

Poster presentation

PI5-26. Leveraging motivators to participation in HIV vaccine research in the age of Obama

SB Alexander* and S Im

Address: Communications and External Relations, HIV Vaccine Trials Network, Seattle, WA, USA

* Corresponding author

from AIDS Vaccine 2009
Paris, France. 19–22 October 2009

Published: 22 October 2009

Retrovirology 2009, **6**(Suppl 3):P227 doi:10.1186/1742-4690-6-S3-P227

This abstract is available from: <http://www.retrovirology.com/content/6/S3/P227>

© 2009 Alexander and Im; licensee BioMed Central Ltd.

Background

The HVTN 505 trial recruits men who have sex with men who are HIV uninfected, between the ages of 18 and 45, and meet behavioral criteria demonstrating that they are at risk of HIV infection. Current attitudes of HIV vaccine research were assessed to inform the development of recruitment materials.

Methods

Focus groups were held in four cities, with participants self-reported to be men who have sex with men between the ages of 18–45. Participants were recruited through Craig's list and community based organizations. Word and theme association with HIV vaccine trials, as well as motivators and barriers to trial participation, were explored. In a second phase, 12 men at a Seattle coffee shop were interviewed and asked to select among three potential headlines for materials.

Results

Focus group participants identified altruism as the top motivator to participation in HIV vaccine research, and participants reported HOPE as the first word that came to mind after hearing "HIV Vaccine." Associating HOPE and HIV vaccine research was an objective in development a recruitment campaign. Several headlines were developed and three selected for further testing. One-half (50%) of interviewees in Seattle chose HOPE TAKES ACTION as the preferred headline. The headline reflects the altruism that drives participation for many people; copy focuses on the key barrier to participation by stating that the vaccines cannot cause HIV infection.

Materials include print ads/posters, palm cards, postcards, web banner ads and a website <http://www.HopeTakesAction.org>. All materials direct readers to the website, which provides basic information about the study and a mechanism to request contact from a local study site.

Conclusion

Materials build on the perception of an HIV vaccine as hope, and address concerns that inhibit trial participation. They further reflect the mood of the country in the early years of the Obama administration.