

Patient Recruitment for Colorectal Cancer Screening in South Texas: Lessons Learned

Raquel Lozano Romero, MD, MPH,^{1,2,3} Michael L. Parchman, MD, MPH,^{1,2} Anthony Jerant, MD,⁴ Elizabeth Costilla BS,¹

Introduction

- U.S. Hispanics have much lower rates of colorectal cancer (CRC) screening than non-Hispanic whites.
- IMCPs is an interactive multimedia computer program that shows promise as a way of delivering personally tailored (PT) information to enhance cognitive mediators of health behavior and to improve patient outcomes.
- Within the Hispanic group there is a language-driven disparity in screening: 28% of Spanish-speaking Hispanics were up to date for screening 44% of English-speaking Hispanics.
- More studies are needed to better understand the circumstances underlying recruitment of Latinos for medical studies.

Study Objective

Recruiting Hispanics to clinical trials is often challenging. Here we discuss lessons learned from recruiting Hispanic patients in a PBRN to an RCT designed to improve rates of colorectal cancer (CRC) screening

Materials and Methods

Study Design: The study is a randomized controlled trial of a new computer program, viewed by patients in their doctor's office prior to a scheduled appointment, designed to help people who are potentially interested in colorectal cancer screening to actually undergo screening

Intervention: Laptop program with information about CRC screening administered prior to patients' appointments.

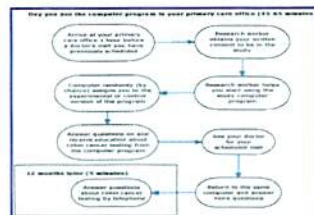
Outcome measures: Interviews with project coordinator and research associate (RA) about recruitment approaches utilized and those that are most successful.

Setting/Subjects: 5 clinics in the South Texas Ambulatory Research Network.

Inclusion Criteria: Eligible subjects recruited from a convenience sample of self-selected adult patients who receive primary care at one of the participating outpatient offices and meet the following criteria:

- * Age 50-75
- * Able to read and speak English and/or Spanish
- * Adequate vision, hearing, and hand function to use an IMCP running on a laptop computer via a touch screen interface
- * Have an active telephone

Patient Path



Patients Recruitment

Clinic #	Contacted	Enrolled	English Speaking	Spanish Speaking	Non-Latinos
1	192	32	31	1	0
2	418	120	101	19	0
3	3	3	3	0	0
4	84	40	34	5	1
5	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	697	195	169	25	1

Results

Successful recruitment techniques included:

- 1) Use a clinic location with privacy to provide the patient freedom to ask questions like "what is my colon?" before they will agree to participate in the study.
- 2) Call before a return study visit to confirm transportation: many are grandparents who depend on family members for transportation.
- 3) Reassure subjects that the RA will stay with them at all times during the use of the computer interactive program and not leave them alone.
- 4) Continual presence of the RA in the clinic in the morning to meet patients and recruit in-person established a level of trust that a phone call does not.
- 5) A snack: many patients come in fasting for non-study related clinic visit and are reluctant to stay after the appointment for the study.

Barriers that keep patients from participate include:

- 1) Depending on family members for transportation
- 2) Not having a phone number
- 3) Lack of time
- 4) Lack of interest

Discussion

Recruitment required a "relationship-centered" approach rather than appealing to scientific altruism, by accommodating patient personal needs. These approaches might be applicable in other studies focused on underserved populations and Hispanics in particular. These methods are more time and resource intensive than traditional methods of recruiting for research studies and should be planned for in the budget.

*1. Department of Family, Behavioral, and Community Medicine, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
2. Department of Health Services Research, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
3. UTHealth South Texas Network
4. Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston*

Correspondence: This study is supported by the National Cancer Institute (Contract Number 1U54CA13333-01)