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Achieving 'Time and Target': Lessons Learnt from a community based, observational multi-site NIHR portfolio research study

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Background

Performance metrics for NIHR portfolio studies link directly to approvals and 'time and target' recruitment. Lessons learnt for recruitment on a portfolio multi-site observational study across three community NHS Trusts were evaluated.

Methods

Access was provided to a Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder information website and baseline and post-access knowledge assessed. Participants were parents/carers of children with diagnosed/suspected ADHD [target n=99]. Healthcare and educational staff also participated. Follow-up occurred 4 weeks after recruitment.

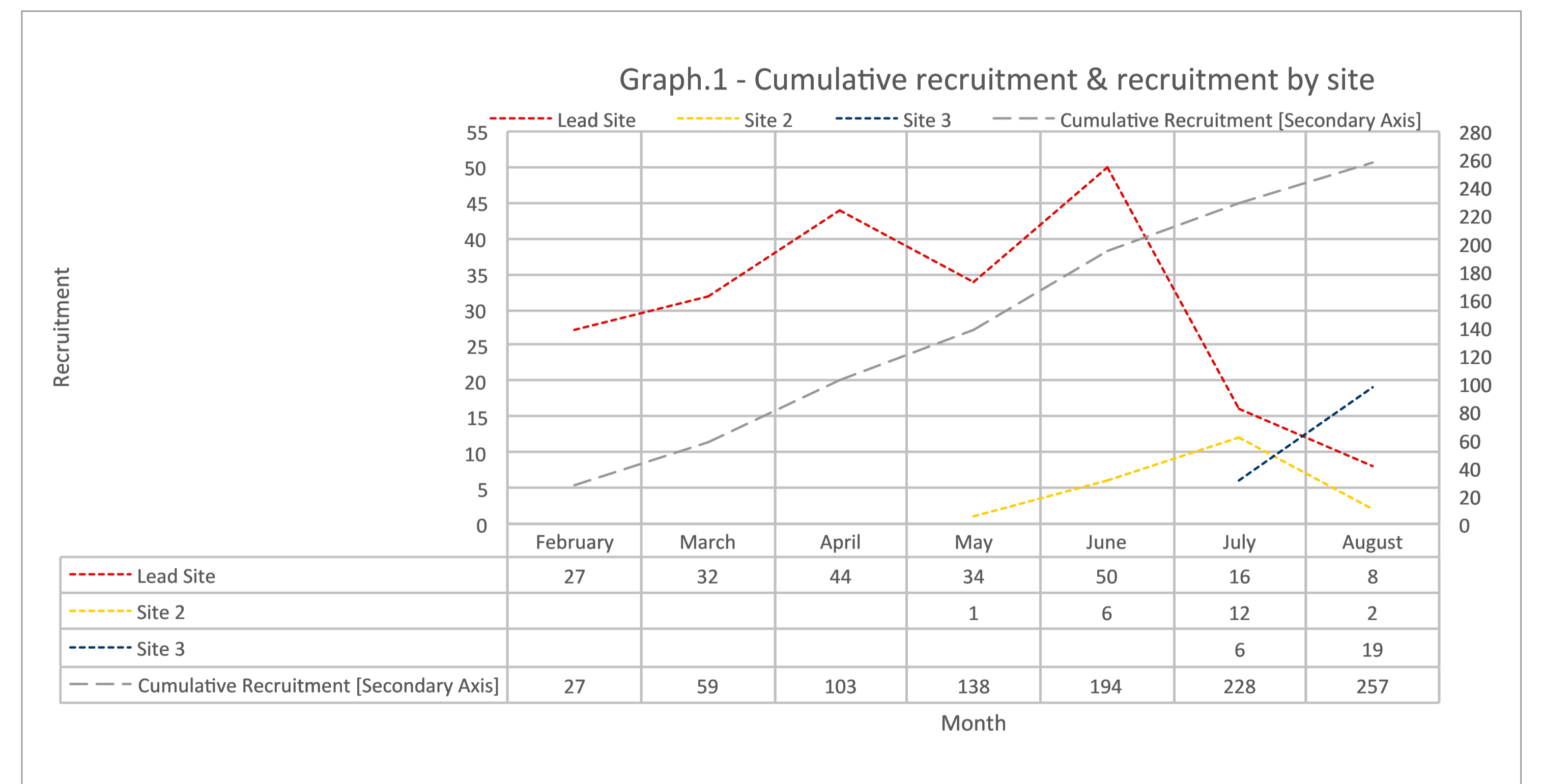
Recruitment Results

At the lead site the first participant was recruited 1 day post-approval, four weeks after R&D and NIHR portfolio application. Total recruitment was 260% of target [n=257]. Portfolio status attracted two additional sites after initial approval.

Follow up phone-calls were time consuming but minimised loss to follow-up [n=21, 8%].

Lessons Learnt

- Recruitment targets should be realistic and sensible; consult clinical staff
- Consult clinical teams to decide recruitment procedures and methods before seeking approvals
- Use time between permission application and confirmation to alert teams of the potential project and inclusion criteria
- Standard Operating Procedures ensure continuity and consistency
- Create a 'flowchart' for clinical and administration staff to aid understanding and recruitment
- On-going targets should be set and regularly reviewed by the team
- A nominated person should report recruitment to the NIHR monthly
- An on-going lessons learnt log should be maintained and shared with all sites via a clear communications strategy
- The experience and skills of CLRN infrastructure staff are essential in the successful delivery of such studies



Plan, Record, Review, Relay, Repeat