DESIGN OF HEALTH RESEARCH RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Background

Improving medical care relies on new knowledge gained from research studies. Yet, recruiting volunteers into health research remains a significant challenge for many health research study teams. Data show that there are over 80,000 clinical trials conducted each year in the United States, however, less than 2% of the population participates.(1) It is well established that most of the public is either not informed of the need for volunteer participation in clinical research, or there is a fear or mistrust of medical and clinical research.(2–4)

The University of Michigan is investing in research at unprecedented levels. Hundreds of U-M researchers are investigating ideas that may lead to improved health and quality of life. A major challenge is accruing volunteers willing to participate in clinical research studies, and as a result, some studies are closed prematurely, causing wasted time and money, and missed opportunities for discovery.(5–6) Within UMHS, 47% of all studies that open intending to enroll participants do not accrue a single participant. Another 40% do not reach full accrual goals.(7)

Study teams at the University of Michigan use many strategies to spread awareness about their research study and recruit potential participants. One of those strategies involves posting posters in various public spots such as clinic waiting areas, cafes, busses and libraries. The study teams that design these posters usually have no background in user-centered graphic design.

Project Brief

Design an 11x17 recruitment poster for the following health research study that the corresponding study team can put up in public spaces to spread awareness about their study and to attract volunteers to participate in it. In addition, choose two or more mediums that you think would work best for the assignment (posters, past-cards, stickers, murals, digital displays on walls in waiting rooms etc., games on phones etc). Feel free to include the entire study description or to pick out parts of it that you think are valuable to the user. Make sure to consider the audience, the context in which it will be placed (UM hospital) and its effectiveness in recruiting participants.

Example Health Research Study

Title: Cognitive Control and Obesity

Purpose: The goal of this study is to identify ways people think that may help determine whether they are obese or overweight, and whether they are able to successfully lose weight.

Eligibility: This study is seeking healthy individuals that meet ALL of the following:

- `Age (years) is between 18 and 65`
- `BMI is less than or equal to 28`
- `Must be fluent in English`
- `Must not be pregnant at the time of enrollment`

Study Description: In this study, you would be asked to complete behavioral testing sessions. These testing sessions involve completing a couple of tasks on the computer, as well as some pencil and paper tests or surveys. The computer tasks involve things like remembering and responding to letters, numbers, words, images, or shapes on the computer screen using the keyboard and/or mouse. The pencil and paper tests assessing things like vocabulary, memory, problem solving skills, eating behavior, and weight history. Your

height, weight, and waist and hip circumferences would also be measured by a trained research assistant. Each participant will complete 2 testing sessions within one year. We expect each testing session to last approximately 2 hours, and the spacing between testing sessions will vary for different participants. Participants will also be contacted to complete a third, follow-up session within two years of their first session.

Compensation: You will receive $15/hour for the time spent participating in this study. You will also receive a $10 completion bonus payment if you complete the first two testing sessions. You may also earn bonus pay based on your performance in the computer tasks, up to $10 per testing session. You may also receive a parking pass. If you withdraw from the study prematurely, you will be paid for the time spent participating up to that point. You will be paid at the end of each testing session in cash.

Location of study visits: Ann Arbor, MI

IRB number: HUM00067783

Principal Investigator: Jonides, John

Department: LSA - Psychology

Study contact: Jonides Lab, obesityresearch@umich.edu

Extra Credit

There are hundreds of study teams at the University of Michigan and they have thousands of studies between them. It is impossible to design a poster for each of those studies. Design a graphic system (example: a poster template or a style guide or something else) to empower the study teams themselves to create well designed and efficient posters for their studies.

References

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