Blog: 5 Reasons You Should Be Running Communities In Patient Market Research

Contributed by GKA
Thursday, 23 June 2016

A market research online community (MROC) is a private online community designed to create insightful discussions and enable modern tools to be used for healthcare market research purposes. Research communities provide a unique insight into your patientsâ€™ minds and enable researchers to gather rich, qualitative insights, instantly. Read on for our top five reasons why you should be putting MROCs on your to-do-list for your next patient market research studyâ€¦

1) Unbeatable access to hard-to-reach patients

When it comes to patient market research with rare diseases, it goes without saying that the patients you need to reach will be spread out across the country or will find it difficult to travel. Thatâ€™s why MROCs are one of the best ways to engage with rare patient types, especially if you are looking to study patients in a group setting. Although be mindful that if recruiting a patient type where the prevalence is less than 40% then it recruitment will become harder so be prepared for a smaller sample size. The benefits of MROCs speak for themselves: as well as delivering rich insights for the researcher, research communities also provide a great opportunity for patients to engage with each other, which is especially important for those suffering from very rare conditions with no support groups available. Itâ€™s also a great way for patients to learn more about the latest developments in their therapy area and to influence the process to help themselves and their community get better.

2) The power to build relationships

Another great benefit of market research communities for both researchers and patients alike is the ability to build strong relationships and a real rapport with each other over time and across multiple tasks and activities. The benefits of these relationships include more comfortable respondents who are more open to sharing information â€“ which of course leads to deeper insights. Not only that, but strong patient to patient relationships can also have a positive impact on future research projects and actually encourage patients to take part in more market research studies thanks to their initial positive experiences â€“ so itâ€™s win win all round!

3) Insights like never before

One of the biggest benefits of market research online communities is the quality of insights they deliver. Because itâ€™s an actual community, patients and researchers can build a strong rapport with each other allowing unique and real human insights to come to the surface â€“ meaning that sensitive issues can be discussed and researchers can uncover the true story behind the data. The flexibility of the methodology also helps patients to open up. With MROCs patients can take part in discussions online or even upload pre-recorded footage, meaning they are less inhibited and more open to sharing valuable insights. The excitement of the tasks and different ways of engaging are also a great way to encourage patients to open up. Not only that, but by undertaking more interesting research, your agency can really stand out from the crowd. And according to the latest GRIT report, more and more agencies are continuing to embrace online and mobile research methods â€“ so itâ€™s time to get on board and make sure you donâ€™t get left behind!

4) Instant access to real-time results

Utilising online communities for patient research also has the added benefit of allowing researchers to access the results in real-time.

With all of the results gathered from each task or activity available instantly via an online portal, researchers can track results, identify trends and monitor patterns as and when they occur. And the best bit is that because these rich insights are available straight away, researchers can make quicker, more informed decisions, ensuring that they are able to meet their deadlines.

Research communities also offer a wealth of back end tools and analytics allowing for detailed analysis as well as community management to make your job easy. Including:
- â€¢ Create heat maps â€“ use the mark up tool to bring variety to presentations and create more visual and engaging research deliverables
â€¢ Ability to tag responses â€“ this allows you to pull out key quotes for your presentation or to create themes based on popular tags
â€¢ Transcripts â€“ outputted in Microsoft Word and responses can be anonymized
â€¢ Word Clouds
â€¢ Create visual graphs and charts - which can be outputted in Microsoft Excel

â€¢ Extract media files that can be outputted into a range of formats

This is the next best thing to actually being right by a participantâ€™s side to gauge their habits in everyday life, and potentially better as there is no observer influence.

5) Saving valuable time and money

Finally, research communities are often cheaper than more traditional methods. Although the cost of the software might appear pricey at first, when it is weighed up against the other savings that can be made and the rich insights that are available, MR communities are an affordable option. With MROCs there are no venue or hotel costs, no catering expenses and not to mention no travel fees for researchers or respondents. Not only that, but because all of the activities take place online, there is also no need for researchers to waste valuable time traipsing up and down the country to meet with patients. In addition, market research online communities can also fit in easily around respondentsâ€™ lives and routines so they can complete tasks in their own time, meaning they will be more open to providing insightful information.

You can simply observe while we manage and facilitate your mobile study or you can get under the skin of your patient group and facilitate the sessions yourself, set up tasks and get live feedback on your latest questions.

Watch our GKA Mobile Qual demo video to learn more.