Tailoring Stakeholder Engagement for Study of Adults with Opioid-Treated Chronic Low Back Pain

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**Background**

Strategies To Assist with Management of Pain (STAMP) is a 5-year, multi-site, randomized controlled trial comparing effectiveness of Mindfulness and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in 766 individuals with opioid-treated Chronic Low Back Pain (CLBP).

**Tailored stakeholder engagement approach**

- Number of eligible participants decreased due to changes in opioid prescribing
- Medically and psychologically complex population
- Fear of stigma due to “the opioid crisis”
- Fear of opioids being discontinued

**Foundation for successful engagement**

- Budgeted for stakeholder stipend and travel, and team member with dedicated time to coordinate activities
- Determined optimal group size and included representatives from key groups (patient, provider, community, healthcare system)
- Held meetings at convenient time and place determined by stakeholders
- Provided tailored orientation for researchers and stakeholders to establish culture of engagement from day 1
- Planned interesting meeting activities to maximize stakeholder input

**Recruitment, retention challenges of complex population**

-PFAC feedback on recruitment

**Tailored Activities Across Two Stakeholder Groups**

- Design meeting activities to match stakeholder group strengths
- Consistently report back to PFAC and SAC with examples of their impact on study materials and processes
- Overlap key topics reviewed by PFAC and SAC with examples of their impact on challenging topics (e.g. recruitment and retention)
- Best Practices to Sustain Engagement

- Maintain communication between the PFAC and SAC (PFAC members report at each group meeting; researchers provide additional updates)

**Example of Stakeholder Impact**

**Before**

- Do you have daily low back pain that has lasted over 3 months?
- Do you take prescribed pain medications for your back pain?
- Are you ready to try something new to help your back pain?

**PFAC feedback on recruitment brochure:**

- Cover image is dark, depressing, has nothing to do with CLBP
- Text on blue background is difficult to read
- Too many words
- “Mind-body” raises questions and concerns
- University logo needed to add legitimacy

**After**

- Looking for more help with managing your chronic low back pain?
- ClinicalTrials.gov#: NCT03115359

**Example input:**

- EFAC feedback on recruitment

**Conclusion**

Effective, tailored engagement with our stakeholders has resulted in numerous study improvements, including new recruitment strategies/materials, improved retention strategies, and qualitative data collection guide revisions. Working with WINRS stakeholder engagement consultants helps our project avoid common pitfalls, makes best use of the expertise on each stakeholder board and sustains participation of advisory board members.

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