Cultural Competency Education for Clinical Researchers to Improve Minority Participation in Clinical Trials

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Background & Significance

• Ethnic and racial minorities represent 1/3 of the population but characterize 18% of the total participants in clinical research studies in the U.S.
• In 2018, NIH reported 29 of total research participants identify as minorities but only 9% were ethnic minorities
• Indigenous, Latinx, Black populations, >3-fold increase in health disparities during COVID-19 pandemic but vastly underrepresented in clinical research

Purpose

• Address barriers, normalize participation, and enhance researcher-participant engagement in the recruitment stage and throughout clinical trial participation

Aim #1: To educate clinical research provider and staff on the positive effects of cultural competency education on improving research participant:

Aim #2: To increase NIH provider/research staff cultural awareness and knowledge

Aim #3: To increase NIH provider/research staff awareness and knowledge of implicit bias

Aim #4: Determine the acceptability of integrating program into the organization’s standard training

Methods

Design: Pre-/post test
Setting: large research organization
Data Collection: 6 weeks between October 2021 through November 2021, captured via Qualtrics
Intervention: 60-90 minute, virtual cultural competency & implicit bias educational program, via Canvas. Optional de-brief for project participants.

Measures: Cultural Diversity Questionnaire for Nurse Educators (CDQNE-R) & Stratis Health’s Implicit Bias for Healthcare Provider’s quiz; measured satisfaction scores evaluating feasibility

Analysis: Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test; Descriptive and frequency statistics

Sample

• 24 clinical researchers/staff involved in the direct clinical study activities, patient care, and recruitment activities including Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Research scientists, Fellows, Post-baccalaureate or doctorate graduates

• Spanish-speaking, non-White participants scored higher on cultural competency and implicit bias questionnaires

• Nursing professionals scored higher than Associate & Principal Investigators

Results

• 55% report that 1-1.5 hour(s) was enough time to complete the course and would recommend this course to a colleague

• 64% report that the course defined and discussed cultural competency and implicit bias in clinical research

Conclusion

• Cultural competency & implicit bias training is in demand by both organization and staff

• While there was no improvement in cultural competency, implicit bias awareness and knowledge improved

• Implicit bias and cultural competency education can reduce attitudinal and behavioral barriers to recruitment, engagement, & retention

• Adds to current research that bridges the gap between inadequate minority representation in research and national health disparities

• With a larger sample size, cultural competency training can be effectively integrated into organizational onboarding training to improve recruitment, enrollment, engagement, and retention

References

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