

Clinical trials from the general public perspective: A preliminary qualitative study in Kuantan, Pahang

Lim Bee Chiu, Mahmud Fatihah, Mohd Jamili Nur Hazwani, Hasnuddin Muhammad Aiman, Kamaronzaman Nur Liyana, Mohamad Nor Fariz Safhan

Clinical Research Centre, Tengku Ampuan Afzan Hospital

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Clinical trials (CT)s are necessary for developing medical knowledge and improving healthcare. The current study identifies the public's awareness, experiences, and perceptions regarding CT participation and dissemination at the community level. **Methods:** The study employed in-depth qualitative interviews with public participants from various demographic backgrounds who stayed in Kuantan. Participants were recruited until saturation was reached. We used a topic guide to facilitate the interviews and audio-recorded it for content analysis. Interviews were recorded on paper and translated from the local Malay language to English for analysis. **Results:** Five males and five females, aged 20 to 80 years old, participated in the interview. Four main themes were identified: awareness, benefits, concern about side effects, and sources of information. The understanding and awareness about CTs are very low, making them hesitate to participate. Only a few participants could associate CTs with medicine or the development of new vaccines. **Conclusion:** There is a need to create awareness about CTs which helps the participants to participate in CTs based on their own decision. These IDI findings require validation in a larger sample. Better information, interactive leaflets, Tiktok social media, and greater emphasis on face-to-face discussion are suggested to understand more about CTs, side effects, and how the procedures are done to them. A further survey is needed to improve the general public's understanding, motivation, and barriers to participating in CTs.