



Methodology of Assessing the Prevalence of Human Trafficking in Nebraska

Erwin, S. (MA), Dalla, R. (PhD, CFLE), Chaidez, V. (PhD, RD), Peter, J. (MS), Williams, T., Mount, A.
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Child, Youth, and Family Studies

Abstract

Human trafficking is a notoriously clandestine enterprise, rendering victim identification difficult. Although figures are reported, they have been challenged for dubious methodology. This research discusses the use of Respondent Drawn and Venue Based Sampling in measuring prevalence within Nebraska. An accurate methodology would result in improved practices assisting this population.

Purpose

- Aim 1:** To develop a state-level methodology to estimate labor and sex trafficking prevalence in Nebraska.
- Aim 2:** To develop an effective sampling site methodology for implementing respondent drawn sampling.
- Aim 3:** To assess the use of community health workers (CHWs) as a resource for identifying and recruiting difficult-to-access populations.

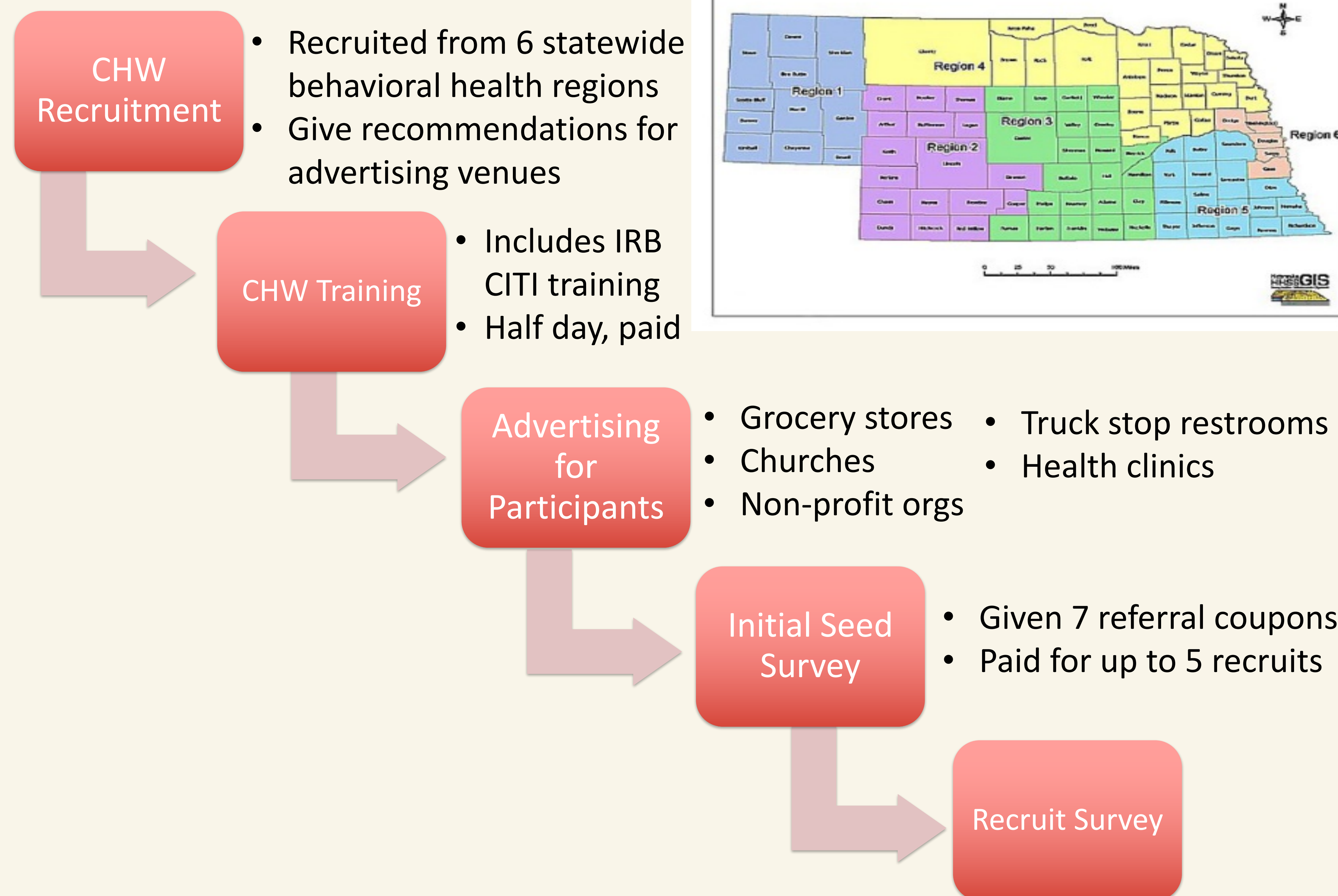
Methods

Participant Survey Process

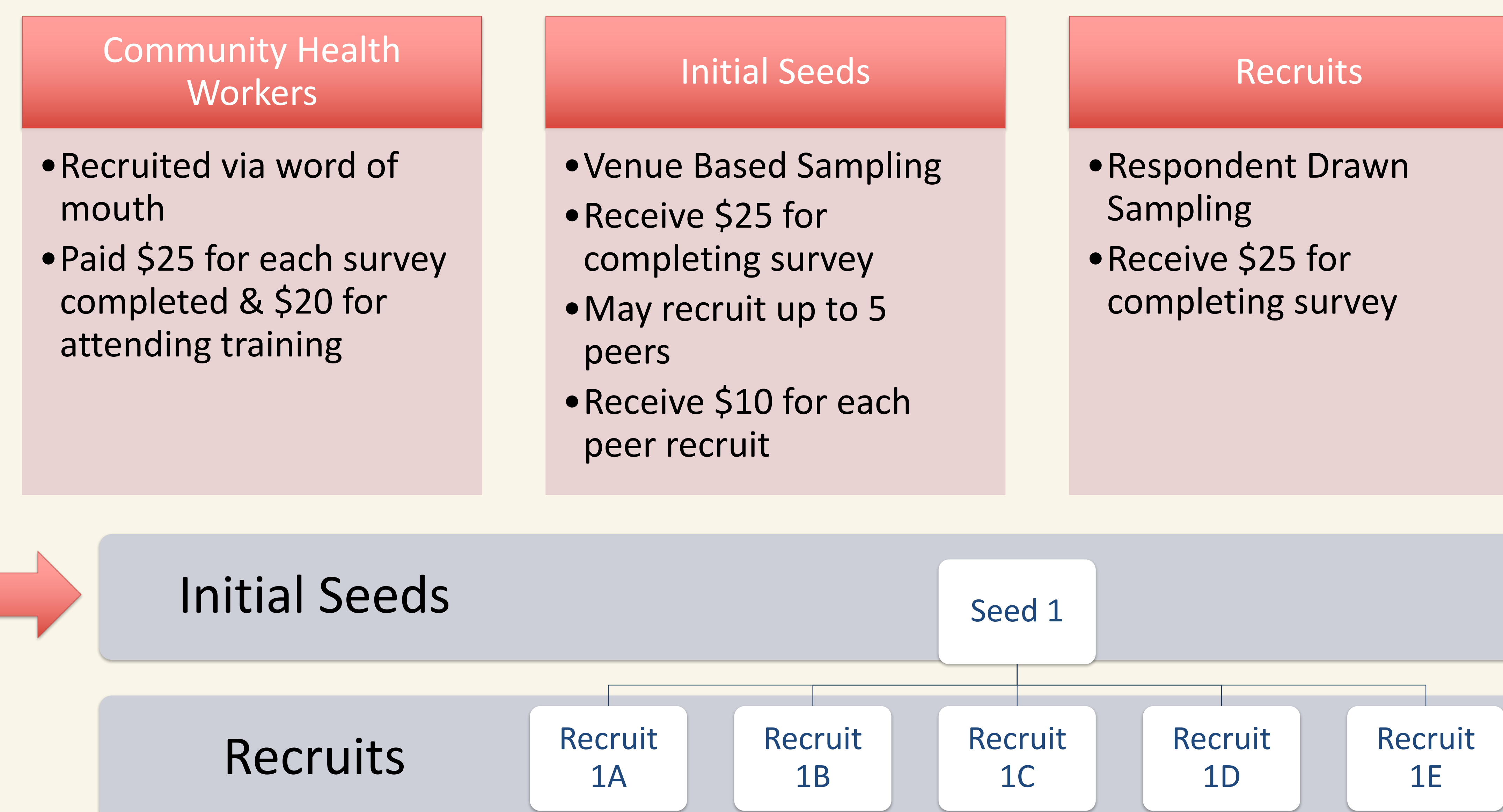
1. Participant calls the advertised phone number.
2. Research assistant fields phone calls and determines if potential participant meets study criteria (Spanish and English).
3. Minors are directed to an online survey. Adults make an appointment to complete the survey with a CHW closest to them.
4. Initial seeds complete the survey, coupons are distributed, initial payments are made.
5. Recruited participants complete the survey. They are given e-gift cards and initial seeds' e-gift cards are reloaded.

Methods Continued

Participant Recruitment Process



Sampling & Recruitment Methodology



Findings

Three rounds of IRB submissions led to many methodological changes, highlighting the difficulty of conducting research with the given population. Changes include:

- For participants 19 and younger, the survey was moved to an online format. This avoids fact-to-face contact, which would require the report of child abuse or neglect.
- Obtained a waiver of parental consent for minors and a waiver of signature consent for all participants.
- All initial seeds are paid for up to 5 recruits, however, each seed receives 7 coupons. This way, they do not know who completes the survey and limits coercion.
- Initial participant criteria determined via the phone rather than face-to-face. This way, the research team is determining who meets criteria rather than CHWs.
- Participant payments are made through e-gift cards. This allows for minors to complete the survey online. CHWs give e-gift cards to adult participants. E-gift cards are able to be reloaded for the initial seeds when recruits take the survey.
- IRB CITI training included in the CHW training manual to avoid CHWs needing to complete the full IRB CITI training online.

Conclusion

- Implications for Recruitment Practice:
 - It is essential to form relationships with CHWs for recruiting and connecting hidden populations with academia.
 - CHWs have knowledge of the intricacies of the communities in which they work, often outside of the geographic regions of academic institutions.