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Miami Cancer Institute
BAPTIST HEALTH SOUTH FLORIDA

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Improving Clinical Trial Awareness Through Community Education: A Retrospective Survey of Diverse South Florida Participants

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Background

- Clinical trials are essential for advancing breast cancer treatment.
- With the increasing incidence, especially among younger patients, and changing demographics in the United States, it is critical that clinical trial recruitment reflect the diversity of the overall patient population.[1,2]
- Despite this, participation in clinical trials remains low, especially among underrepresented groups due to barriers such as mistrust, limited awareness, and perceived burdens. [3,4]
- Community-based educational interventions have proven effective in overcoming these barriers. [5,6]

Objective

- To assess changes in group-level knowledge and willingness to participate in clinical trials before and after a series of community presentations conducted in diverse South Florida communities.

Methods

- Adults aged ≥ 18 from Palm Beach, Broward, or Miami-Dade counties attended one of three community-based programs on clinical trials.
- English sessions (Palm Beach and Broward), and a Spanish session (Miami-Dade) included patient testimonials and were promoted through grassroots outreach.
- Funding was provided by the V Foundation for Cancer Research.
- Anonymous unlinked pre- and post-surveys assessed self-reported understanding and willingness to participate in trials.
- Identical willingness questions were included in both surveys; the Spanish-language event included one additional repeat question.
- Group-level differences were analyzed using chi-square tests to compare pre/post responses and English vs Spanish events.

Results

- A total of 115 individuals participated across the three clinical trial educational events:
  - 29 in Palm Beach, 42 in Broward, and 44 in Miami-Dade.
- Understanding of the importance of clinical trials increased from 84% pre-event to 100% post-event ($p < 0.05$).
- Before the sessions, 25% of respondents reported never having been offered the opportunity to participate in a clinical trial, despite expressing interest.

Figure 1: Do you feel you understand why clinical trials in cancer are important, and what are the risks and benefits of participating in a clinical trial?

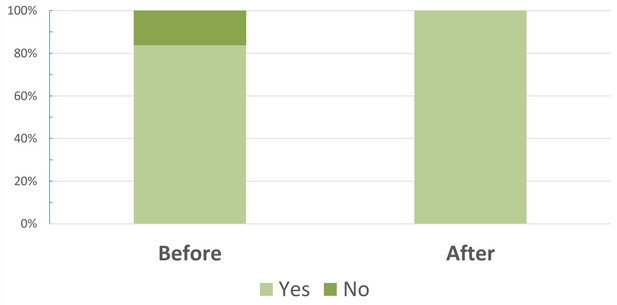


Table 1: Which statement best describes your current feelings about being in a cancer clinical trial?

	% of participants		
	English	Spanish	Overall
I was **never offered** the opportunity to participate in a clinical trial.	43%	39%	41%
I was **never offered** the opportunity to participate but **would have liked** to.	21%	31%	**25%**
I **was offered** the opportunity but **did not** participate.	13%	8%	11%
I **was offered** the opportunity and **did** participate.	23%	22%	23%

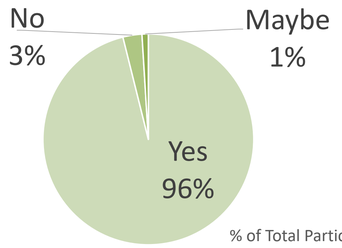
Results

- Among those initially hesitant, the most common concern (33%) was fear of side effects or doubts about treatment efficacy.
- Following the sessions, 77% indicated an increased willingness to participate and 96% reported improved understanding of clinical trial types and significance.
- In the Spanish-language Miami-Dade event, willingness increased from 45% to 74% (p=0.23).
- Overall, attitudes and response patterns were similar between English and Spanish language events (p>0.05).

Table 2: Which statement best describes your current feelings about being in a cancer clinical trial?

	% of participants		
	English	Spanish	Overall
I would be willing to participate in a clinical trial if I were given the opportunity to do so.	46%	45% 74%	46%
I'm worried about the possible side effects, or that the treatment might not work.	25%	45% 24%	**33%**
I don't want to be a 'guinea pig' or be given a sugar pill when I have cancer.	17%	5% 3%	12%
I'm worried about traveling, time commitment, or having to take off work to be in a trial.	10%	5% 0%	8%
I don't trust the drug/pharmaceutical companies.	1%	0% 0%	1%
For Spanish-language event, top is % prior to event, bottom is % after the event.			

Figure 2: After this evening's presentation, do you feel you understand enough about the different kinds of clinical trials … and why they are important?



Results

Table 3: After this evening's presentation, which statement best describes your feelings about being in a cancer clinical trials?

	% of participants		
	English	Spanish	Overall
I would be **more** likely to participate.	73%	82%	**77%**
I would be **less** likely to participate.	2%	0%	1%
My mind has not changed about being in a clinical trial.	6%	8%	7%
I'll still need more information before I decide.	19%	10%	16%

Conclusion

- Community-based education can enhance awareness and interest in clinical trials.
- Patient testimonials and culturally tailored outreach likely contributed to improved understanding and willingness to participate.

Limitations

- Unlinked survey design, small sample size, retrospective analysis, and limited repeat questions restrict the interpretation of individual-level change and consistency across groups.

Future Directions

- The gap between interest and opportunity highlights the need for more inclusive recruitment strategies.
- Sustained education, proactive outreach, and trust-building are essential to address misconceptions and improve access.
- Focusing these efforts at the point of recruitment may help increase clinical trial diversity and participation.

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