

# Recruitment Strategies for Cognitively Impaired Older Adults in Assisted Living Communities

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## Background

Recruiting persons with cognitive impairment for research studies in long term care settings can be challenging due to administrative, resident, staff, family/caregiver, ethical/legal, and budgetary factors (Lam, et. al. 2018)

The National Institute on Aging (2018) offers suggestions for recruiting and sustaining older adults in clinical trials because research shows this can be difficult due to:

- Health problems
- Difficultly assessing potential subjects
- Difficulty establishing trust
- Stigma

A clinical trial is being conducted in which older adults are being recruited for a year long study. Recruitment for the study has been challenging.

Few studies have examined the cost and effectiveness of different types of recruitment in older adults in long term care communities.

## Purpose

- The purpose of this study is to examine the hours and success of different recruitment techniques for a cluster, randomized clinical trial involving older adults with cognitive impairment living in six long term care communities (assisted & independent living residences).



## Inclusion Criteria

- Six long term care communities were included in the study. The sites were randomly assigned to one of 3 study arms after enrollment.
- Older adults were eligible to participate in the study if they resided in a study site; were 62 or older; were self-mobile, and sufficiently health to participate. In addition, they had to demonstrate an inability to find their way along an established route.

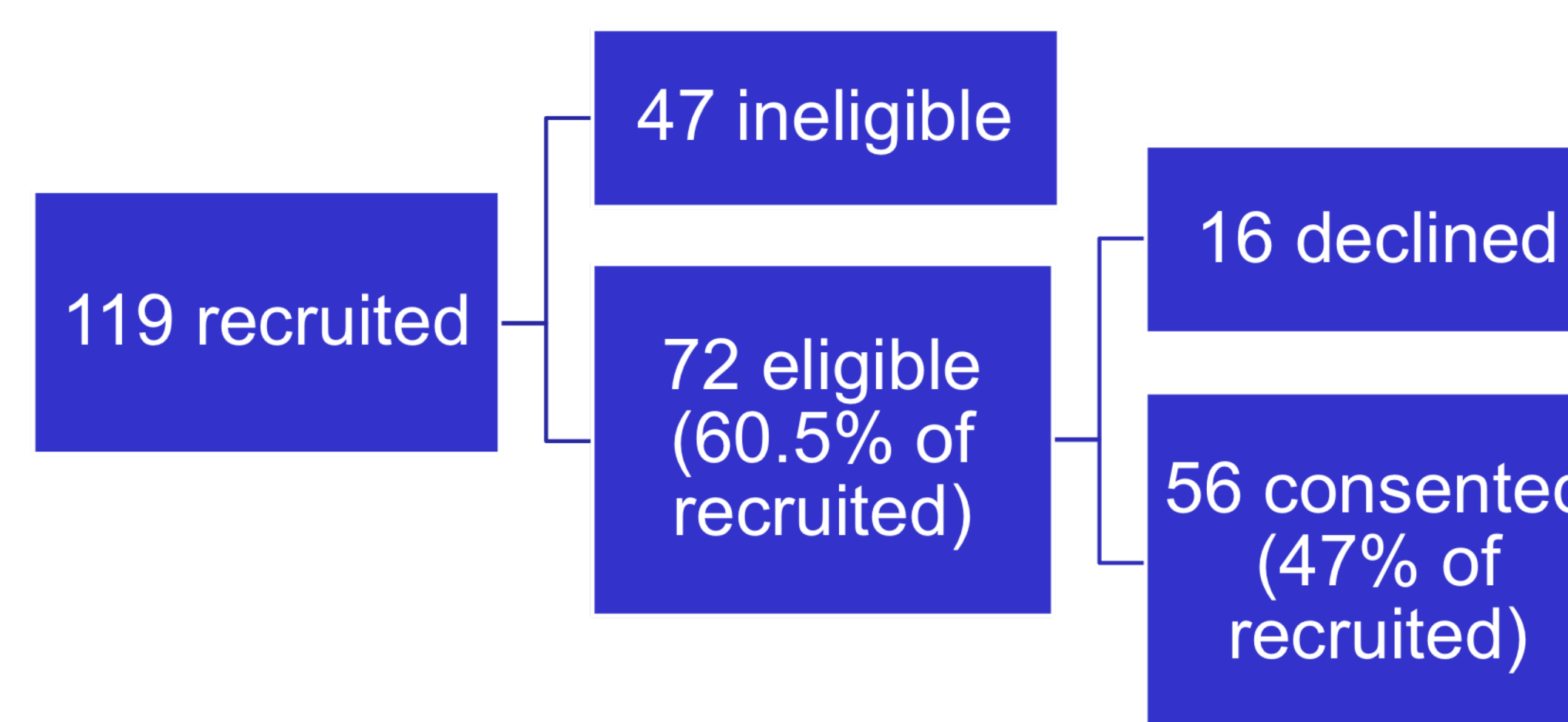
## Methods & Design

- Data was collected on each participant originally recruited on whether they were eligible, consented, and remained in the study. In addition information was collected regarding the number of times and number of hours each method was used, and the number each method enrolled. These included the following types of recruitment methods:

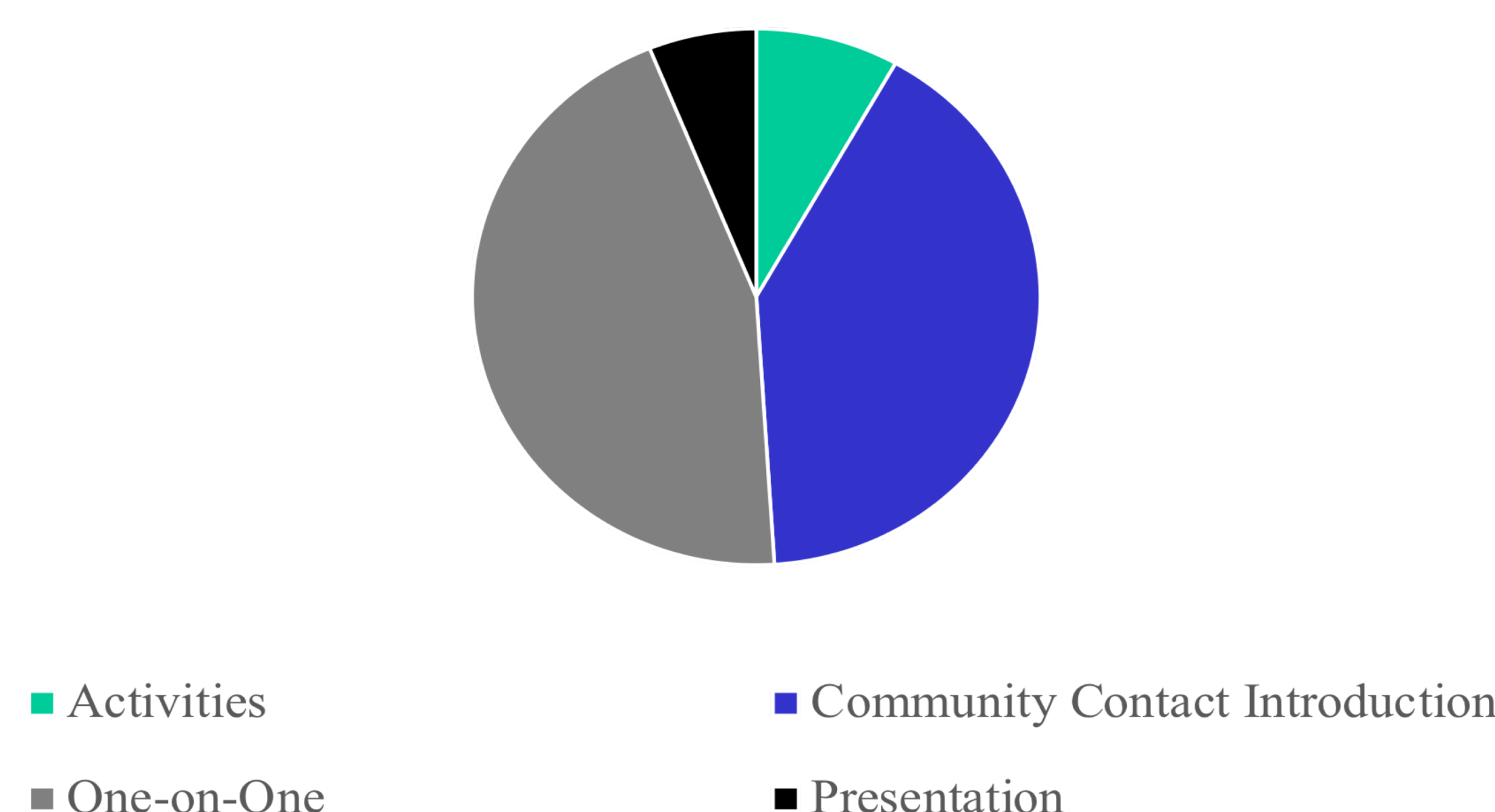
- Flyers put in mailboxes to advertise presentations
- Direct referral of potential participants by a community staff contact (CCI)
- Group presentations
- Informational tables at facility events
- Interacting with residents one-on-one by recruiters being present within the communities
- Participation by recruiters in activities, such as exercise classes.

## Results

### Breakdown of Sample of Participants

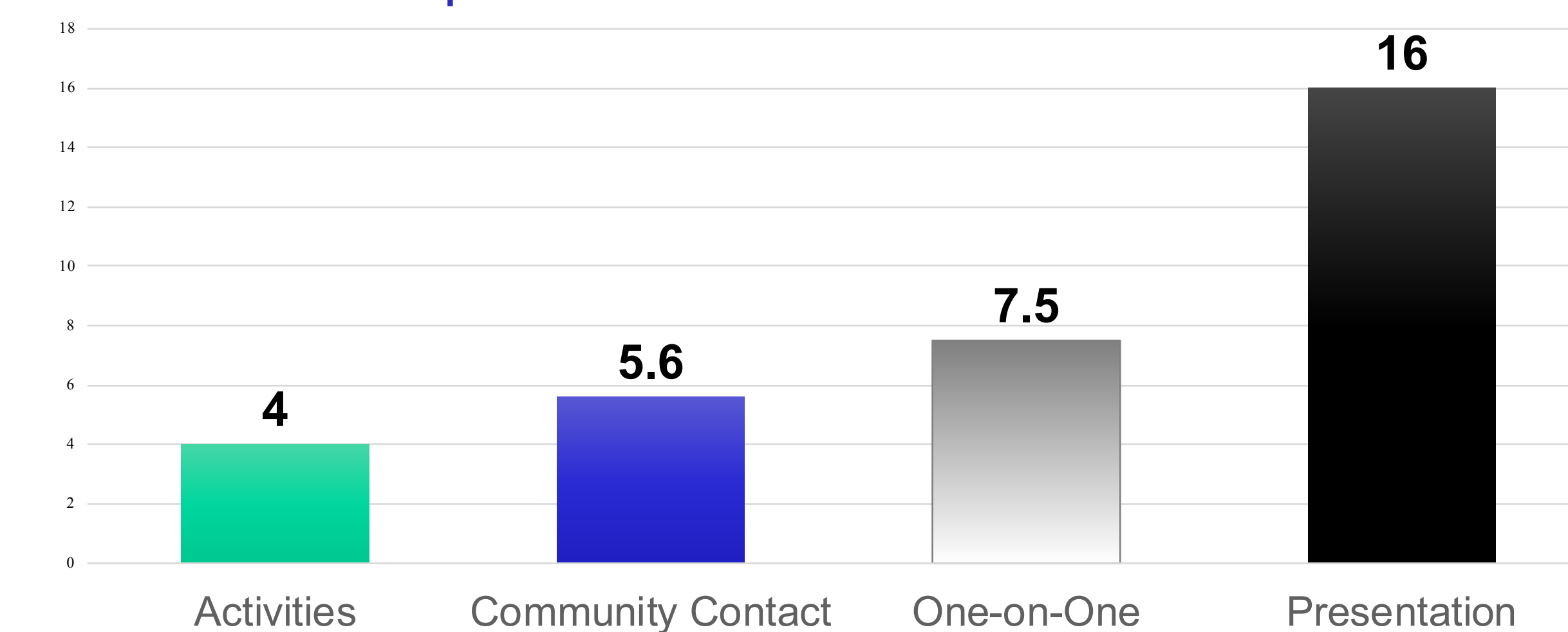


### Number of People Recruited by Each Method



## Results Continued

### Average Number of Hours to Recruit One Participant for Each Recruitment Method



- The average number of recruiting hours per person overall was 6.35 hours.
- The top three recruitment methods found to be most efficient included activities [4 hours per person (HPP)], CCI (5.6 HPP), and 1:1 interaction (7.5 HPP)
- Recruitment took an average of 2.75 months per community.
- Note: Three table events were conducted, but no one was enrolled from these events.

## Conclusions

- Recruiting individuals in this population requires time and persistence.
- For this study, 47% of those recruited moved to enrollment; showing a need to screen many individuals to meet the target sample size.
- The most efficient strategies involved building trust and getting to know the residents in activities and by introductions from trusted staff.

## Nursing Implications

- Using face to face interaction (activities, community contact, and/or presentations) to recruit older adults with mild cognitive impairment can lead to an increase in recruitment in assisted living facilities
- Having a prior relationship with the facility takes time, but can lead to improved recruitment success

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