Harnessing landing pages for effective patient enrolment in clinical trials

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Abstract

This article highlights that patient-centric landing pages offer a powerful and effective solution to the persistent challenges of clinical trial enrolment. Besides, implementing these strategies can also bridge the awareness gap and accelerate access to vital new treatments. By addressing patient needs and offering clear, accessible information and addressing patients' concerns directly, we can overcome all the above-mentioned barriers. The potential for increased recruitment and patient engagement underscores the value of this strategy.

The statistics are stark: Scientific Research Publishing[1] reports that over 80% of clinical trials struggle with enrolment, causing costly delays and requiring the addition of new research sites. While traditional recruitment methods like physician referrals and printed materials remain relevant, innovative approaches are needed to boost awareness and engagement, particularly in regions with low levels of clinical trial understanding.

Despite the critical role of clinical trials in advancing medical breakthroughs, awareness remains shockingly low in many parts of the world. In Eastern Europe, for example, surveys reveal that a significant percentage of the population has never heard of clinical trials, while others lack essential knowledge about the trial process and how to participate in a trial. This knowledge gap underscores the need for proactive and accessible communication and enrolment strategies. One effective approach for connecting with potential trial subjects is the use of landing pages. These dedicated single-page websites serve as a dynamic communication channel, delivering accessible and compelling information about specific studies. They provide a valuable solution in that they offer patient-centric information online in a readily digestible format. The key lies in understanding that the target audience is not composed of scientific experts, so clear, accessible language is essential. Here are the key elements of an effective landing page for clinical trial recruitment:

- **Address the pain point**
  Start by directly addressing the problem the study aims to solve. For example: "Struggling with insomnia?" or, as in Figure 1, "Are you suffering from constant lower back pain?". Connect with potential participants by immediately acknowledging their unmet needs (see figure 1).

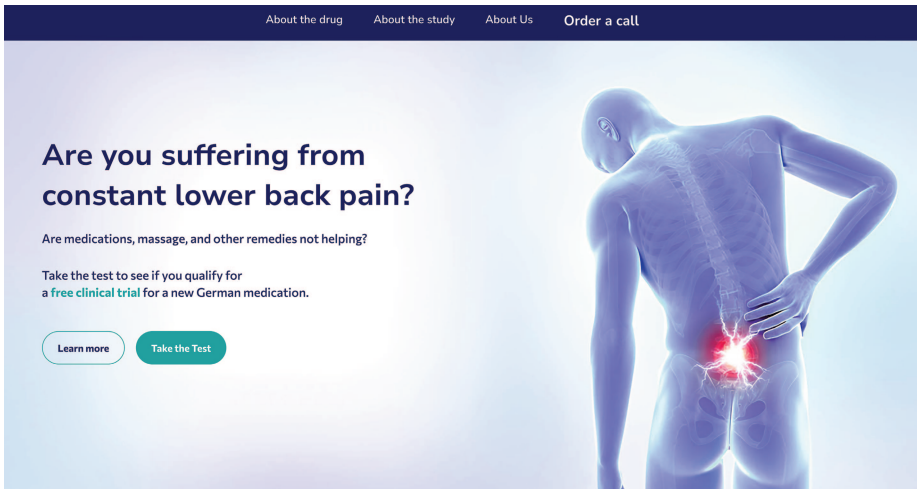

Figure 1. Example of a section of a landing page addressing a particular pain point of a potential trial candidate

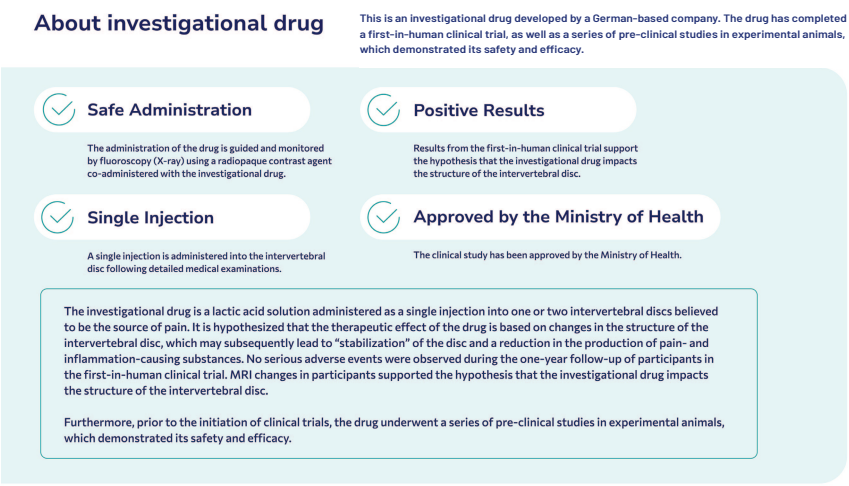

Figure 2. Example of a section of a landing page with information about the investigational product

- **Give clear information about investigational products**
  Provide concise information about the investigational drug and its manufacturer. Mentioning a well-known pharmaceutical company can significantly enhance trust and credibility, as people tend to trust information which they are already familiar with. See Figure 2 for examples of what to include in this section.

- **Demystify the process**
  Include a dedicated section outlining "What to expect during the study." Provide a clear overview of each stage, including the number of injections, clinic visit frequency (including whether a nurse will visit the subject at home), and the duration of the observation period. Transparency builds confidence. As illustrated in Figure 3, you can clearly outline the patient journey, detailing preliminary screening, injection procedures, observation and monitoring stages, and doctor consultations.

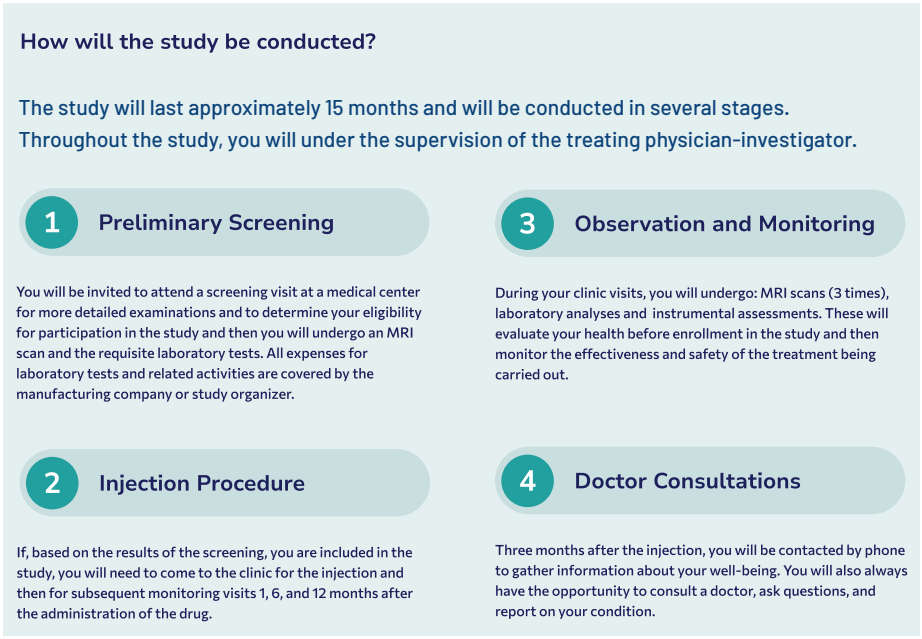

Figure 3. Example of a section of a landing page outlining the study stages that participants can expect

- **Highlight CRO relevant expertise**
  Showcase the CRO's experience and successful track record. Displaying logos of global pharmaceutical partners or highlighting previous successful projects can positively influence potential trial participants' decisions. Including demonstrable evidence of experience, like years in the industry, the number of patients recruited across various studies, a map showing office locations, can influence potential participants' decisions.

- **List the benefits**
  Clearly state any additional benefits of participating, such as free study medication or coverage of travel expenses. Figure 4 shows how a CRO can offer patients reimbursement for transportation costs for visits to the research centre. While financial compensation is not always the primary motivator (especially for those seeking access to innovative treatments), transparency regarding costs is essential.

Patient transportation costs for visits to the research center will be covered by the study budget. Travel from regional towns to the main regional center will also be arranged and paid for in full.

Figure 4. Example of a section of a landing page dedicated to optional benefits of participating in a trial

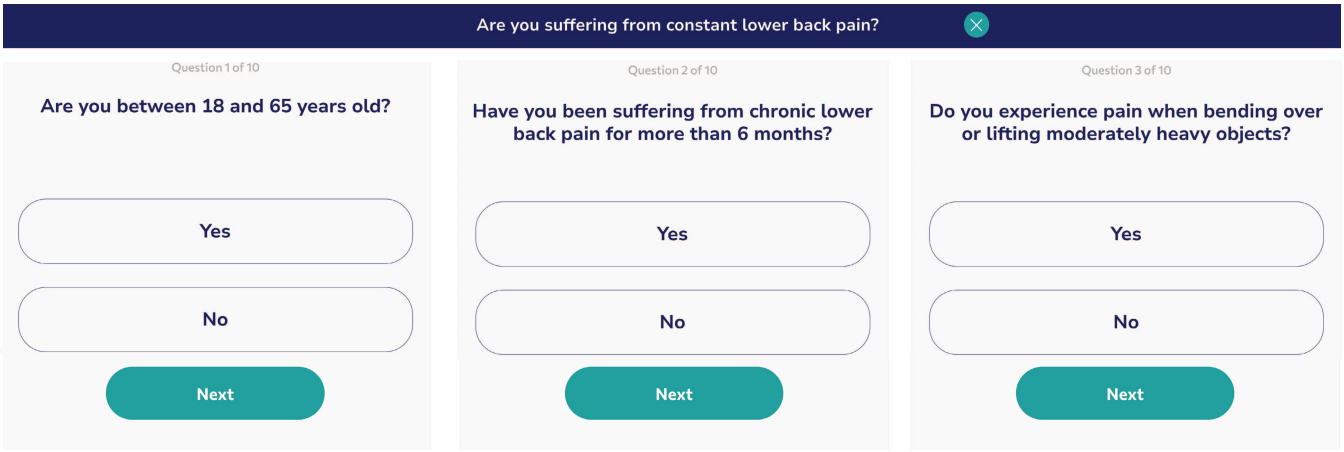

Figure 5. Example of questions that can be used in an online eligibility test to determine if a user qualifies for a trial

- **Post an eligibility test**
  Placing the online test if a user qualifies for a trial is a unique strategy for a CRO. The goal is to quickly get information from a potential candidate. In this test, you can ask basic questions, such as those presented in Figure 5: Are you between 18 and 65 years of age? Experiencing pain? What kind of pain? As a common result, a significant number of those completing the questionnaire can be identified as potentially eligible and advance to the screening process.

- **Answer questions**
  Include a frequently asked questions (FAQs) section to address common concerns and provide additional details about the study.

Where to promote a landing page

Landing page links can be strategically distributed across various online channels, including:

- Pharmacy and clinic websites;
- Medical forums;
- Social media platforms (targeted ads);
- Patient advocacy groups;
- Online support communities;
- Partnerships with healthcare providers.

Positive outcomes

Implementing patient-centric landing pages for clinical trial recruitment has yielded tangible improvements. Beyond accelerating enrolment timelines, with recruitment speeds increasing compared to average enrolment rates in similar studies, landing pages contribute to several positive outcomes. For example, they enhance the quality of candidate leads, reduce screen-failure rates by ensuring better-informed participants, and increase overall patient engagement throughout the trial process. Ultimately, a well-designed landing page empowers potential subjects to carefully evaluate their goals and interests in relation to the specific trial and its potential benefits.

Landing pages, therefore, represent a transformative tool for enhancing patient communication, optimising recruitment efficiency, and improving overall clinical trial success. By prioritising a patient-centric approach, providing clear and accessible information, and strategically leveraging online distribution channels, clinical research organisations can not only bridge the awareness gap but also fundamentally transform the patient experience and accelerate the delivery of life-changing treatments.

Disclosures and conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest. This article was prepared with the support of artificial intelligence grammar and proofreading tools.

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