



**PROVOC** CLINICAL  
RESEARCH STUDY  
RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

# SURVEY RESULTS:

What researchers are saying about  
the challenges of study recruitment

**May 2018**

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## Study Recruitment: Common Challenges for Researchers

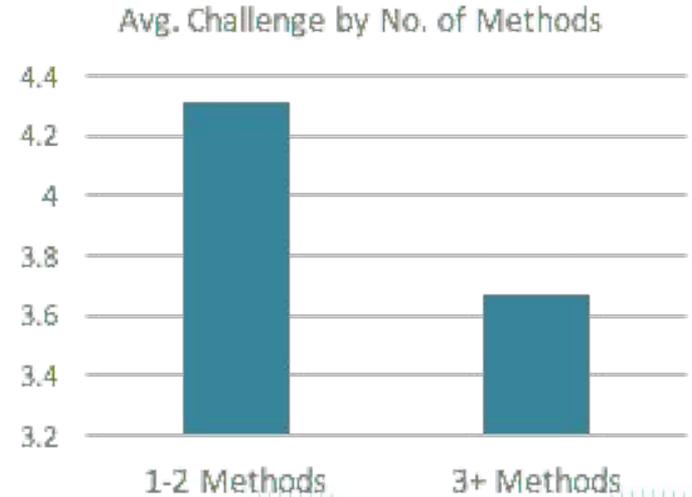
Provoc heard from 28 researchers around the U.S. who responded to a short, online survey in Sept-Nov. 2017. The survey was used to learn about recruitment challenges and what researchers are doing to overcome them. We report three key findings from our analysis and provide the survey questions and answers for additional reference.

Participation in research can be the opportunity of a lifetime for volunteers to help advance medical treatment options, safety, and hope for oneself and others. We are grateful to learn from the research community whose work we are here to support. It is from this perspective that Provoc approaches communications to accelerate study recruitment.

Research study recruitment is challenging but also manageable.

## #1 Use of Fewer Methods Correlates to Higher Challenge

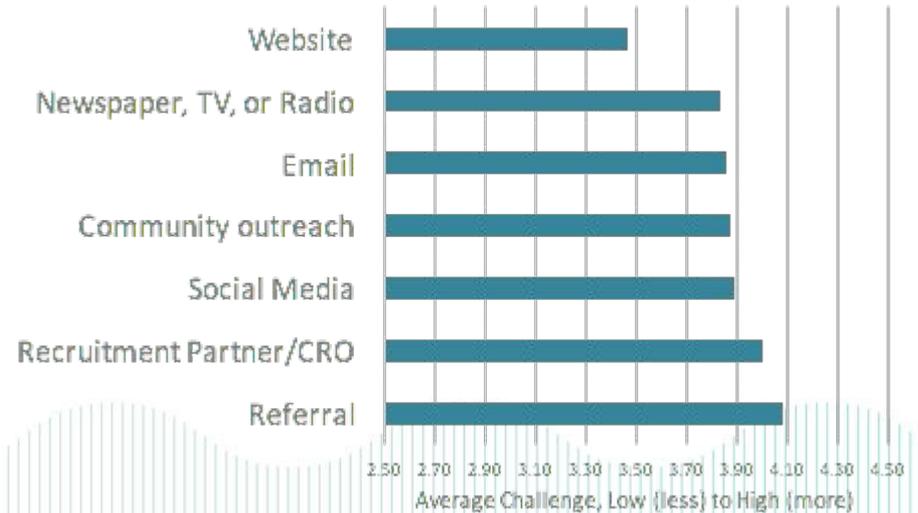
- ▲ **Recruitment challenges are higher** for researchers who use only 1-2 methods of recruitment, compared to those who use 3+ methods. In our survey, 16 of 28 use 1-2 methods, and 12 people report 3+ methods.
- ▲ **A website is a key differentiator.** Among researchers who use 1-2 methods, 14 out of 16 *do not* use a website and report higher challenge on average. For researchers who use 3 or more methods, 10 out of 12 use a website and report lower challenges on average.



## #2 Use of a Website Correlates to Lower Challenge

- ▲ **Researchers who use a website** as part of their recruitment program report the lowest level of challenge on average.
- ▲ **Recruitment challenges are lower** on average for researchers who use digital media and community outreach strategies. Those who relied on Partner/CRO and physician referral sources without these other strategies report higher challenges.

Challenge by Method of Recruitment



## #3 A Desire for Diversity and Contact Challenges are the Norm

- ▲ 21 out of 28 respondents are trying to reach **racially/ethnically diverse participants**
- ▲ 19 out of 28 respondents are trying to reach **people without access to email**
- ▲ 16 out of 28 respondents are trying to reach **people without reliable access to transportation**
- ▲ 11 out of 28 respondents are trying to reach **people who are using assistive technology**



# SURVEY RESULTS

Questions, Answers, Charts

# RESULTS

## Q1: Please provide some information about yourself.

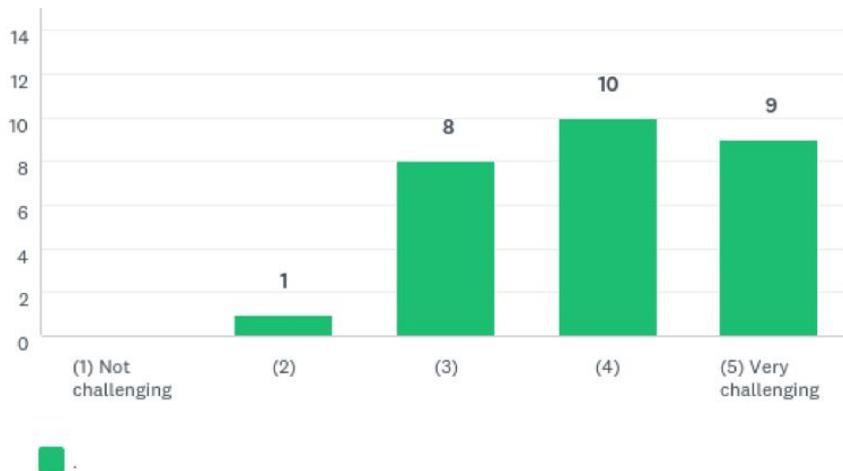
### Answer summary:

- ▲ **By Geography.** Survey respondents are from 28 different organizations in 16 states: AZ, CA, IL, KY, MA, MD, MO, NC, NY, OH, OR, PA, SC, TX, UT, VT
- ▲ **By Job Title:** 16 of 28 responses are from Clinical Research Studies Coordinators, Managers, or Directors; six are professors; six are other healthcare professionals.
- ▲ **By Gender:** Female, 20; Male, 8

# RESULTS

**Q2: On a scale of 1-5, please rate how challenging it is for you to recruit participants for your studies or trials.**

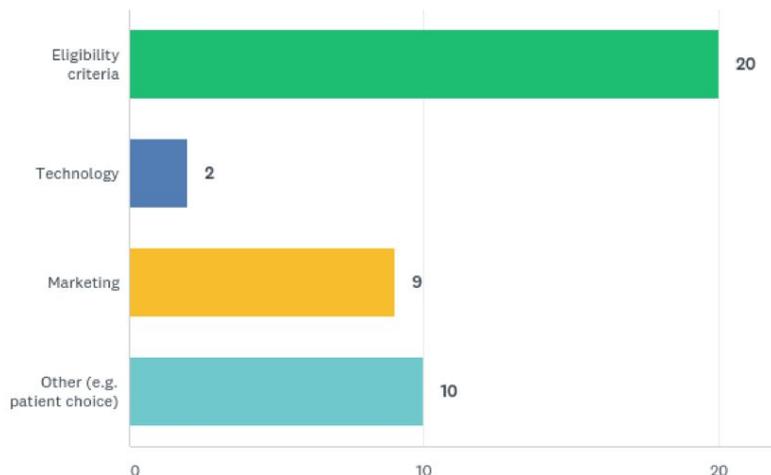
+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



# RESULTS

## Q3: What are your biggest challenges with recruiting participants? (Check all that apply)

+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



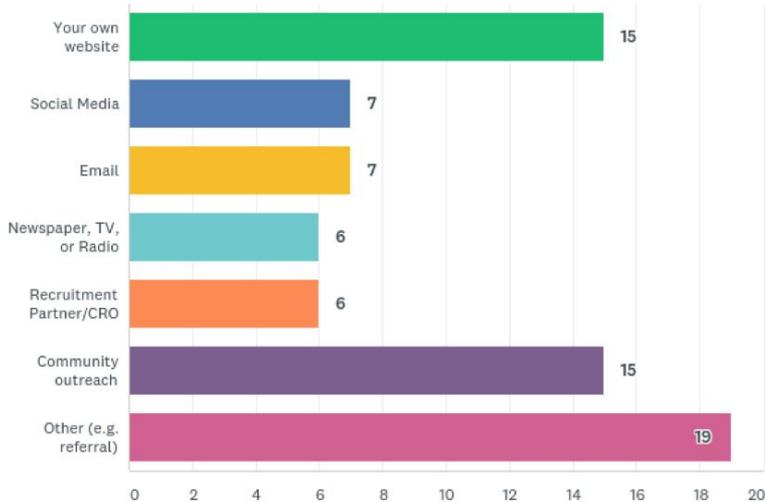
### Other | 11 write-in text responses:

- ▲ Willingness to participate
- ▲ Interest, time commitment, time window to do studies if subjects work
- ▲ Patient preference
- ▲ Competing trials recruiting same patient population
- ▲ Patient unwillingness to join a trial
- ▲ Getting referrals from Ophthalmologists
- ▲ Missing eligible patients that do show up in clinic
- ▲ Patient interest in clinical trial participation
- ▲ Agreement to participate
- ▲ Patients' hesitation due to treatment being experimental
- ▲ Logistics. Finding patients that aren't frightened of trials.

# RESULTS

## Q4: What methods do you use to recruit study participants? (Check all that apply)

+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



### Other | 20 write-in text responses:

- ▲ Most via physician referrals from the ICU and ER
- ▲ Clinic referrals
- ▲ Medical center data
- ▲ Clinic
- ▲ Approach patients at scheduled appointments
- ▲ EMR at Hospital
- ▲ Phone calls to participants
- ▲ Digital and print advertisements
- ▲ Physician referral
- ▲ Physicians, screening physicians schedules
- ▲ Flyers, mailed letters, advertisement on websites
- ▲ Referrals from Ophthalmologists
- ▲ Mailings; physician approach in clinic
- ▲ We recruit from within our own practice pool
- ▲ StudyKIK
- ▲ Referrals
- ▲ Our institution and patient population
- ▲ Approach at scheduled clinic visits
- ▲ Asking other doctors to refer patients who qualify.
- ▲ Key opinion leaders

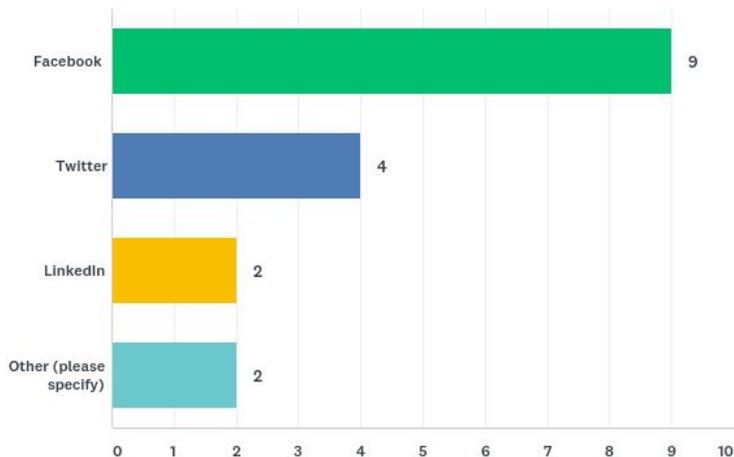
# RESULTS

## Q5: If you answered social media in the above question, which social media channel(s) are you using to recruit study participants? (Check all that apply)

+ Answered: **11** – Skipped: **17**

**Other | 2 write-in text responses:**

- ▲ Instagram
- ▲ NMSS

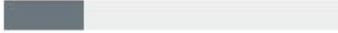
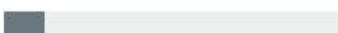


# RESULTS

**Q6: Consider one or more groups of people that are the hardest for you to reach (e.g. older people, racial/ethnic minorities, etc.), but that you must reach to succeed with your research. Please describe the group(s), and what you've done or plan to do to reach them.**

+ Answered: **23** – Skipped: **5**

▲ Summary text analysis based on word frequency

Patients		24%	6
Minorities		20%	5
Older People		12%	3
Women		12%	3

## Write-in text responses:

- ▲ Our study is for HIV+ adults over age 35. Recruitment is much more difficult in areas with greater stigma, since people don't want to be publicly identified as having HIV.
- ▲ Younger minorities
- ▲ younger women because a lot of patients either want to get pregnant so they don't want to use birth control and a lot of trials want the patients who are women to be on birth control or have gone through menopause.
- ▲ older people: direct mailings
- ▲ calciphylaxis patients (organ disease) - contact dialysis providers to help identify patients at their dialysis centers
- ▲ ***(Continued on next page)***

# RESULTS

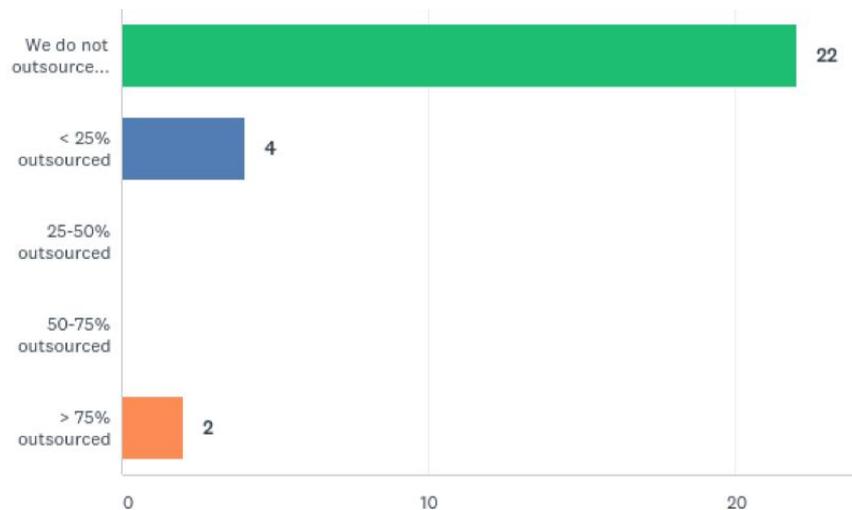
## Q6 (write-in text responses, continued)

- ▲ Younger patients that present for surgery. We've enlisted the help of a spine surgeon to recruit but he has no incentive to recruit.
- ▲ Hispanics because of the language and cultural barrier. We try now to make sure to have Spanish speaking interpreter that are able to convade the study in a way they can make an informed decision.
- ▲ pregnant women, we have used all of the above
- ▲ women. Recruiting was mostly done by the clinical trial sites. We also asked StudyKIK to focus on women.
- ▲ minorities- community outreach in targeted areas
- ▲ Older people. Ads in newspaper insert for Senior Expos, etc. Spoke at Agencies on Aging.
- ▲ Children parents
- ▲ CPAP compliant people
- ▲ people with essential tremor
- ▲ racial/ethnic minorities
- ▲ Severely ill patients who have limited mobility. We have attempted to appeal to themselves and their care givers through digital advertising and patient advocacy group partnerships,
- ▲ Don't have a subset that is harder to reach, but we have made patient education materials and partnered with national organizations for patient advocacy to spread the information.
- ▲ Patient already being treated at another transplant program.
- ▲ ethnic group - speak directly in clinic
- ▲ Ethnic minorities- support groups and churches
- ▲ Older people, people with diabetes
- ▲ Patients with wet macular degeneration Referrals from the Retina Specialists and other Ophthalmologists
- ▲ Minorities: Press release of study

# RESULTS

## Q7: Do you outsource any portion of your recruitment efforts?

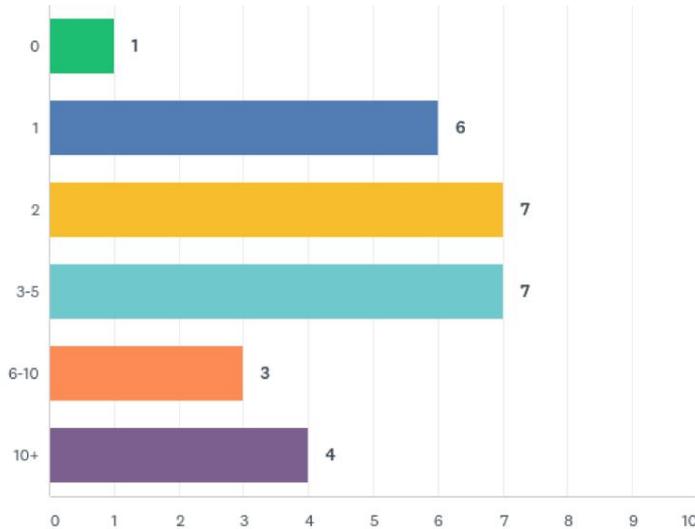
+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



# RESULTS

## Q8: How many studies are you trying to fill?

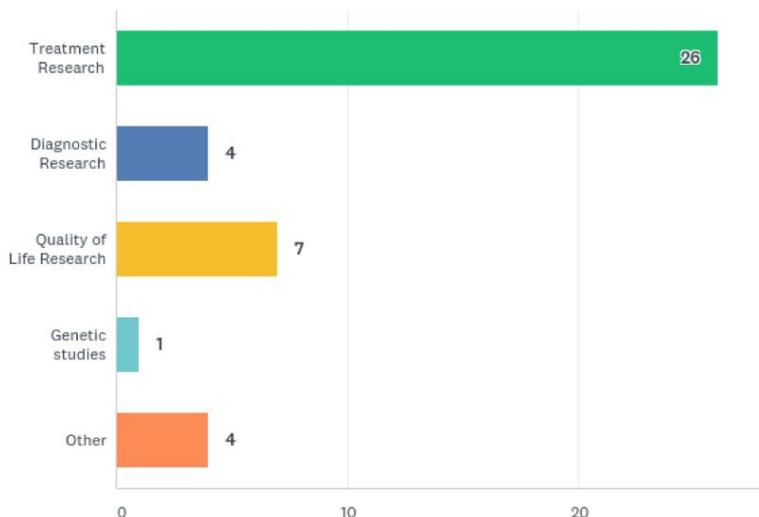
+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



# RESULTS

## Q9: What type of study are you recruiting for? (check all that apply)

+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



**Plus, text responses with "Other" option:**

- ▲ ICU and Critical Illness research
- ▲ Investigational Research
- ▲ Recurrence rates in cancer with diet and exercise
- ▲ Macular Degeneration, Stargardt's Disease

# RESULTS



## Q10: Please list the diseases that your studies are focused on.

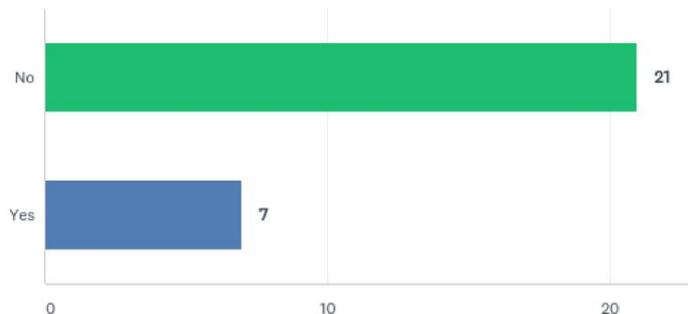
**27** out of **28** responded

- ▲ HPV-related anal cancer among HIV+
- ▲ Multiple Sclerosis
- ▲ Breast cancer, Gynecological cancer, and Radiation Oncology
- ▲ chronic tympanic membrane perforations; vestibular schwannoma; meningioma; severe to profound hearing loss (cochlear implants); acute peripheral vestibulopathy; sudden sensorineural hearing loss
- ▲ Calciphylaxis and end stage renal disease
- ▲ Low back pain, opioid-responsive pain, Chronic pain
- ▲ Lymphoma Multiple Myeloma CLL CNS
- ▲ cigarette smokers
- ▲ autism
- ▲ Macular Degeneration, Stargardt's Disease
- ▲ Headache, Migraine
- ▲ Obstructive Sleep Apnea
- ▲ Obesity
- ▲ CNS....too many to list
- ▲ Breast cancer, pediatric cancer
- ▲ rare diseases and oncology
- ▲ cancer
- ▲ Leukemia, Lymphoma, Multiple Myeloma
- ▲ tobacco use disorder, cannabis use disorder
- ▲ Environmental Hazard Pulmonary diseases Neuropathy
- ▲ Multiple types of cancer
- ▲ Diabetes, Mild Cognitive Impairment
- ▲ Stroke. Neurocritical care
- ▲ Age related macular degeneration
- ▲ ARDS, VTE, Pneumonia, Pulmonary Hypertension, Trauma, Sepsis
- ▲ Sickle cell disease
- ▲ Down syndrome

# RESULTS

## Q11: Do any of your (current) studies have a goal to recruit from racially/ethnically diverse populations?

+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



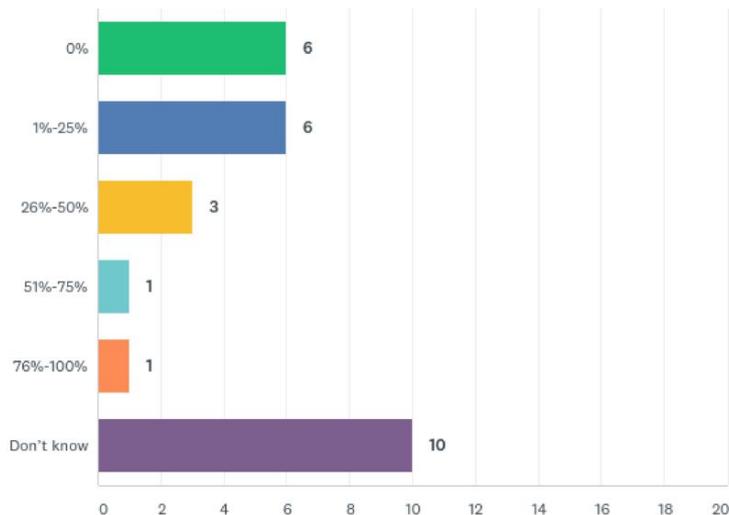
**7 out of 28 added text response:**

- ▲ Whatever representation in clinic without having to translate pregnant non-white
- ▲ General goal of diversity
- ▲ All of them because these are cancer studies
- ▲ No discrimination
- ▲ Not a true accrual number but a statement reflecting the need for a diverse study population for the results to be generalizable
- ▲ African American and Hispanic

# RESULTS

## Q12: In your estimation, approximately what percentage of the people you're trying to reach are using assistive technology?

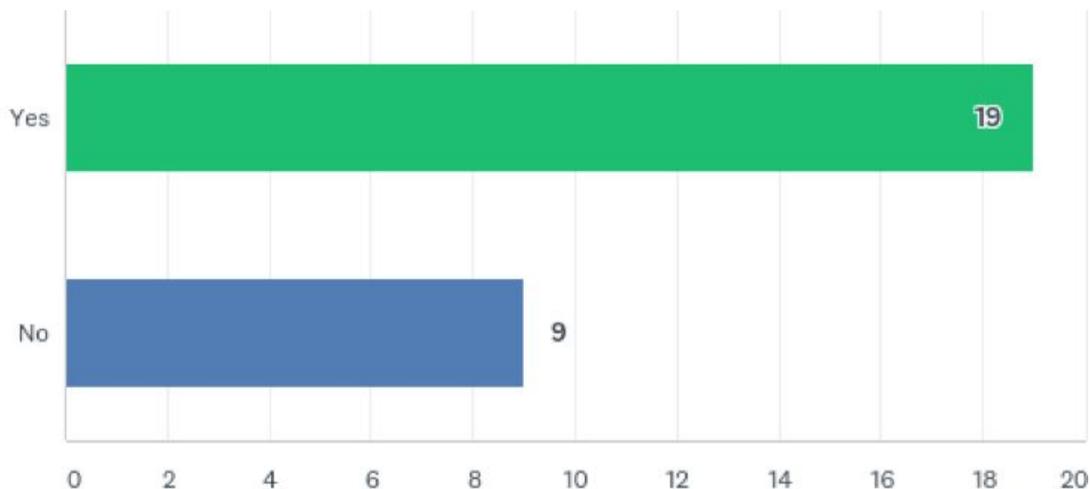
+ Answered: **27** – Skipped: **1**



# RESULTS

## Q13: Do you need to reach people who do not have access to email?

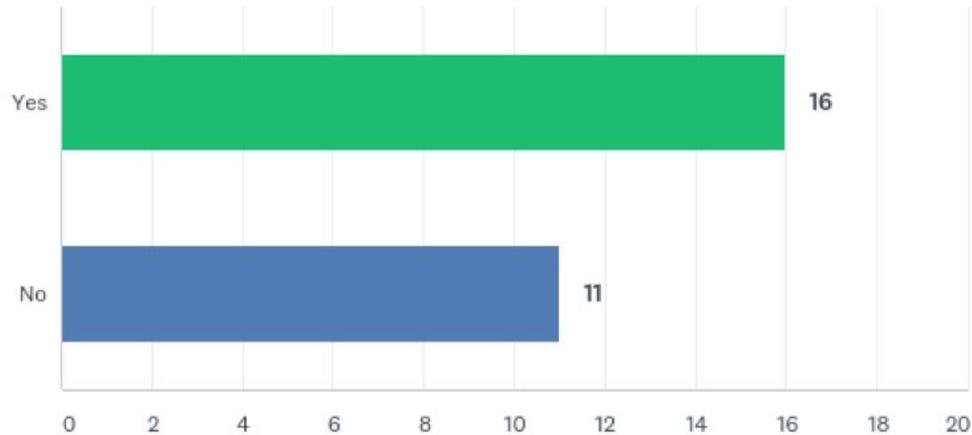
+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



# RESULTS

## Q14: Do you need to reach people who do not have reliable transportation? (i.e. do not own a car, and are not near public transportation)

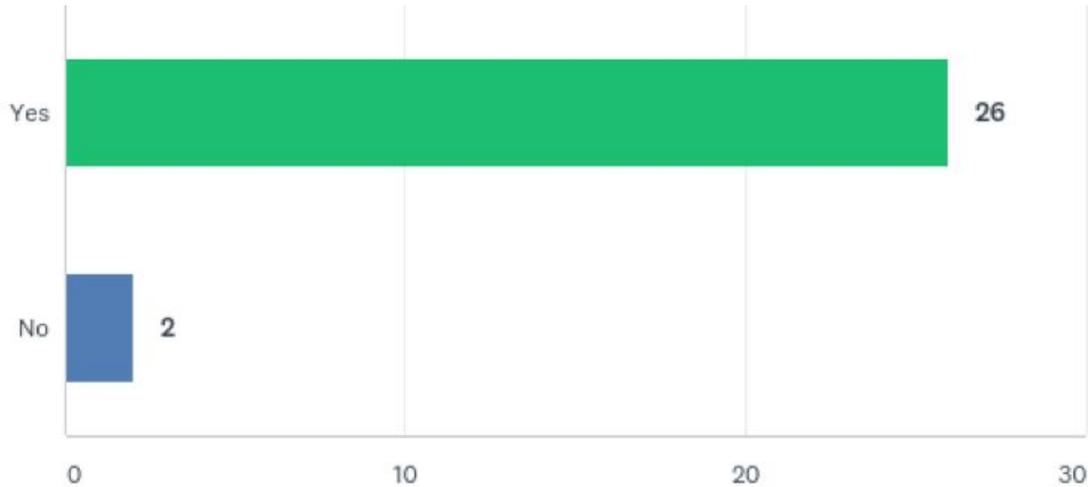
+ Answered: **27** – Skipped: **1**



# RESULTS

## Q15: Are you able to reach people who are visiting a medical facility?

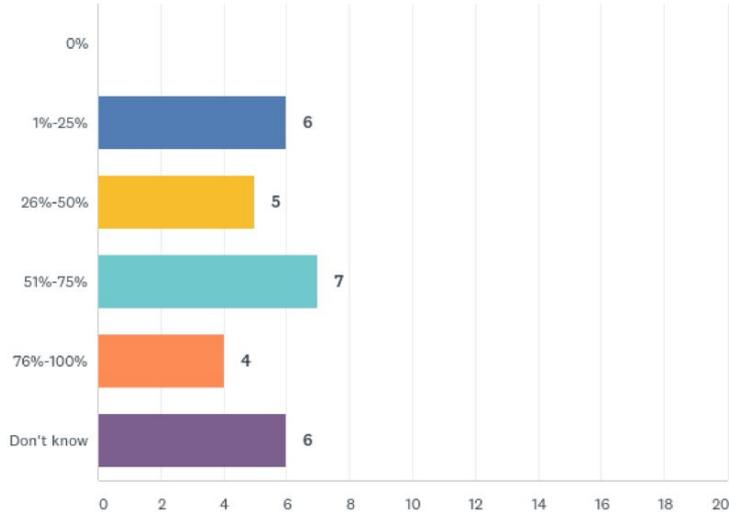
+ Answered: **28** – Skipped: **0**



# RESULTS

## Q16: What percentage of your target population would you estimate would use a mobile device to interact with your recruiting efforts?

+ Answered: **27** – Skipped: **1**



# RESULTS

## Q17: Please share any questions, comments or anything you are curious about that you are grappling with in your recruitment efforts.

**6** out of **28** responded

- ▲ Time availability of facilities and doctors availability also reduce availability of subjects
- ▲ We would like to use more social media and online outreach platforms but don't know exactly where to find our prospective participants
- ▲ Reaching parents of young adults with Down syndrome and community groups
- ▲ General indifference seems to be the biggest problem. Trial participants should be venerated and called out as heroes. Without them, no drugs would ever get approved
- ▲ Not just recruitment, but consistent participation in the treatment based trial is a challenge  
How to overcome their fears

# QUESTIONS?



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If you have any questions about the information shared in this report, please email Raj Aggarwal at [raj@provoc.me](mailto:raj@provoc.me), or call **202-518-6808**.

You may also enjoy a quick stop at our website to read more about Provoc Clinical Research Study Recruitment:

<https://provoc.me/recruitment-program/>