

Optimizing Community Outreach for Study Recruitment



GHUCCTS CRC Workshop
Sept 17, 2026



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Ivy and Pearls of Southern Maryland Community Charities, Inc.
and
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Nu Zeta Omega Chapter
present

COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR



Connect with local organizations, access helpful resources,
and enjoy activities to support your physical and mental
well-being.

 **Sat., May 9, 2026**

 **10:30 am - 1:30 pm**

 **Capital Clubhouse**
3033 Waldorf Market Pl.
Waldorf, MD 20603

FREE Open to the Community!

- Health screenings
- Health workshops
- Chair massages
- Yoga classes
- SNAP Benefits Assistance
- Giveaways and wellness information

Register Here:



Videos and/or photos may be used by IPSMCC/Nu Zeta Omega Chapter on their electronic media platforms and websites for general public viewing.

Webinar Goals

Participants will:

- Apply community engagement best practices & principles to support effective study recruitment
- Explore how we can give back to the community
- Create an outreach plan and toolkit that balances study promotion with health education

Community Outreach

While community outreach for study recruitment has been an established practice, applying community engagement best practices can strengthen engagement communication and help build trust.



Let's take a Poll

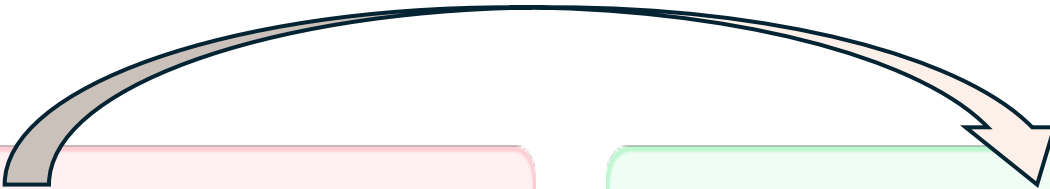
How much experience do you have with community outreach for health research recruitment or study promotion?

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Some
- ☐ A little
- ☐ Not yet



What is one lesson you took away from the experience?

Shift in Mindset: Recruitment vs. Engagement



Transactional Recruitment

Goal: Hit enrollment numbers

Approach: One-way pitch for study participation

Relationship: Ends as soon as targets are met

Risk: Could leave communities over-researched & under-informed

Relational Community Engagement

Goal: Build trust & mutual benefit

Approach: Active listening & bi-directional learning

Relationship: Sustained partnership beyond study lifespan*

Outcome: Equitable health impact & shared ownership; valuable community input obtained



Principle: Shared Power in Action



Partner Expertise

Recognize community leaders as experts. Involve event coordinators to inform your outreach strategies before launching.



Reflection

Have community partners helped shape our outreach approach?



Community Input

Allow event participant questions and feedback to guide best ways to interact, identify what is needed, and shape future outreach.



Reflection

Are we informing future events based on community input? Are we modifying our approaches and interaction to enhance engagement?

Principle: Health Equity & Mutual Benefit

Ethical Recruitment = Science + Service

Ensure participants leave feeling supported and educated.
Focus on health literacy rather than just recruitment.

Actionable Ways to Give Back:

- Provide free, plain-language educational health materials.
- Offer health education workshops or expert Q&A sessions.
- Offer available resources (i.e. giveaways, educational listserv)

Reflection

What resources or services do we have available to give back to the community?

How can we give back?

Reflection

Do we ask community members: "Was this health information clear and helpful to you today?" instead of just "Are you ready to join?"

Expert health
presentations

Information
resources

Data and
evaluation
support

Career guidance
for youth

Research study
partnerships

Meeting or event
space

Virtual webinar
access
(Zoom support)

Letters of
support

Free Institutional
health programs
(screening)



What available **resources**, **knowledge**, **expertise**, or **services** can we realistically offer that could be meaningful to the community?

- Your Study Team
- Your Department
- Your Institution

Before a Community Event

Before the event



Identifying events

Start with your audience, then leverage trusted community connections

Know Your Audience

- Age
- Location
- Language
- Culture
- Health condition

Use Trusted Networks

- Community Org.
- Advocacy groups
- Faith communities
- Hospitals
- CTSA/CTSI CE core
- Chambers of commerce

Find Events

- Community Org.
 - calendar
 - websites
 - social media
- Local govt events
- Eventbrite

When reaching out, ask for upcoming events that could be a good fit.

Is an event a good fit?

Poor fit:

- Events with mismatched study population
- Study outreach feels intrusive
- Festivals



Better fit:

- Community resource fairs & health fairs (chronic diseases, healthy participants)
- Disease-specific events
- Senior center events



Determining good fit

1. Study topic alignment
2. Organizer support for recruitment
3. Population of focus attendance
4. Suitable research discussion setting
5. Expected attendance
6. Time for brief conversations (3–5 min)
7. Event costs or requirements
8. Proximity to study site



360° well·ness

2nd Annual Health & Wellness Fair

Free & No Pre-Registration Required!

Saturday, April 20 @ 10am - 2pm

The Emory Fellowship, 6100 Georgia Ave NW



Brought to you by Emory's Health & Wellness Ministry
emoryfellowship.org/health-wellness

Planning Questions for Event Coordinator

- Communicate expectations: event coordinator? Event attendees? Your teams?
- Space availability for the study team?
- Private area for conversations if needed?
- Tables, chairs, electricity, Wi-Fi, parking provided?
- Any restrictions: distributing materials, collecting contact info, discussing research?
- Other questions?

Paid Research Opportunity

We are seeking volunteers for a study exploring the relationship between physical activity, lifestyle habits, and sleep.

Study Overview

-  21-day in-home monitoring using a breathalyzer and actigraphy watch
-  5 min daily survey
-  Optional health-related activities as part of the study

Are You Eligible?

-  18 years and over
-  Drinks 9+ alcoholic beverages per week
-  Able to complete surveys and monitoring activities
-  Have a sedentary or highly active lifestyle

Register Your Interest



Scan the QR code or visit the website to learn more and register your interest.



Participants will receive a gift card upon completion of the study.

Contact

research@exampleuni.edu

Have questions?
We're happy to help.

This is a sample recruitment flyer created for educational purposes only.
All details are generic and for illustrative use.

Reviewing printed material through a community lens

Is it clear? Research and medical terms in plain language

Is it of value? Study goal connection with patients, improving health, or public health

Is it inclusive? Images, messaging, and content reflect the study population

Need to be IRB approved

Knowing the event audience

What do I know about this community, and what do I still need to learn?

What values, traditions, or experiences are important to this community?

How might past experiences influence views on research?

Am I approaching the community with curiosity rather than assumptions?



"Listening is the beginning of understanding, and understanding is the beginning of wisdom."

— African Proverb

Learn about the community

Connect with a community broker (event coordinator, coworker)

Ask :

- ✓ What might community expect from us?
- ✓ How do we engage respectfully?
- ✓ What is best way to build rapport and trust?
- ✓ What are community perceptions of research?
- ✓ Norms to be aware of? (i.e., no shaking hands, no direct eye contact)
- ✓ Appropriate dress code?
- ✓ Other considerations?



What's in the GHUCCTS' Outreach Toolkit?



- Tablecloth with GHUCCTS logo
- Flyer display stands or frames
- Sign-up form (consider privacy, avoid lists)
- T-shirts with our logo
- Study Promotional Material
- Educational Material
- SWAG / Giveaways (pens, hand sanitizers, notebooks, etc.)

Developing a Conversation Starter

- A short statement or a question
- Include the disease of interest
- Avoid YES/NO questions
- Use plain language
- No more than 15 seconds
- **Make connection with community's experiences, interests, or concerns**
- Test it with colleagues or community partners. If not clear, revise.

Examples:

1. *What is your connection to Lupus?
(Used at a lupus event)*
2. *How has diabetes affected you or a loved one?*
3. *We're sharing information about a study on improving heart health. Has heart health affected you or someone close to you?*



Study Talking Point

Describe the study in less than 3 minutes using plain language. Include:

- Your name, institution, & your role in the study
- **Clear study goal(s)**
- **Why would the study be important to patients, community members, or improving health?**
- Who is invited to participate in the study?
- What the study involves (briefly describe procedures, surveys, treatment, etc.)
- Compensation (not the focus)

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Take-home reflection questions

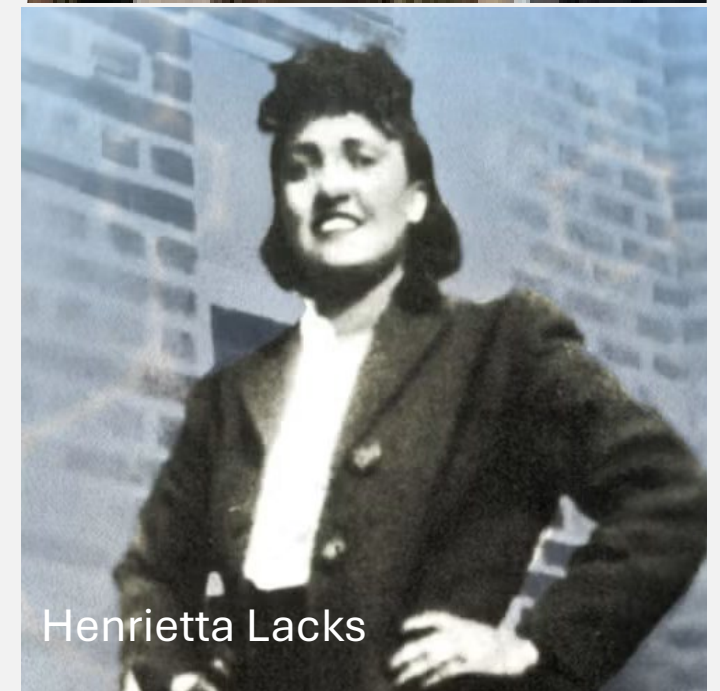
1. ***Identify a study you are or will be working on that is ideal for community recruitment and engagement. What makes it a good fit?***
2. ***What is the connection of this study with patients' health, increased knowledge, or addressing public health needs?***

Before going out, ensure you can explicitly communicate the big picture- how it directly improves health, advances care, or serves collective well-being.



Acknowledge past wrongs in research

- Some people still have mistrust and choose not to take part in research because of past wrongs.
- If concerns arise, be prepared to acknowledge past wrongs in research
- Our role is not to persuade participation but to listen, acknowledge concerns, provide accurate information, and respect each person's decision.
- Reassure attendees that protections are in place to safeguard their rights, safety, and privacy in research.



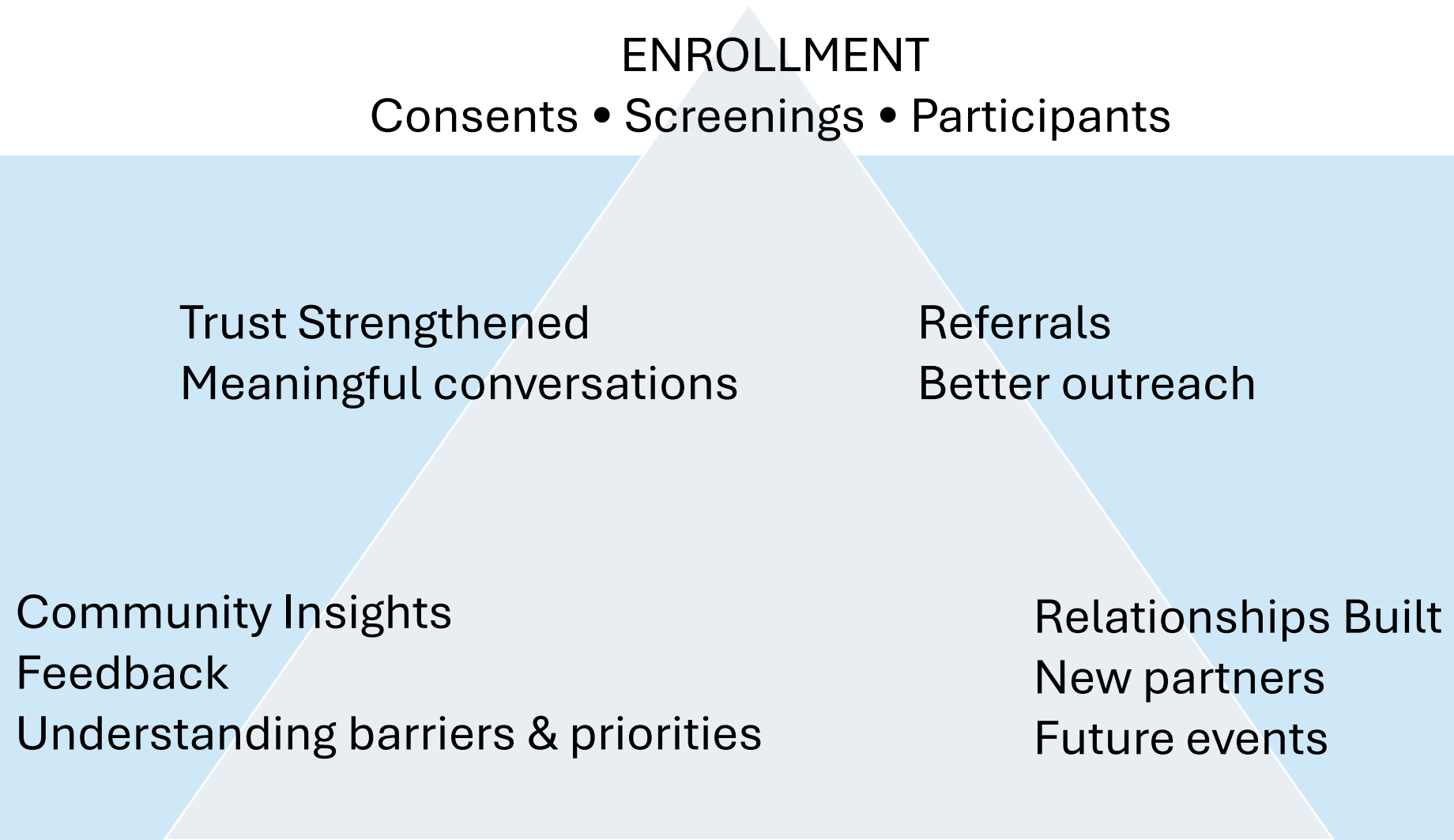
During the Community Event

What does building rapport with someone at a community event look like?

- Listening more than talking
- Building genuine connections
- Using open, respectful communication
- Creating a welcoming environment
- Showing appreciation and gratitude



What Does Success Look Like Beyond Enrollment?



Relationships, trust, learning, and future opportunities often create the foundation for future recruitment success.

Post Event: Follow-up Considerations



Considerations for event follow-up



Offer different
types of contact
information



Ensure
designated
person(s) to
answer study
inquiries in a
timely manner via
email and/phone.



Establish a study
phone line with a
voice message
including
institution name,
department, staff
name, etc.

Example of voice message script:



For English-speaking participants

You have reached the office of Dr. Jones, Howard University, Department of Medicine. If you are calling to inquire about one of our research studies, please leave your name, telephone number, and the study of interest. We will return your call within 24 hours or the next business day. Thank you!

If anticipating recruitment of participants who do not speak English

This is a bilingual message. Este es un mensaje bilingüe.

You have reached the office of Dr. Jones, Howard University, Department of Medicine. If you are calling to inquire about one of our research studies, please leave your name, telephone number, and the study of interest. We will return your call within 24 hours or the next business day. Thank you!

Si llama sobre uno de nuestros estudios clínicos, por favor deje su nombre, número de teléfono y un mensaje breve. Nos comunicaremos con usted lo antes posible. Gracias.



Important
considerations
& follow up to
post
community
event?

Post-event Debriefing & Tracking

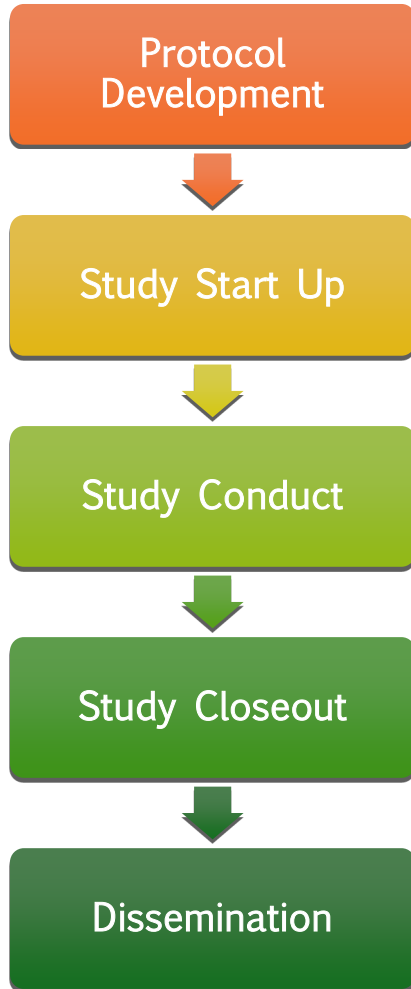
- Track outputs (e.i., encounters, screening, enrolled), stories,
- Debrief: Need not be formal
 - Do ASAP while information is fresh
 - Questions for consideration:
 - What went well, what didn't, what needs improvement?
 - How to improve future events based on attendee feedback & questions?
 - Ways to engage with partners and community after an event (ex: listserv that provides educational info)

To follow: A two-session workshop



In-depth with activities on developing
conversation starters, talking points, etc.

CE & Recruitment Consultation Support



- ✓ Training and coaching for research teams on best practices for recruitment, community-academic partnerships, and community outreach
 - Engagement and recruitment strategic planning & budgeting
 - Focus Groups, CE Studios
 - Community/patient advisory boards
 - Community collaborations
- ✓ Support with developing:
 - Conversation starters & study talking points
 - Outreach kit
 - Scripts for engaging community
 - Presentations in plain language for a lay audience
- ✓ Link study team to community outreach events
- ✓ Referrals for Language translation and interpreting services



**For a no-cost consultation,
Contact us at
florencia.gonzalez@howard.edu
or Finie Richardson at
fkhunter@howard.edu**

**JOIN OUR LISTSERV!
Get information on GHUCCTS
Events & Services**



**Visit our Website at
www.georgetownhowardctsa.org
or
Contact us at
1-855-338-4293 ghuccts@georgetown.edu**

Q&A
