SHARING RESULTS FOR EQUITY IN RESEARCH

THE COMMUNITY COALITION FOR EQUITY IN RESEARCH creates tools and materials for researchers to help address common issues identified during the study review process. This guide gives best practices for equitably sharing research results with community members after a study is completed. This includes returning individual research results to participants as well as sharing general results with the community. The guidelines below are applicable to both kinds of results.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Returning research results to study participants and to community members should be a primary goal of research. Researchers have an ethical obligation to return results to participants. The findings may also be useful to the community for education, healthcare delivery, and community health. Sharing research results also helps to build trust between researchers and the community. Community members can give feedback and help critically expand the research to ask new questions. This may encourage more people to engage with research in the future.

ACTION STEPS FOR RETURNING RESEARCH RESULTS

Plan Ahead
- Think about how you will share research results from the beginning of your study.
- Engage with community partners.
- Engage with experts outside your field (e.g., content creators, digital media, design) to help you creatively share results.

Define Goals
- Who is your audience(s)?
- What are the key findings?
- What is the purpose of sharing the findings? (e.g., education, systems change, advocacy, policy?)

Develop Content
- Decide with members of your audience the best way to share research results (e.g., flyer, community meeting, etc.).
- Ensure all material is written in plain language and translated in appropriate languages for your audiences.

Share Results
- Leave time for questions and a way to contact the team for additional questions.
- Develop various methods to collect feedback from your audience to work towards continuous improvement.

TIPS FOR ENSURING EQUITY IN RETURNING RESEARCH RESULTS

Use plain language throughout all content and explain terms where needed. We recommend using this plain language checklist for your materials.
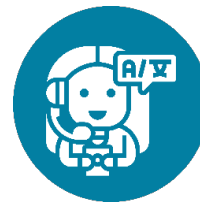
Make content available in the languages best suited for your audience. We recommend these local and certificated translation and interpretation services for your materials.

For design, use darker font on light background, adjust for different printing limitations (e.g. black and white printouts) and use culturally relevant graphics.

Use subtitles and captions with audiovisual materials. Also, use alt text for graphics on websites.

Get creative!
Share results using…
- Presentations
- Facebook lives
- One-pagers
- Radio shows
- Digital media

Additional guidance for returning individual results to research participants. is available from the Multi-Regional Clinical Trials Center resources here.

OTHER RESOURCES:

Six Ways to Share Your Research Findings: This article suggests further ways to think about sharing research results once a study is complete.

Community-Centered Dissemination Toolkit: This website from the University of Minnesota has an entire toolkit for community-centered research dissemination. You can download the entire toolkit to help plan your return of results.

Dissemination as Dialogue: Building Trust and Sharing Research Findings Through Community Engagement: This article by the CDC gives lessons learned on research dissemination through community presentations. It gives clear recommendations for sharing research findings and provides examples of each recommendation.

REVIEW YOUR STUDY WITH US:

The Community Coalition for Equity in Research serves as a free resource for high-quality community input on research proposals and protocols, as well as a trusted communication channel between researchers and community stakeholders.

Please email community@catalyst.harvard.edu if you are interested in having your research study reviewed by our coalition members.

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