

## **Using Innovation to Engender Trust, Transparency, and Enthusiasm to Recruit and Retain Study Participants**

**Greater Chicago Study Center**

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Recruiting and retaining participants are two of the most essential components for the success of longitudinal studies such as the NCS. Community engagement efforts enhance initial and continued participation, which not only elevates the trust of community members, but also allow researchers to play an active role in the community's perception of the NCS. Three formative research projects at the GCSC are using innovative methods to better understand factors that influence enrollment and retention in the Study: 1) using electronic chat rooms and putting video cameras in the hands of community members to produce self-made videos that could be run via social media outlets or other media outlets; 2) encouraging active involvement of partners/fathers/significant others in a participant's consent process; 3) engaging parents of pregnant teens who could potentially participate in the NCS in the future. Engaging the community to produce self-made videos about their thoughts of the Study shows transparency. Initial results from the NCS Original Vanguard suggest that partner/father/significant other involvement is an important factor in a woman's choice to participate in the Study. The GCSC is taking this a step further and asking significant others to become active participants in the consent visit. Understanding why certain populations do and do not choose to enroll in research will help the NCS in recruiting and retaining these individuals, showing the community that the Study is interested in their opinions and ideas. Transparency is not easily revealed and trust not easily gained. Innovative approaches are crucial to navigate beyond merely raising awareness of the NCS to directly engaging community members in a dialogue about the Study.