

# Making the Case for Volunteering: UCSD's CTRI Clinical Volunteers Campaign.

## About UCSD's CTRI

UCSD's Clinical and Translational Research Institute provides research resources, training, and collaboration opportunities for CTRI scientists, health care providers, and the community.

The CTRI is part of a national Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) consortium created to accelerate laboratory discoveries into treatments for patients. The CTSA program is led by the National Institutes of Health's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS).

## About ResearchWorks

We're dedicated to helping socially-minded organizations advance their mission and improve their bottom line. We provide marketing and communication strategies to life sciences, hospitals, nonprofits, medical device companies, and others working for improved health.

For more information, go to:  
[www.researchworks.com](http://www.researchworks.com)

## The Challenge

Getting people to sign up for medical studies/clinical trials is a hard thing to do. There are stigmas, fears, health and safety concerns, and time drains that can be obstacles to getting volunteers. The result of not getting diverse people into medical studies means that cures are delayed, health disparities persist, and communities don't benefit from medical breakthroughs.

## The Breakthrough

We learned that in order for people to engage, (1) they would need to understand why clinical research mattered, (2) they'd have to have an idea of what clinical research is, and (3) we'd have to address their safety concerns.

We transformed these insights into a strategy to reach these audiences by using our Communication Touchstone to define the specific target audience, and what we want them to "Think, Feel, and Do" as a result of seeing our campaign. We identified the "WIFM": people would consider volunteering if it benefited them or people in their community.

Key barriers to volunteering for clinical research included: a) people didn't know what a clinical trial was, b) people didn't know if it was safe, and c) people didn't know what would be required of them. Once we informed the audience of those unknowns, we needed them to see the "WIFM." From the results of the group interviews, we understood that people would consider volunteering if it benefited them or people in their community. Creatively, the strategy we developed was to put the emphasis on each of these benefits by using thematic images and messaging.

UCSD's CTRI (University of California San Diego's Clinical and Translational Research Institute) engaged ResearchWorks to help them overcome the obstacles and to get effective campaigns out into communities so that people would volunteer for more studies. Through our collaborative approach of



teaching while doing, CTRI's staff gained training and built capacity to do this kind of campaign development on their own in the future.

CTRI's target communities were Spanish-speaking Hispanics in Imperial County, Asian-Pacific Islanders, veterans, and those with a chronic disease. To identify and overcome obstacles for these communities, we conducted focus groups with Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Operation Samahan, the VA of San Diego, and the Epilepsy Foundation.

## The Campaign

The execution of the campaign led to the creation of two posters to be placed in the waiting rooms of medical facilities, where potential volunteers have the time and are more receptive to medical-related information.



**Everyone Benefits When You Volunteer**

**Even You**

**Consider Learning More at ResearchMatch**

**It's important.** The medical advances we all benefit from today, are made possible by people like you volunteering for medical research.

**Safety's first.** At ResearchMatch your personal information is only shared with legitimate researchers to determine what studies you are a match for. Then, when you are invited to join a study you get all the information up front in a one-on-one discussion. All your questions are answered and your health is monitored through the study.

**It's easy to learn more and sign up.** ResearchMatch connects volunteers like you to legitimate research studies from universities and hospitals, safely and conveniently. Visit the website below to learn more about the possibilities.

[www.participate.ucsd.edu](http://www.participate.ucsd.edu) 



**Each One of Us Holds a Piece of the Research Puzzle.**

**Help us solve it.**

**Consider Joining ResearchMatch.**

**It's important.** The medical advances we all benefit from today, are made possible by people like you volunteering for medical research.

**Safety's first.** At ResearchMatch your personal information is only shared with legitimate researchers to determine what studies you are a match for. Then, when you are invited to join a study you get all the information up front in a one-on-one discussion. All your questions are answered and your health is monitored through the study.

**It's easy to learn more and sign up.** ResearchMatch connects volunteers like you to legitimate research studies from universities and hospitals, safely and conveniently. Visit the website below to learn more about the possibilities.

[www.participate.ucsd.edu](http://www.participate.ucsd.edu)  

The “puzzle” poster’s objective is to help people understand that each and every reader can fulfill a role in the clinical research process, and that everyone is needed. The “hero” poster highlights the individual volunteer’s reward in terms of community recognition and contribution to the well-being of the community.

Both posters emphasize the importance of volunteering while addressing the doubts and fears that arise in the minds of the public. The subheads “It’s Important,” “Safety’s first,” and “It’s easy to learn more and sign up,” help people move beyond objections and give them a clear call to action.