

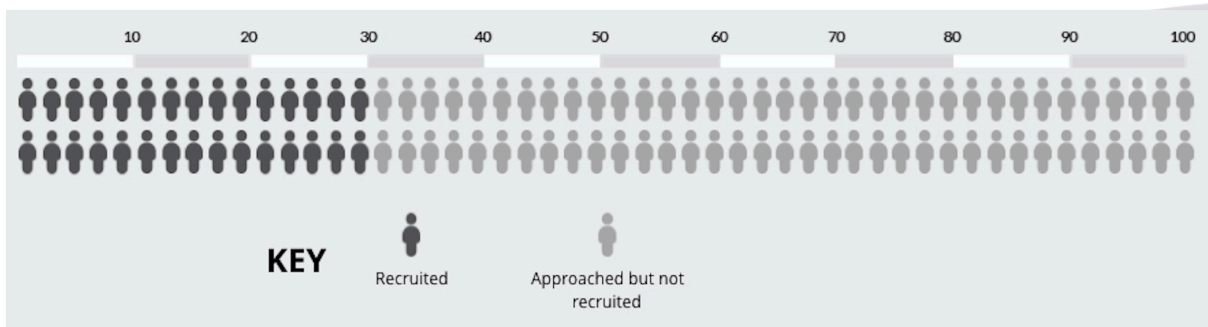
# RECRUITMENT: OPEN TRIALS (ID REC1)

## EVIDENCE SUMMARY

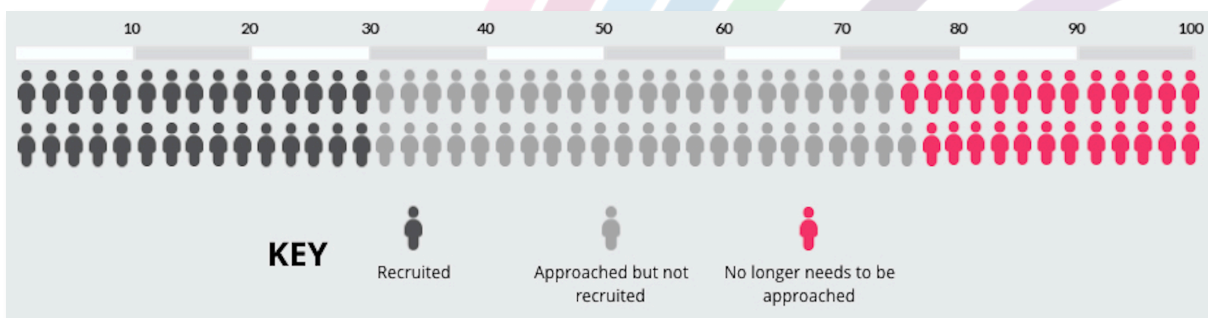
<b>What is it?</b>	<b>Open trials</b> are trials where participants know which treatment they are receiving. In other words, there is no blinding.
<b>Does it work?</b>	Having an open trial <b>increases recruitment</b> .
<b>How big is the effect?</b>	An increase of <b>10.2%</b> (95% confidence interval = 7.4% to 13.0%).
<b>How certain are we?</b>	GRADE <b>High</b> certainty for trials involving cheap, easily available drugs. GRADE <b>Moderate</b> for other interventions (e.g. an expensive drug).
<b>Recommendation</b>	Where <b>integrity is not compromised</b> , we recommend trialists use <b>open trials</b> to increase recruitment.
<b>How can I use this straight away?</b>	See <b>Resource bundle</b> below for details of how (and if) integrity can be protected in an open trial.

## PRACTICAL IMPACT

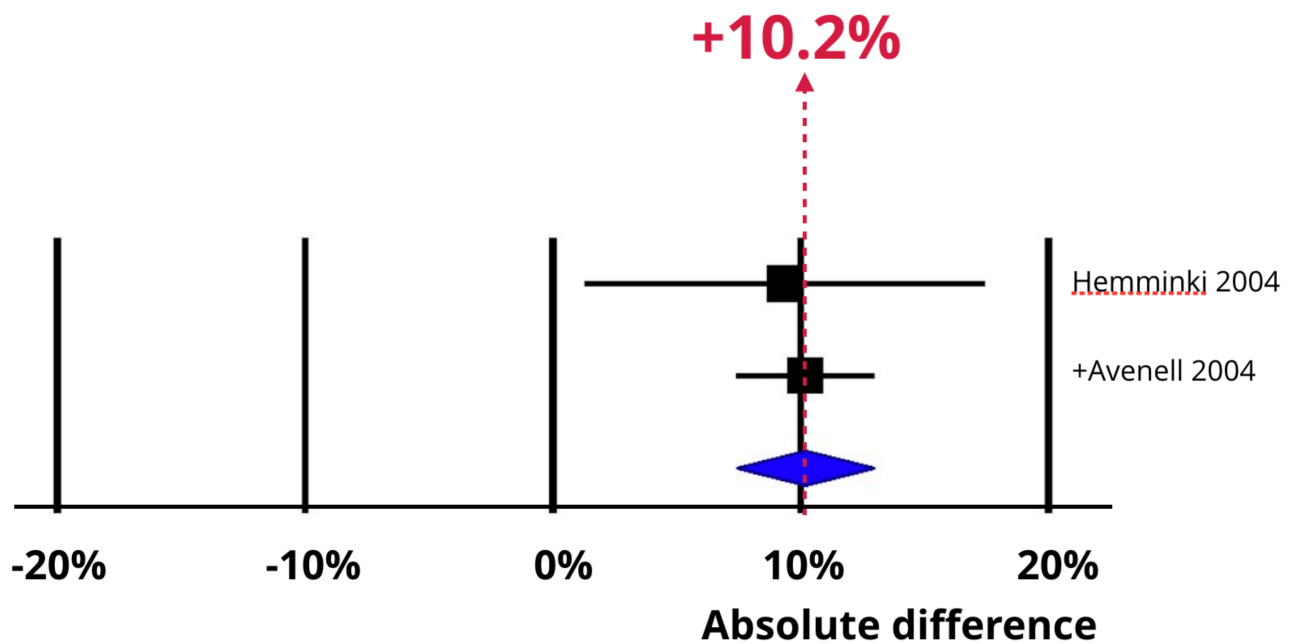
Imagine a trial that needs to recruit 30 participants and **initial recruitment is 30%** of those approached. This means you'd need to approach 100 people to recruit 30 of them (see chart).



Now imagine using an open trial. The chart below shows the impact of an absolute increase of **10.2% (95% CI = 7.4% to 10.0%)**. **Recruitment is now 40.2%**, which means our best estimate is that 75 people would now need to be approached to recruit 30 of them.



## CUMULATIVE META-ANALYSIS\*



\* Random effects model done using Comprehensive Meta-Analysis v3 (<https://www.meta-analysis.com/>). Differences >0% favour the intervention. GRADE assessment is Moderate because of imprecision.

## RESOURCE BUNDLE



See <https://www.trialforge.org/resource/evidence-pack-recruitment-open-trials-id-rec1/>

## MORE INFORMATION

1. The authors of this summary are Shaun Treweek and Laura Clark, with comments from Alison Avenell and Katie Gillies.
2. It is important to note that blinding is not the same as allocation concealment, which is what randomisation does when done properly. An open trial should not compromise the integrity of allocation concealment.
3. This summary is from the Cochrane review of strategies to improve recruitment in randomised trials (<https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.MR000013.pub6>). The search was updated to 2017 using <http://www.orrca.org.uk> but additional studies were found. A more recent version of an already included study was found but the data presented were essentially the same.
4. The 'Does it work?' statement is structured according to effect size and GRADE certainty as per GRADE Guidelines 26 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2019.10.014>). The statement is for moderate effect size and High GRADE certainty. Where Moderate GRADE certainty applies, we would say that open trials probably increase recruitment.
5. If you have any questions contact [info@trialforge.org](mailto:info@trialforge.org).