Developing the science of recruitment

What improves recruitment to RCTs?

It's people like you who improve medical science. Is taking part in a study right for you?

We've made this website to help you decide.

Multi-media interventions
Can access to a multimedia resource boost recruitment in your trial?

A multi-media intervention (MMI) has been developed to complement existing participant information sheets.

The MMI content was informed by current evidence and expert opinion, led by patient and public involvement using material from the award winning healthtalkonline.org.

We are seeking trials to act as hosts to run nested recruitment trials to test our unique interventions. The MRC START research programme has been informed by the MRC Framework.

It has an information study-specific to trials component, providing bespoke trial information, and information generic to trials component, outlining generic research issues and questions.

Relevant existing video clips of patients discussing their participation experiences in medical research studies (healthtalkonline.org) have been carefully matched to each research issue. Infographics are in place to help offer visual and text explanations about the importance of medical research studies.

We provide expertise and resources to help trials develop bespoke content for the web page.

Enhanced participant information sheets intervention

Does improved patient comprehension, increase recruitment?

Existing participant information sheets will be put through a process of Performance-based User Testing and design demonstrated to improve patient comprehension.

This is a proven technique where participants seeing the enhanced patient information sheet were able to better understand a trial.

We are looking for trials which use a paper-based method to recruitment to act as hosts to run nested recruitment trials to test our participant information sheet intervention.

Systematic Techniques for Assisting Recruitment to Trials (START) is an MRC funded collaboration to test recruitment methods across multiple clinical trials.

The MRC START study aims to:
- Improve the evidence base on recruitment to trials
- Enhance trial recruitment rates
- Make research more accessible to the public

Why the MRC START Collaboration?

Randomised controlled trials (RCTs) are critical to evidence-based practice. The acceptance of the RCT as the bedrock of outcomes research has led to a vast number of trials conducted, but recruitment is often problematic and achieving high professional and patient participation in RCTs has traditionally been difficult. Little rigorous evidence exists to support research teams in recruitment and retention of participants. In 73 UK Trials (2002 - 2008), 55% recruited to target and 46% needed an extension. Despite large numbers involved in RCTs, a recent Cochrane systematic review identified only 14 nested studies testing approaches directed at potential participants in real trials and 27 overall.

Benefits of getting involved
- An opportunity to get involved in an MRC funded initiative
- Contribute to the evidence base on recruitment to RCTs - developing the science of recruitment
- Access to current thinking on effective recruitment strategies
- Access to recruitment interventions, within and beyond, MRC START
- Additional resource to develop interventions relevant to your study
- Opportunity to publish study specific recruitment outcomes data
- Acknowledgement in any MRC START Collaborative reports, dissemination and publications

The MRC START team

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Recruitment to science is not underpinned by a science of recruitment.

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