

The Effectiveness of a Peer Specialist Training Program

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Background

- Clinical trials are key to making progress against cancer, yet fewer than 1 in 20 adult cancer patients enroll in clinical trials, and only 3-5% identify as Black or African American (AA).
- Peer support is an evidence-based practice used in various disease states and is proven to increase patient knowledge, social supports, and care navigation; yet few programs exist within the cancer clinical trial space, and fewer are specific to the needs of Black/AA cancer patients.
- In Spring 2022, 8 individuals participated in a 12-hour, 6-part virtual training series for Peer Specialists as part of CSC's Peer Clinical Trials Support Program.

Aims

- This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of a peer support training program at improving the knowledge and helping ability of Peer Specialists in the Peer Clinical Trials Support Program.

Methods

- A total of 8 trainees completed a pre/post survey which consisted of a total of 18 5-point Likert scale questions measuring their knowledge of clinical trials (9) and peer support (2) and confidence in their helping ability (7).
- The post-survey included 9 additional satisfaction questions on a 5-point Likert scale and 5 open-ended responses.
- Paired t-tests were analyzed for improvement in knowledge and helping ability. Qualitative data was analyzed to identify common themes.

Participants

N= 8	n (%)
Gender	
Female	8 (100)
Race	
Black	8 (100)
Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic	8 (100)
Age Range	
45-54 years	2 (25)
55-64 years	2 (25)
65-74 years	3 (37.5)
75-84 years	1 (12.5)
Primary Cancer Diagnosis	
Breast	6 (75)
Lung	1 (12.5)
Multiple Myeloma	1 (12.5)
Years Since Clinical Trial Participation	
3 years or less	4 (50)
4-6 years	2 (25)
Professional in the Field	
Yes	3 (37.5)
No	5 (62.5)

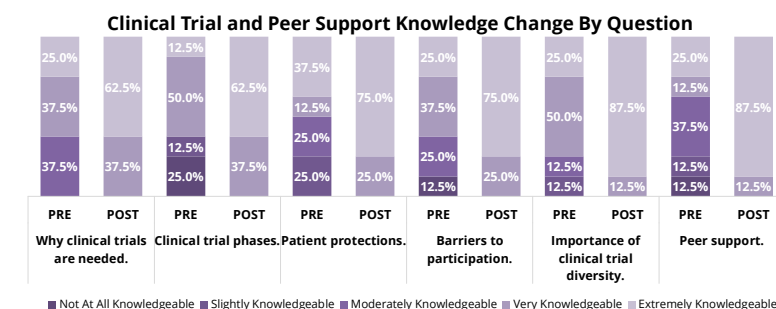
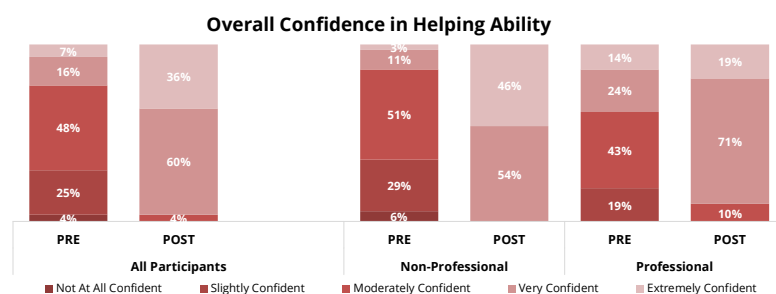
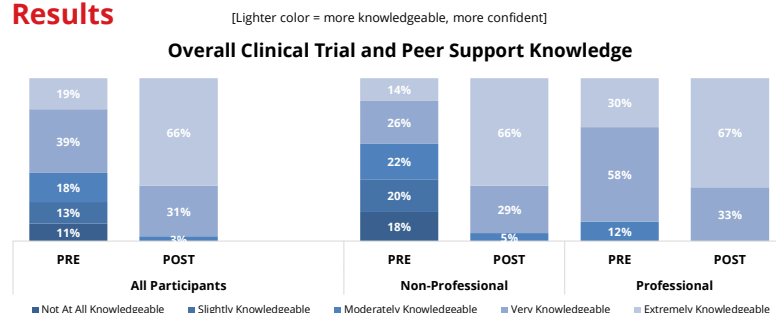
Acknowledgments

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Training Curriculum

Session 1: What is Peer Support?	Session 4: Effective Communication Part 1
Session 2: Understanding Cancer Clinical Trials	Session 5: Effective Communication Part 2
Session 3: Barriers and Myths to Clinical Trial Participation	Session 6: Program Operations

Results



Results, cont.

[Lighter color = stronger agreement]

Training Satisfaction



- There is a notable shift to greater overall perceived knowledge among all participants, with more than half (66%) being extremely knowledgeable following the training. Participants averaged a 35% increase in knowledge levels overall.
- Participants' confidence in their helping ability increased overall, with 60% indicating they were very confident and 36% extremely confident following the training. Participants averaged a 41% increase in confidence levels overall.
- Both non-professionals and professionals reported knowledge and confidence growth, with non-professionals averaging 53% growth in knowledge and 171% growth in confidence, compared to 14% and 21% for professionals, respectively.
- Knowledge levels increased across all statements, with the most gains seen in patient protections, clinical trial diversity, and peer support.
- Most participants agreed (37.5%) or strongly agreed (50%) they were satisfied with the training and 100% of participants agreed/strongly agreed the training will help them provide better support to patients.

Conclusions and Implications

- Cancer patients have various needs related to clinical trials; therefore, it is essential a peer training program train participants across multiple disciplines.
- Both non-professionals and professionals reported increased gains, suggesting the effectiveness of a peer training program for individuals of varying competencies and experiences.
- In development of a peer training program, time allotment should be considered to ensure all topics are covered appropriately.
- Given the success of the peer training program for the Black/African American community, additional research should be considered for other populations who are underrepresented in cancer clinical trials.

References

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