

Participant

Recruiting [participants](#) into [clinical trials](#) continues to be a challenge, which can result in study delay or termination. Recent studies have used social media to enhance recruitment outcomes. An assessment of the literature on the use of social media for this purpose is required.

Objective: This study aims to answer the following questions: (1) How is the use of social media, in combination with traditional approaches to enhance clinical trial recruitment and enrollment, represented in the literature? and (2) Do the data on recruitment and enrollment outcomes presented in the literature allow for comparison across studies?

Methods: We conducted a comprehensive literature search across 7 platforms to identify clinical trials that combined social media and traditional methods to recruit patients. Study and participant characteristics, recruitment methods, and recruitment outcomes were evaluated and compared.

Results: We identified 2371 titles and abstracts through our systematic search. Of these, we assessed 95 full papers and determined that 33 studies met the inclusion criteria. A total of 17 studies reported enrollment outcomes, of which 9 achieved or exceeded their enrollment target. The proportion of participants enrolled from social media in these studies ranged from 0% to 49%. Across all 33 studies, the proportion of participants recruited and enrolled from social media varied greatly. A total of 9 studies reported higher enrollment rates from social media than any other methods, and 4 studies reported the lowest cost per enrolled participant from social media.

Conclusions: While the assessment of the use of social media to improve clinical trial participation is hindered by reporting inconsistencies, preliminary data suggest that social media can increase participation and reduce per-participant cost. The adoption of consistent standards for reporting recruitment and enrollment outcomes is required to advance our understanding and use of social media to support clinical trial success. ¹⁾

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Darmawan I, Bakker C, Brockman TA, Patten CA, Eder M. The Role of Social Media in Enhancing Clinical Trial Recruitment: Scoping Review. J Med Internet Res. 2020 Oct 26;22(10):e22810. doi: 10.2196/22810. PMID: 33104015.

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