

## **NCS Recruitment and Retention Network:**

In-Depth Interviews with Vanguard Center Staff  
Related to NCS Outreach, Recruitment and Retention

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Suzanne A. Milbourne<sup>1</sup>, Deidre Sepavich<sup>2</sup>, A. Chantal Caviness<sup>3</sup>, Deborah Davis<sup>4</sup>, Bruce Gale<sup>4</sup>, Nadine Peacock<sup>5</sup>, Beatrice J. Selwyn<sup>3</sup>, Lesley Cottrell<sup>6</sup>, for the NCS Recruitment and Retention Network

Introduction. The NCS Recruitment and Retention Network aims to identify recruitment and retention barriers for specific “difficult to reach” populations. The Network recognizes that the Vanguard Centers (VC) have had valuable experience with a variety of populations.

Methods. Face-to-face, guided structure interviews with VC staff were designed to: a) identify knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of the special populations that may serve as barriers to women’s participation in NCS; and b) identify strategies that facilitate women’s participation in NCS via increased support from others in their surroundings. Typed interview notes were reviewed by VC locations to ensure accuracy.

Results. Pairs of R&R Network members interviewed a total of 100\* VC staff representing a range of NCS roles including site PI, outreach, call center, enumeration, recruitment and home and birth visit teams.

Conclusions. Preliminary findings: Essential to recruitment and retention efforts is modifying outreach dependent on study location population characteristics; hiring staff representative of and using local phone exchanges for the study location is vital; a case management approach is a useful method for retention; cross-training of staff ensures consistency in the message presented to the community; having a shared database containing recruitment and retention materials would be cost effective and improve efficiency in study material development; and an average of six-months to a year of lead-time for community engagement and outreach is necessary. Despite the original intent to identify barriers to recruitment and retention for specific “difficult to reach” populations, the findings suggest the need to apply these “lessons learned” throughout each study location.

1 University of Delaware – CHOP SC, 2University of Massachusetts, 3 Baylor College of Medicine, 4 University of Louisville SC, 5 University of Illinois, Chicago – Greater Chicago SC, 6 West Virginia University – Alleghenies Consortium SC

\* Rounds to 100. SOURCE: NCS Alternate Recruitment Substudy, Vanguard Study, November 2010-April 2011. NOTE: NCS Rounding Rules applied