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

Submission date
21/10/2025

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
27/10/2025

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
02/12/2025

Condition category
Other

[X] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[_] Results
[_] Individual participant data
[X] 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

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

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
Ethics approval required

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

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Two-arm parallel-group randomized controlled trial

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
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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, The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), 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).

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol article		08/05/2025	27/10/2025	Yes	No