

Khoza, L. G. (2008). Challenges with recruiting male partners of participants for acceptability research in hiv prevention trials in south africa. Microbicides 2008. New Delhi, India.

Background: As part of assessing acceptability of HIV prevention technologies among trial participants, we need to understand the acceptability of male partners. In this social science study researchers outline their challenges and strategies with male partner recruitment for in depth interviews. Method: Women were consented by interviewers to contact their male partners only after they informed their partners about their study participation. Interviewers documented the responses from male partners when appointments were being scheduled and noted the challenges faced by women with partner communication on study participation and gel use. Results: Women and their male partners were to be interviewed at different time points of study duration. A total of 100 women were interviewed at the start of the trial and only 10 male partners were able to participate in the in – depth interviews. Recruitment challenges and common reasons for minimal male involvement included : a) most women did not inform their partners that they were participating in the trial and thus men could not be contacted; b) few men reported time constraints due to employment commitments; c) men were working far from home and were not available within study timeframes; d) many mlen refused participation in the interviews as it was related to HIV; e) appointments could not be finalized with men because they kept on postponing the interviews; f) some women reported that their partners will not be comfortable to discuss such issues with the interviewers. Conclusion: Recruitment of male partners can be improved by encouraging women to disclose their trial participation to their partners when they enroll into the study. We need to have greater flexibility in scheduling appointments with men who are employed and male education programs will assist male partner participation in qualitative research.