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Negative Perceptions of Cancer Clinical Trials Persist

CSC study shows mistrust and misperceptions about clinical trials remain prevalent

WASHINGTON, DC (Aug 04, 2017) – The Cancer Support Community (CSC), an international nonprofit, today announced the results of its study of cancer survivors' perceptions of clinical trials at the 2017 American Psychological Association Annual Convention. The study shows that negative perceptions of clinical trials and low participation in trials persist – barriers that are elevated among racial and ethnic minorities.

Key findings from the study include:

- 61 percent reported feeling uncomfortable about being randomly assigned to a treatment
- 57 percent expressed fear they would receive a placebo
- 24 percent believed their insurance would not cover the costs of a clinical trial
- 18 percent thought that logistical barriers such as transportation would make it impossible to fulfill trial requirements

Only 41 percent of cancer survivors recalled having a discussion about clinical trials with their health care team.

Some views about clinical trials were related to race and ethnicity, even after accounting for differences in education and income. Compared to Non-Hispanic White participants, Black and African American, Asian, and Hispanic participants reported less understanding of clinical trials and greater mistrust and fear of being used as “guinea pigs.”

“Clinical trials are essential for advancing cancer research of treatment and finding a cure. However, fewer than five percent of adults with cancer participate in trials nationally,” explained Joanne Buzaglo, Ph.D., Senior Vice President of Research and Training at CSC. “To increase participation rates, we must ramp up outreach efforts to racial and ethnic minority groups because having diversity in trials increases the generalizability of the results.”

“These findings tell us that there is much work to be done to educate patients about clinical trials and increase their sense of trust,” said Claire Saxton, Senior Director of Education and Outreach at CSC. “Novel approaches like CSC’s [*Frankly Speaking About*](#)

Cancer Clinical Trials: A Narrative, present real conversations that patients, their family members, and their health care teams had about their decisions to participate in a clinical trial and helps debunk myths about clinical trials that still exist.”

Over 3000 participants took part in this study. They are a part of CSC’s Cancer Experience Registry that includes over 12,000 patients and caregivers of 45 cancer types.

See [full poster presented](#) at the 2017 American Psychological Association Annual Convention.

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About Cancer Support Community

As the largest professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, the Cancer Support Community (CSC), including its Gilda’s Club affiliates, is dedicated to ensuring that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action, and sustained by community. CSC achieves its mission through three areas: direct service delivery, research, and advocacy. The organization includes an international network of Affiliates that offer the highest quality social and emotional support for people impacted by cancer, as well as a community of support available online and over the phone. The Research and Training Institute conducts cutting-edge psychosocial, behavioral, and survivorship research. CSC furthers its focus on patient advocacy through its Cancer Policy Institute, informing public policy in Washington, D.C. and across the nation. For more information, please call the toll-free Cancer Support Helpline at 888-793-9355, or visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org. *So that no one faces cancer alone.*®