
- Relationships are key
Who is communicating the messages?

- Interpersonal Communication skills are KEY
  - Confidence, versatility, understanding
- Must be someone your target population will trust
- Aim for Referrals!!!
If this seems like too much work...

“I was gonna attend the time-management seminar, but I couldn’t fit it in.”
Study Specific Recruitment Databases– Use your resources!

- SCresearch.org
  - New features
  - Lay language!

- ResearchMatch.org
  - The more we put in, the more we get out
  - Include in protocol from onset
Planning – Where to start

- You know your audience/population
- You know some resources
- Lay out the plan
  - Is there an adequate group of patients from which to recruit – feasibility?
    - Clinic-based – health seeking population (30%)
    - Community – everyone else – how will you “get in” – where do you start? (70%)
- Unfortunately not one size fits all
How many subjects will you need to approach in order to get your sample?
- Some estimates are 10 people for every one completed.

How much time do you have to enroll?
- How many months do you have from the start of enrollment until the last possible day you can enroll?
- Calculate how many people you will need to approach each week and enroll to meet your recruitment targets.
Strategies

- Make the connections up front and get letters/agreements in place – who is on board?
  - Advisory groups
  - Colleagues
  - Professional organizations
  - Community–based participatory approaches for hard-to-reach populations
    - Involves mutual benefits
    - Partnership
    - Knowledge building
      - Do you have newsletter, Web items
      - Educational materials, presentations
Strategies

- Established media – recruit through the media of others
- Organizational gatekeepers, liaisons, champions – personal contact
- Need a marketing plan specific to that organization
  - Electronic, print and visual images
- Logo branding of your project
Variety of incentives:

- Personal cash
- Opportunity to learn about problem and take measures or better understand ways to treat or prevent
- Interest in advancing goals of organization, increase membership
- Altruism

Be prompt in the delivery of incentives, study materials, requests for information, providing thank you’s, and follow-ups!

Tailoring to the unique needs

- Professionally designed portable banner that is culturally appropriate
- Business cards
- Flyers
- Email messages
  - All should contain:
    - Study title, logo, color image of population/setting, brief description of the study, contact information with a name
- Repeat solicitations to same person no more than twice
What’s missing here?

We need your HELP! We are looking for HEALTHY volunteer children and teens (ages 6 to 16) to participate in research at the Alberta Children’s Hospital to help us learn more about Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

What’s in it for you?!

- Feel good! about participating in research and helping other children
- Junior/High School community volunteer hours & credits
- Certification of Recognition
- Receive a small gift card and reimbursement for parking

To find out more about the research we are doing, contact Caitlin Wright
email: caitlin.wright@albertahealthservices.ca  Ph: (403) 955-3192
Or visit  www.mskids.ca
The budget

- **Budget – what will this cost?**
  - **Low hanging fruit cheapest**
    - Flyers in elevators, letters sent out from colleagues (postage and paper)
  - **High expense – billboards, tv ads, newspaper**
Lessons learned

- People do not understand what is involved in clinical trials and how their participation would contribute to the advancement of the research enterprise
- Participatory approach is best suited to reach the community
- Partnership building is key to success in recruiting and retaining study participants
- Requires significant investment of time, personal effort, and regular evaluation of progress and flexibility to adjust the original plan
Persistence

- If it works, keep doing it, spread it out
  - Keep track of all of your tactics
    - Have a plan for each month... It might only be a change in the flyer or a different location for posting them
  - Some things work better at different times and with different populations/demographics
Who on the study team member is responsible . . .

- Requires an ongoing commitment from the team
  - Estimates of time commitment range from 100% at the start of a new study to 30 – 50% during the course of the study – fluctuates depending on how well recruitment tactics are working
Success story: Project Quit
Your greatest resource: US!

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Request a FREE Recruitment Consult at Sparc.musc.edu