



Characterization of Barriers and Facilitators to Recruitment of Veterans in Alzheimer’s Disease Biomarker Research

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Veterans demonstrate overall lower levels of knowledge surrounding Alzheimer’s disease (AD) and related dementias (ADRD) research but report greater concern for developing memory problems compared to non-veterans. Despite limited knowledge, veterans still express interest in research participation.

INTRODUCTIONRESULTSCONCLUSIONS

- Military veteran population comprises about 5.9% of the total adult population in the U.S., and about ½ are ≥ 65 years old.
- Veterans face greater risk for ADRD due to increased exposure to TBI, PTSD, and chemical agents.
- Veterans are generally willing to participate in research but hesitate to enroll.
- There is a need for scalable recruitment strategies to conduct research in veterans and develop tailored therapeutics.

METHODS

- Outcome variables were responses to survey questions.
- Chi-squared tests and ordinal logistic regression models were used for analysis.
- Multivariate odds ratio was calculated.

Table 1: Participant demographics.		
Survey completers	Veterans (N = 179)	Non-veterans (N = 326)
Age (years)		
55-64	63 (35.2)	120 (36.8)
> 65	116 (64.8)	206 (63.2)
Sex		
Female	51 (28.05)*	202 (62.0)
Male	128 (71.5)*	124 (38.0)
Race		
White	44 (24.6)*	124 (38.0)
Black	135 (75.4)*	202 (62.0)
Education		
Grades 1-11	3 (1.7)	16 (4.9)
Grade 12/GED	31 (17.3)	51 (15.6)
Vocational/training/some college	56 (31.3)	80 (24.5)
Associate's degree	27 (15.1)	42 (12.9)
College grad	22 (12.3)	67 (20.6)
Some professional school	6 (3.4)	16 (4.9)
Master's degree	32 (17.9)	40 (12.3)
Doctoral degree	2 (1.1)	14 (4.3)
Income status		
Comfortable	106 (59.2)	210 (64.4)
Just enough to make ends meet	59 (33.0)	98 (30.1)
Don't have enough to make ends meet	14 (7.8)	18 (5.5)
Knowledge of AD		
Lower knowledge	45 (25.1)*	57(17.5)*
Higher knowledge	134 (74.9)*	269 (82.5)*
Trust of researchers		
Lower trust	59 (33.0)	97 (27.8)
Higher trust	120 (67.0)	229 (70.2)
All numbers are N (%). *p < 0.05 for X ² test.		
Table 2: Interest in AD biomarker research.		
Survey question	OR (95% CI)	p-value
Interest in an AD biomarker study	1.28 (0.81-2.02)	0.29
Interest in PET scan	1.47 (0.96-2.23)	0.076
Table 3: Motivators for participation.		
Survey question	OR (95% CI)	p-value
A loved one or I could be diagnosed with AD one day.	0.94 (0.49-1.79)	0.85
Participating in research could help find a cure or treatment for AD.	1.23 (0.56-2.72)	0.60
I want to learn more about AD and how to keep my brain healthy.	1.58 (0.75-3.00)	0.23
Participating in research is something that everyone should do.	1.52 (1.01-2.30)	0.045
Table 4: Perceptions about memory and lifestyle practices.		
Perception	OR (95% CI)	p-value
Concerned about memory	1.5 (1.02-2.21)	0.041
No need to get tested for AD	0.74 (0.43-1.27)	0.27
Lifestyle	OR (95% CI)	p-value
Practice a healthy lifestyle (e.g., eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly)	0.55 (0.35-0.86)	0.009
Stay mentally active (e.g., doing brain games)	0.92 (0.59-1.44)	0.72
Table 5: Reasons for hesitancy for PET scans.		
Survey question	OR (95% CI)	p-value
I do not have enough information about this procedure to make a decision.	0.68 (0.33-1.43)	0.31
I do not think this procedure is safe.	2.20 (1.10-4.41)	0.026
I do not know what will happen to my information.	1.13 (0.54-2.34)	0.75
I only do these procedures when they are medically necessary.	1.40 (0.69-2.88)	0.35
I am worried about abnormal test results.	0.60 (0.29-1.26)	0.18
OR = odds ratio. CI = confidence intervals. OR > 1 indicates veterans were more likely to be interested, motivated, concerned, agree with statements, or more hesitant than non-veterans.		

- Majority of veterans are interested in ADRD biomarker research.
- Veterans were more likely to view research as part of a broader mission.
- Veterans were more likely to be concerned about the risks of biomarker procedures, especially the PET scan.
- Veterans were more likely to be concerned about developing memory and thinking problems but less likely to practice healthy lifestyles.

REFERENCES

1.

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