Recruitment and Retention of Underrepresented and Vulnerable Populations to Research

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Purpose
Share strategies to successfully recruit and retain underrepresented and vulnerable populations
- Based on our collective expertise spanning multiple disciplines and populations

Recruiting Participants: Strategies that work
- Partner with community entities
- Approach participants where they are and at a time of readiness
- Use participants’ preferred mode of communication; speak their language
- Offer parking and transportation vouchers for study visits
- Adapt consent delivery based on participant preference and learning style
- Meet in familiar settings
- Hire research staff from community of interest
- Offer flexible days and times for study activities
- Tailor ads to population of interest (e.g., social media versus flyer)
- Offer meaningful incentives (e.g., $, test results, gift cards, diapers)

Staying Connected: Keep them coming back
- Set clear expectations and timelines
- Offer a run-in period to ensure fit
- Maintain frequent contact
- Provide incentives in real time
- Make incentives tiered (more at end)
- Offer bonus for a certain level of adherence
- Be flexible!

Example underrepresented populations...
- People of color
- Age 17 or younger
- Age 65 or older
- With a physical or cognitive disability
- With less than a high school degree or equivalent
- Who reside in rural or non-metropolitan areas

Example priority populations in CHPDP...
- Veterans with PTSD
- African American women with obesity
- Hispanic youth and adults with prediabetes
- Sexual assault victims
- People of lower income due for cancer screening
- People undergoing cancer treatment
- Mexican American mothers and infants

“Focused efforts to recruit and retain populations historically underrepresented in research are of paramount importance to enhance generalizability of findings as well as to promote health equity.”

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