

Title:

The Bronx Community Research Review Board: A Pilot Project

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Introduction:

Abuses committed against communities of color by researchers have eroded trust in research among these populations. Furthermore, it is argued that traditional research ethics fail to address needs of and protection due to communities. Building on community-based participatory research principles and methods, The Bronx Health Link, a community-based organization and Albert Einstein College of Medicine formed a community-academic partnership to pilot test a Bronx model of community consultation and consent. Through development of a research review board consisting of Bronx residents to review research proposals and provide a feedback process to inform the community of research outcomes, it is hoped that understanding of, trust and participation in clinical research will be promoted among low income, minority communities of the Bronx.

Methods:

Ten community members will be trained in research design and protection of human subjects and communities by Bronx Health Link staff and Einstein faculty. This initial board will develop by-laws and pilot test the research review process by requesting presentations of proposals by investigators, opening a face-to-face dialogue about community perspectives on proposed research. The board will advise investigators on recruitment, sensitivities, and effective communications. Investigators are expected to report research outcomes to the board for community use.

Progress-To-Date/Results:

Problems encountered include infrastructure limitations of a community-based organization, navigating NIH systems, and limited funding. However, communication with stakeholders has been established to gain community support and involvement. To inform the research review process, focus groups with residents are being coordinated to elicit community beliefs and attitudes about research.

Conclusion:

Through the establishment of this community-based structure to open dialogue between Bronx community members and Einstein investigators, it is anticipated that community trust in research, academic-community research partnerships and community participation in research will be fostered.

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