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Improving participation among older African Americans in clinical research: Interim results from a randomized controlled faith-based intervention to increase clinical trial screening and enrollment rates

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Under representation of older African Americans is a serious problem in clinical research. We evaluated how a faith-based educational intervention influenced clinical trial participation among 221 subjects aged 50 to 95 years recruited from six Atlanta Black churches. Nearly half (n=112) were assigned to the intervention, comprising three educational discussion sessions about clinical trials; comparison participants (n=109) completed surveys. Both groups received ongoing notifications about clinical trials seeking participants. Using mixed methods research approaches; we explored participants intentions to seek clinical trials information and tracked their subsequent clinical trial enrollment. Qualitative interviews revealed participants' interest in learning about clinical studies and their enthusiasm for the program. Yet, multivariable linear mixed models showed that participation was not significantly associated with overall increased levels of two intention measurements. Among intervention group participants however, intention to seek information about trials increased significantly by 3 months (mean difference=1.98, $p<0.05$) and at 6 months (mean difference=1.49, $p<0.05$). Younger age was associated with increased intention to seek information at 3 months ($p<0.01$) and 6 months ($p<0.01$) and with increased intention to join trials at 3 months ($p<0.001$) and 6 months ($p<0.05$). Qualitative data revealed participants' enthusiasm about the intervention program including its accessibility and health disparities focus. Intervention participants' reported increased intentions to seek information about and join clinical trials, though this increase was not significantly associated with the intervention itself. Overall, we found those who were younger (example ≤ 70 years) expressed greater interest in trial participation and experienced greater treatment effect on intention to join trials.

Biography

Paula M Frew is an Assistant Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases) and Public Health (Behavioral Sciences and Health Education) at the Emory University School of Medicine and at the Emory Rollins School of Public Health. She is also a Health Scientist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases). She has published more than 60 papers in peer-reviewed journals and is a highly respected expert in community engagement with clinical research, lectures on health disparities in clinical research and she is the recipient of several national awards in clinical research, community engagement and public health.

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