Validation of an Online Training Program for Stem Cell Donor Recruiters

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INTRODUCTION

Unrelated stem cell donors are recruited either online or at stem cell drives, at which recruiters guide registrants to provide informed consent and a tissue sample (buccal-swab) for HLA-typing. Registrant experience at time of recruitment has been shown to impact their commitment as donors, with higher ambivalence seen among registrants who believed recruiting staff were less knowledgeable.1 This highlights the need for well-trained, competent recruiters. Previously, we reported the development of our online training program for stem cell donor recruiters.2 Here, we validate this online training against in-person training.

METHODS

An informed consent and quality control quiz was developed and administered to new volunteer recruiters following completion of either online or in-person training sessions. The informed consent quiz assessed knowledge of topics that the registrant is required to understand to be fully informed at time of recruitment, as per World Marrow Donor Association guidelines.3 The quality control quiz assessed the ability to identify and correct common errors that can occur during stem cell drives. Participants consented for their anonymized quiz scores to be included in the analysis. Recruiters who had previously completed training or had attended a stem cell drive within the previous six months were excluded. Results were scored against pre-set rubrics. Informed consent and quality control scores were summed for each participant in each group. Two-tailed t-tests were used to identify significant changes in quiz scores between online and in-person groups.

- In-person Training Cohort: 58 volunteer recruiters completed an in-person training session on 10/01/2015, facilitated by a Canadian Blood Services staff trainer.
- Online Training Cohort: From 09/15-09/16, 160 volunteer recruiters across Canada completed the online training.

RESULTS

Informed Consent Quiz

1. Everyone can register to donate stem cells (False)
2. Stem cell donors can direct their donations to a patient of their choice (False)
3. Everyone who joins OneMatch will have the opportunity to donate stem cells (False)
4. Donors can be saving the life of a patient who could be in any country, anywhere in the world (True)
5. Donors who have blood-borne and transmissible diseases (such as HIV or Hepatitis) are allowed to donate stem cells (False)
6. Swabs collected at stem cell drives are stored with OneMatch for future additional testing (True)
7. The identification code for each donee is unique (False)
8. Donors are informed of the identity of the person who will receive their stem cells before the donation (False)
9. Once committed to save a patient’s life, donors are not allowed to withdraw from the program (False)
10. There is no need for people on OneMatch to inform Canadian Blood Services when their contact information changes (False)
11. Donors are paid in exchange for their stem cells (False)
12. Pain is the most common side effect of stem cell donation (True)
13. Prior to donating stem cells from blood, the donor is given injections of a growth factor to move stem cells from their bone marrow into their blood (False)
14. A registrant’s medical information (HLA markers, medical history) will be shared with other stem cell donor databases around the world, and their personal information (name, contact information) will be kept strictly confidential (True)
15. To correct an error, a volunteer must: (Draw a line through the error, rewrite the text, and sign the date and the volunteer’s initial next to the correction)
16. Details of how to label and staple a swab kit are included in the labeling station checklist (True)
17. After swabbing, the swab kits, stickers, and registration form are all sealed inside the envelope (False)
18. After a registrant is finished swabbing, they are finished and free to hand in the swab kit when finished (False)
19. Refer to the image below. How many labels need to be added, and what kind(s)? (See picture below – four swab stickers and two square stickers were needed)

Quality Control Quiz

1. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of the most common side effect of stem cell donation? (a) Nausea (b) Fever (c) Fatigue (d) Hair loss (d)
2. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of the most needed stem cell donors (Previous Blood Donors) (a) Hematologic (b) Transplant (c) Cancer (d) Trauma (d)
3. All registrants must be offered an information pamphlet (True)
4. Details of what to tell registrants are included in the informed consent station checklist (True)
5. Only a few of the stem cell drive stations have checklists (False)
6. Volunteers are not allowed to refer to checklists at drives (False)
7. Identify the errors in the (below left) registration form section - select all that apply. (Name and email are not legible, error in birthdate [wrote born in 2043])
8. Identify the errors in the (below right) registration form section - select all that apply (missed questions on the left hand side; missed final question)

CONCLUSION

Our results demonstrate that online recruiter training is feasible and effective in instructing volunteers in informed consent and quality control procedures necessary to recruit stem cell donors. Our work supports continued development and implementation of online recruiter training programs. Limitations of online recruiter training include recruiters being unable to ask questions or practice handling recruitment material prior to their first drive.

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LITERATURE CITED

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