Community Engagement Including Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Musonda Simwinga, PhD

What is community?

- Importance of defining community
  - Affects inclusion exclusion criteria
  - Informs CE activities
  - Informs identification and categorisation of stakeholders based on likely responsiveness
  - Saves resources and limits accountability space

Ethical Goals of CE

- Instrumental Community Engagement: helping to improve the quality of research; maintaining community interest (recruitment and retention)

- Intrinsic Community Engagement: building respect and trust, protecting communities, relevant research

- CE is increasingly being used for intrinsic goals to achieve good participatory practices

CE in Community Randomised Trials

- Whole communities can be units of randomisation

- Messaging and CE activities
  - People may not have a choice but to be 'bothered' by some activities
  - Potential confusion and contamination in control sections of the community

- Involves large numbers of field staff- 650

Recruitment

- Having well trained staff
  - Understand the protocol and targets
  - Give right information to potential and current participants
  - Do not waste people's time
  - Theory vs practice

- Flexible working times
  - that fit into the participant's working schedule
    - Working over weekends, reporting early for work, knocking off late

Recruitment

- Involving Community based stakeholders
    - Traditional leaders, CAB members, peer groups members, other CBOs
    - well known and respected in the community
    - can communicate messages on sensitive issues – blood and satanism issues
    - help locate individuals and households who have moved outside/ in study area
- Frequent field technical support visits
    - Appraise staff skills, quality control

Retention

- Community dialogues
  - Ongoing feedback- progress Vs new developments
  - Ongoing stakeholder engagement
  - Constantly reviewing representation on community representative structures
- Incentives
  - Non financial 'tokens' of appreciation
  - Incentivising retention and not recruitment

Retention

- Incentives- community level
  - Study visibility and show of genuine partnership
  - Infrastructure projects- 'community gift'
  - Training in life skills
  - Building community organisation skills- resource mobilisation

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