



Top tips for GP practices to overcome barriers to OSAC trial recruitment

The OSAC trial is a complex study. However, the trial processes are well organised and logical, and recruitment is proven to be feasible in primary care by the 215 (and counting) patients entered into the trial to date by 46 recruiting practices. One site has recruited over 20 patients, and a number of other sites are not far behind. Here are some of the top tips for making recruitment work, from sites who have first-hand experience. If you would like to discuss any of these suggestions further, please contact your local trial co-ordinator.

Getting the whole practice team on board for recruitment

- “We send out a screen message to the GPs every morning and afternoon reminding them of OSAC and asking them to look out for potential patients.” (*Sedbergh Medical Practice, Cumbria*)
- “I have clinical meetings with all the GPs and NPs here, we have sent an e mail reminder each day to let the clinicians know which research nurse is available. We’re doing our best to raise awareness even with the locums.” (*Windermere and Bowness Medical Practice, Cumbria*)
- “I speak to GPs and receptionists regularly about OSAC.” (*Queen Square Medical Practice, Lancaster*)

OSAC recruitment days

- “Setting aside OSAC active days - we have ‘OSAC Wednesdays’ - when a reminder is sent at the start of the day to all receptionists and clinicians, reminding them of which patients are suitable, and when the [dedicated OSAC] appointment is.” (*Concord Medical Centre, Bristol*)

OSAC recruitment slots at the end of a surgery

- “Setting aside specific slots at end of surgery for reception to book patients into who have a cough... Then if any of them are eligible, they only have to hang around for a short period.” (*Wellspring Surgery, Bristol*)
- “We telephone triage so we are able to do a ‘pre-screen’ screen before the patient even comes to the surgery and I tell them about the study and if they agree in principle get them to come at the end of my surgery so I know I have enough time.” (*Hatherley Surgery, Cheltenham*)
- “We set aside a 45 minute appointment in the early afternoon, and ‘[phone the patient in advance](#)’ to introduce the trial.” (*Concord Medical Centre, Bristol*)
- “We block out appointments and then the GPs with double appointments available look out for potential patients. We have 4 GPs with GCP who rotate. So, if an 11am slot isn’t booked by 10:20am the slot is unblocked and the appointment can be used separately” (*Queen Square Medical Practice, Lancaster*)

Inviting patients

- When a patient has been booked in to the OSAC slot, phone them in advance to introduce the trial. (*Concord Medical Centre, Bristol*)
- “The receptionist asks if the appointment is re cough and then mentions the OSAC study” (*Queen Square Medical Practice, Lancaster*)
- “Interest developed quickly. A lot of interest came from the poster and information leaflets in the waiting area.” (*Oakenhurst Medical Practice, Blackburn*)

Full Time Research Nurse

- “The most difficult factor to overcome is time available, at time of presentation. As we have dedicated trial nurses it has probably been a little easier and this should be come much easier with the amendment so appointments can be planned for later/next day.” (*Rowden Surgery, Chippenham*)

Telephone triage to identify patients and book them for a longer appointment

- “I think Bridget and I have managed to recruit due to the fact that its either one of us or one other colleague who does the telephone triage so we have the first contact via the telephone. Our other colleague has our inclusion criteria with her also so is aware of the study. I think that’s a lot easier than if it was the receptionists booking patients in and us having to look through all the appointments to see if anyone may be eligible.” (*Rosebank Surgery, Lancaster*)

Acute illness clinics

- “I get mine sitting in the acute same day surgery. Acute trials are difficult to recruit for but the next day amendment should make a big difference.” (*Frome Medical Practice, Somerset*)

All GPs and nurses GCP trained

- Make sure you have copies of your most recent training (within 5 years) and signed, dated CV.

And remember...

- “Once you’ve recruited a couple of patients and done the stickers, dealing with the patient and the education is easy” (*Sedbergh Medical Practice, Cumbria*)