Master's thesis Drug development: Proposal

Title	What are the main barriers for cancer patients to participating in academic oncological clinical trials?
Background	In many investigator initiated oncological clinical trials the recruitment of the participants takes much longer than anticipated. This fact leads to organizational and financial problems, sometimes even to early termination of ongoing trials. We would like to learn more about the patient-related reasons not to participate in a clinical study. We hypothesize, that there are reasons not known yet, which could be taken into account when planning a clinical study which would lead to an improvement of the recruitment rates.
Aim	We want to understand better the barriers for cancer patients to participating in academic clinical studis and identify possible actions we could take to improve the recruitment rates.
Research work, methods	We suggest to start with desk research about the known patient-related recruitment failures in clinical trials in the literature. Development of a questionnaire with a focus group (e.g. the patient advisory board of the Swiss Group for Clinical Cancer Research SAKK www.sakk.ch). Dissemination of the online-survey with the help of patients organizations in cancer in Switzerland. Analysis of the results (quantitative and qualitative). Interpretation and discussion of the results with the focus group and Identification of possible actions that could help to minimize the patient-related reasons for not taking part in a clinical study. Suggestion for new strategies and measures to take to improve academic clinical trials.
Potential Relevance	It is very important to know the patient-related reasons for recruitment failures in order to take measures to improve the recruitment rates for academic clinical trials in oncology.
References	https://orwh.od.nih.gov/sites/orwh/files/docs/orwh_outreach_toolkit_litreview.pdf Briel et al. Trials (2021), https://healthtalk.org/clinical-trials/deciding-not-to-take-part-in-a-clinical-trial https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcell.2019.00074/full
Requirements	Interest in clinical trials and clinical trial management and cancer. Interest and willingness to work with a patient advisory board. Willingness to learn about surveys and qualitative analysis.
Contact details of supervisor	Christine Aeschlimann, PhD, Program Manager Patient Advisory Board, Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für klinische Krebsforschung, SAKK, Effingerstrasse 33, 3008 Bern, christine.aeschlimann@sakk.ch