Trial Access: Uncovering Barriers in Clinical Trials for Cancer Care at a tertiary oncology center – a survey feasibility study

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Background and purpose

Importance of improving the representation of the US population in clinical trials and reducing physician uncertainty in their applicability[1]

Financial Strain and limited geographic access to tertiary treatment centers are known barriers to cancer clinical trial participation. [2]

Prior surveys have been effective at capturing patients' insights into barriers to accessing trials. [3-6] , incl. a study conducted by Sydney Kimmel Cancer Center (SKCC) surveyed 2,744 adult residents in the Mid-Atlantic region. [7]

Pilot study

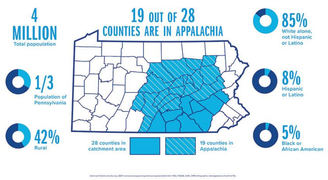
- to explore the feasibility of conducting such a survey at Penn State Cancer Institute (PSCI)
- unique population that includes rural population as well as suburban ones was performed

Overarching goal: Improving access to clinical trials

Expanding newly designed questionnaire with incorporating feedback to larger population share of PSCI

Pointers from this study and statistics will be used:
- to increase access to trials at PSCI
- into the effort of RISEup committee at Penn State

Penn State Cancer Institute catchment area demographics:

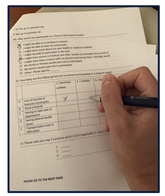


Survey features

One-time paper survey, oral consent. 14 questions

100 patients (0.5% of an average month patient-visits for solid tumors at PSCI)

Inclusion:
18 years of age or older, Speak and write English
Have a history of cancer (both liquid and solid tumors), Currently receiving or have received any form of systemic therapy for cancer at PSCI



Results

Demographics

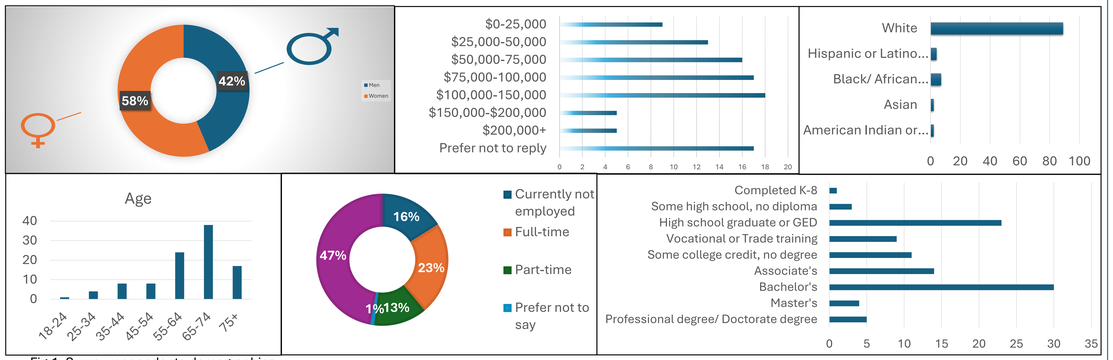


Fig.1: Survey respondents demographics

Willingness to participate in clinical trials

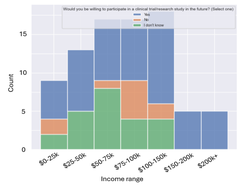


Fig.2: Patient willingness to participate in clinical trials per income category

- 100% pts reporting an annual household income higher than $150k (n=10) willing to participate in trials
- 56% of income less than $150k(n=73) willing to participate
- Fisher's exact test, p=0.017
- Previous participation in clinical trial was associated with willingness to participate (Fisher's exact test, p=0.018)

Patients' motivation, deterrents and perceived barriers

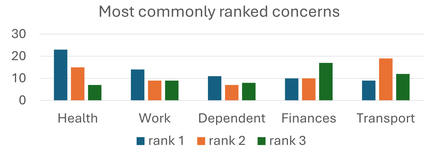


Fig.3: Patient top 3 ranked concerns

- Health is ranked as number one concern by almost a quarter of participant, and ranked by 45% of participants

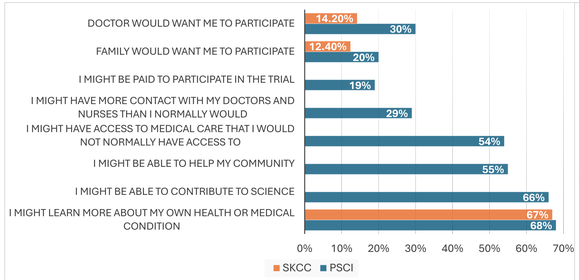


Fig.4: Patient reasons to participate in clinical trials

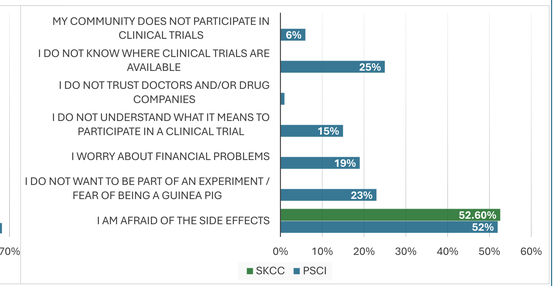


Fig.5: Patient reasons not to participate in clinical trials

Methods

- Pilot study of 100 patients at PSCI using a 14-questions paper survey exploring patients' demographics, attitudes toward clinical trials, and their motivations and perceived barriers to future participation.
- Patients were also asked to rank their most significant concerns.
- Association between demographic data and willingness to participate in trials were evaluated with Fisher's exact test and corrected for false discovery rate with Benjamini-Hochberg procedure.

Feasibility

100 PAPER SURVEY COLLECTED

3 BUSINESS DAYS, 2 MEDICAL STUDENT

82 % PARTICIPATION RATE

100% QUESTION COMPLETION RATE

The 2 questions about motivations and deterrent from participation were taken from the survey at Sydney Kimmel Cancer Center, showing similar results:

	Response	PSCI	SKCC
Most common reason for participation	"I might learn more about my own health or medical condition"	68.0%	67.4%
Least common reason for participation	"My family would want me to participate"	20.0%	12.4%
Most common reason not to participate	"I am afraid of the side effects"	52.0%	52.6%
Willing to participate		58.0%	50.8%

Table 1: Comparison of motivations and deterrent between PSCI and SKCC

Conclusion

High feasibility for capturing patient-reported barriers and motivations for clinical trial participation

Reproducible results between 2 neighboring cancer treatment centers

Future direction: expand survey to 1000 patient, increased power to ask subgroup questions

Mixed mode collection

Including collection of cancer type

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