

# Evaluating tools to communicate scleroderma research results to patients - trial #1

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<b>Registration date</b> 27/10/2025	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 02/12/2025	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Engaging people with lived experience (PWLE) in research is an important component of ethical research, and major research funders mandate or encourage engagement of PWLE to improve research relevance and trust in the findings. PWLE can be engaged in research across all stages and have different levels of influence on decision-making, including (1) consulting by providing opinions or perspectives on a topic or problem related to planned or ongoing research; (2) being involved or advising via two-way conversations with researchers on one or more aspects of a research study; and (3) partnering, which involves working as equals with researchers to collaborate and make decisions related to multiple aspects of one or more studies.

The SPIN – Communicating Latest Evidence and Results (SPIN-CLEAR) trial series will test different ways of communicating research results to study participants and others with relevant lived experience. This will be the first SPIN-CLEAR trial. The primary objective of this trial will be to compare among PWLE an infographic to a plain-language summary for information completeness, understandability, and ease of use. We will also evaluate comprehension of key aspects of disseminated research; the likelihood that participants would enroll in a similar future study; and, for all primary and secondary outcomes, subgroup analyses of effects by participant characteristics (age, gender, race or ethnicity, country, language, education level, health literacy).

### Who can participate?

The Scleroderma Patient-centered Intervention Network (SPIN) is a collaboration of researchers, clinicians, and people with systemic sclerosis (SSc; also known as scleroderma). People with SSc in the SPIN Cohort and other people with SSc not in the Cohort can participate. Participants must be aged 18 years and over, confirm that they have been classified as having SSc by a physician, and be fluent in English or French. People not able to access or respond to questionnaires via the internet are excluded.

### What does the study involve?

Those who consent will be randomly allocated to receive an infographic or the plain-language summary comparator. Items to rate outcomes will be presented to trial participants following the dissemination tool or plain-language summary on a Qualtrics online survey platform. We estimate that participants will require between 5 and 15 minutes to review dissemination tools, and we will record this. There will not be any limits on how many times participants can access

the tools prior to responding to the outcome measurements. We will send email and text reminders to participants who have consented but not completed all outcome measures at 7-days and 11-days post-consent, and data collection will end on day 14 by closing the Qualtrics survey. Outcomes will be linked to sociodemographic, medical, and health literacy data collected via the SPIN Cohort, which has been done with 100% linking success in previous trials. Sociodemographic and medical data will be collected directly in each trial survey from non-SPIN participants.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

There are no direct health benefits from participating, but participants may find the research informative. The only possible harm we identified is that being informed of study results may lead to disappointment if the results are not as hoped. The findings will help improve how research is shared with patients in the future. There will be no financial compensation for participants in the trials.

Where is the study run from?

The study is run by the SPIN research team at the Jewish General Hospital (Montréal, Québec, Canada)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

August 2025 to December 2025

Who is funding the study?

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) (Canada)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Brett D. Thombs, [brett.thombs@mcgill.ca](mailto:brett.thombs@mcgill.ca)

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

### Contact name

Dr Brett Thombs

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### Contact details

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## Additional identifiers

## Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

## ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)

NCT06373263

## Protocol serial number

2024-4165-1

# Study information

## Scientific Title

A randomized controlled trial to compare the effectiveness of dissemination tools to share research results with patients - SPIN-CLEAR trial #1

## Acronym

SPIN-CLEAR #1

## Study objectives

Sharing research results with patients is required by ethical regulations. Yet, most researchers do not share results from their studies with patients. The investigators plan to conduct a series of randomized controlled trials among people with scleroderma, a rare autoimmune disease, in a large international cohort, to identify the most effective methods for communicating study results with patients.

The first trial in the series will compare a research dissemination tool (infographic) against a plain-language summary comparator. Participants will be randomly assigned to receive the dissemination tool or comparator. Study participants will rate communication tools for (1) information completeness; (2) understandability; and (3) ease of use of format.

The results can be used by researchers and patient organizations who disseminate research results so that they can tailor the way they disseminate results to patient needs.

## Ethics approval required

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## Ethics approval(s)

approved 27/08/2025, CIUSSS West-Central Montreal Research Ethics Board (3755, Chemin de la Côte Ste-Catherine, bureau A-925, Montréal, H3T 1E2, Canada; +1 (0)514 340 8222 ext 22445; cer@jgh.mcgill.ca), ref: 2024-4165

## Study design

Two-arm parallel-group randomized controlled trial

## Primary study design

Interventional

## Study type(s)

Quality of life

## **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Comparison of research dissemination tools to people living with systemic sclerosis (SSc; scleroderma)

## **Interventions**

The investigators will use the multinational Scleroderma Patient-centered Intervention Network (SPIN) Cohort to conduct a series of RCTs to compare tools among people with systemic sclerosis, or scleroderma. The first trial in the series will compare a research dissemination tool (infographic) against a plain-language summary comparator.

SPIN patients and researchers will select systemic sclerosis research to disseminate. Tools will be developed by experienced tool developers, patients, and researchers. SPIN Cohort participants (n = 1,250 and growing) will be invited to enrol, and those enrolled will be randomized to a dissemination tool and complete outcomes.

## **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

## **Primary outcome(s)**

1. Information completeness: "The information presented in the [tool – e.g., "infographic", "plain-language summary"] told me everything I wanted to know about the study". Response options = 0-10 numerical rating scales (0 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). Time frame: immediately post-intervention (intervention and outcomes in one login - outcomes approx. 30 min after randomization).
2. Understandability: "The information presented in the [tool] was easy to understand". Response options = 0-10 numerical rating scales (0 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). Time frame: immediately post-intervention (intervention and outcomes in one login - outcomes approx. 30 min after randomization).
3. Ease of use: "The [tool] was designed in a way that made it easy to use". Response options = 0-10 numerical rating scales (0 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). Time frame: immediately post-intervention (intervention and outcomes in one login - outcomes approx. 30 min after randomization).

## **Key secondary outcome(s)**

1. Pleased to have received results: "I am glad that I received the study results"; Response options = 0-10 numerical rating scales (0 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). Time frame: immediately post-intervention (intervention and outcomes in one login - outcomes approx. 30 min after randomization).
2. Intention to participate in future studies: "In the future, I would agree to participate in a similar study to the one presented in the [tool]". Response options = 0-10 numerical rating scales (0 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). Time frame: immediately post-intervention (intervention and outcomes in one login - outcomes approx. 30 min after randomization).
3. Open-ended items: "What did you like about the way the information was communicated?"; "What did you dislike about the way the information was communicated?"; "Do you have suggestions for improving how the information is communicated?" Time frame: immediately post-intervention (intervention and outcomes in one login - outcomes approx. 30 min after randomization).

## **Completion date**

19/12/2025

# Eligibility

## Key inclusion criteria

1. Enrollment in SPIN Cohort, which requires a systemic sclerosis (SSc) classification by a site physician based on 2013 American College of Rheumatology/European League Against Rheumatism criteria, ≥18 years old, being fluent in English or French, and have completed one SPIN Cohort assessment in the last year.
2. External enrolment with patient-reported physician classification of SSc and age 18 years or older.

## Participant type(s)

Patient

## Healthy volunteers allowed

No

## Age group

Mixed

## Lower age limit

18 years

## Upper age limit

100 years

## Sex

All

## Total final enrolment

0

## Key exclusion criteria

Patients not able to access or respond to questionnaires via the internet

## Date of first enrolment

05/12/2025

## Date of final enrolment

19/12/2025

# Locations

## Countries of recruitment

Canada

## Study participating centre

Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal  
3755 Chemin de la Côte Sainte-Catherine

Montréal  
Canada  
H3T 1E2

## Sponsor information

### Organisation

Jewish General Hospital

### ROR

<https://ror.org/056jjra10>

## Funder(s)

### Funder type

Government

### Funder Name

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

### Alternative Name(s)

Instituts de Recherche en Santé du Canada, Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), CIHR\_IRSC, Canadian Institutes of Health Research | Ottawa ON, CIHR - Welcome to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, CIHR, IRSC

### Funding Body Type

Government organisation

### Funding Body Subtype

National government

### Location

Canada

## Results and Publications

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

All data and materials will be provided upon reasonable requests to the corresponding author, Dr Brett Thombs ([brett.thombs@mcgill.ca](mailto:brett.thombs@mcgill.ca)).

### IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

**Study outputs**

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Protocol article</a>		08/05/2025	27/10/2025	Yes	No