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## Background:

- ❖ OPTIMUM is a multi-site pragmatic clinical trial for persons with chronic low back pain randomized to a mindfulness clinical pain management program or to usual care. The trial is conducted by three health care system sites; Boston Medical Center, University of Pittsburgh and UNC-Chapel Hill in partnership with Piedmont Health Services.
- ❖ Participant engagement and retention are vital factors in pragmatic clinical trials to ensure participants' commitment to the entire course of the study.
- ❖ Implementing robust engagement, recruitment, and retention strategies help achieve the study goals while enhancing participant safety and trust.
- ❖ Our goals were to identify effective cohort retention and engagement strategies and then to implement the most effective and efficient identified.

## Methods:

- ❖ Over three 1-hour sessions the OPTIMUM team reviewed recruitment and retention methods.
- ❖ Team members included investigators, project coordinators, and research assistants across all three sites.
- ❖ The team discussion was led by study PI Dr. Natalia Morone and explored all the methods used at each site.



## Future Recruitment and Retention Plans:

- ❖ Creative Committee developed for ongoing recruitment and retention ideas
- ❖ Research assistant monthly meetings instituted for review of issues as they arise

## Retention and Engagement for the Mindfulness Intervention Arm

- ❖ Additionally, our strategies are often adjusted based on the group. Retention and engagement for the mindfulness intervention participants includes:
  - ❖ Peer support
  - ❖ Communication and connection between participants in mindfulness breakout rooms
  - ❖ Interaction with the study clinician
  - ❖ Reinforce mindfulness and meditation and its connection to decreasing pain

## Conclusion

It is important to understand participant needs and find methods and strategies to motivate participants to remain engaged with the study. We have found a variety of strategies to engage and retain participants, with one of the most important being a warm and compassionate approach to ongoing interaction and communication.

## Acknowledgment

This work is supported within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Health Care Systems Research Collaboratory by the NIH Common Fund through cooperative agreement U24AT009676 from the Office of Strategic Coordination within the Office of the NIH Director and by the NIH through the NIH HEAL Initiative under award number UH3AT010621 from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. This work is also supported by the NIH through the NIH HEAL Initiative under award number U24AT010961. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIH or its HEAL Initiative.