

# General Public's Attitudes Towards Clinical Research

Prepared for

**IPPOSI**

By



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***"Ireland needs to be at the forefront of research, we should be out there telling people what we are doing not hiding it behind closed doors somewhere"***

# Background & Objectives

- Ascertain public awareness and understanding of clinical research:
  - *What is the general public's level of awareness and understanding of clinical research?*
  - *How does the Irish public view clinical research? Does the public share any common positive or negative perceptions of clinical research and/or clinical trials?*
  - *How does the general public feel about the prospect of participating in clinical research and/or clinical trials?*



# Methodology

- 2 Phased approach:
  - 6 Focus groups
  - A general public survey (1000 adults 18 +) representative of the adult population
- All interviews/focus groups were conducted between May-June 2009

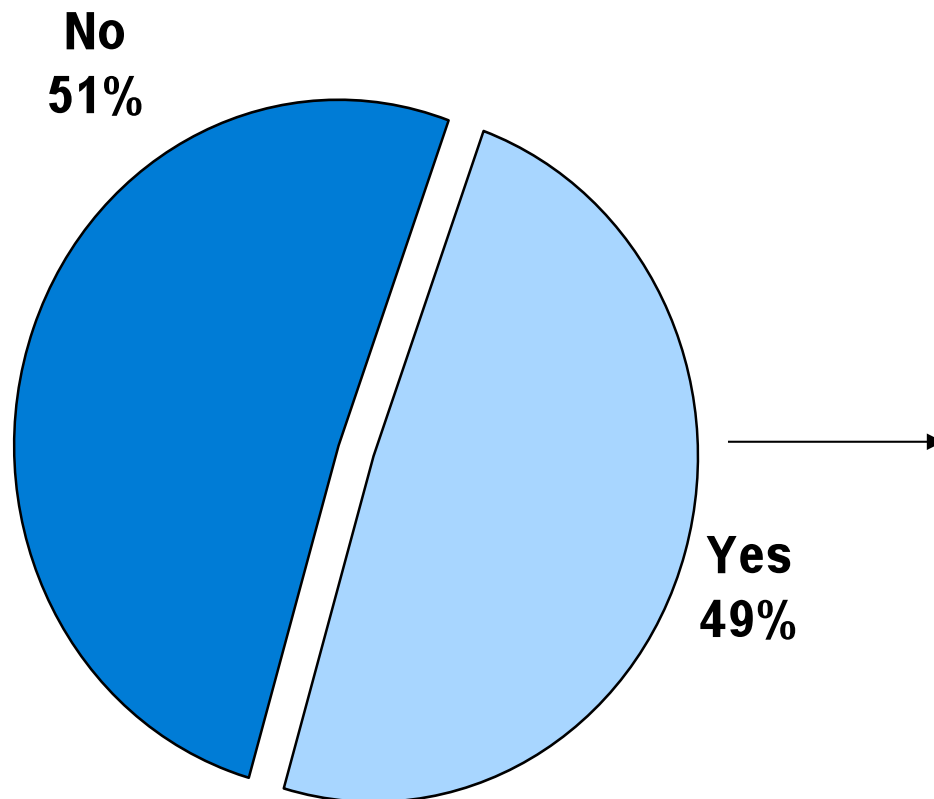




# Key Findings

## “Spontaneous Views”

# Do You Understand What is Meant by the term Clinical Research?



## Yes 49% (489)

Male 47%

Female 51%

**18-24** 32%

25-44 55%

**35-44** 44%

45-54 55%

55-64 53%

65+ 52%

ABC1 56%

**C2DE** 46%

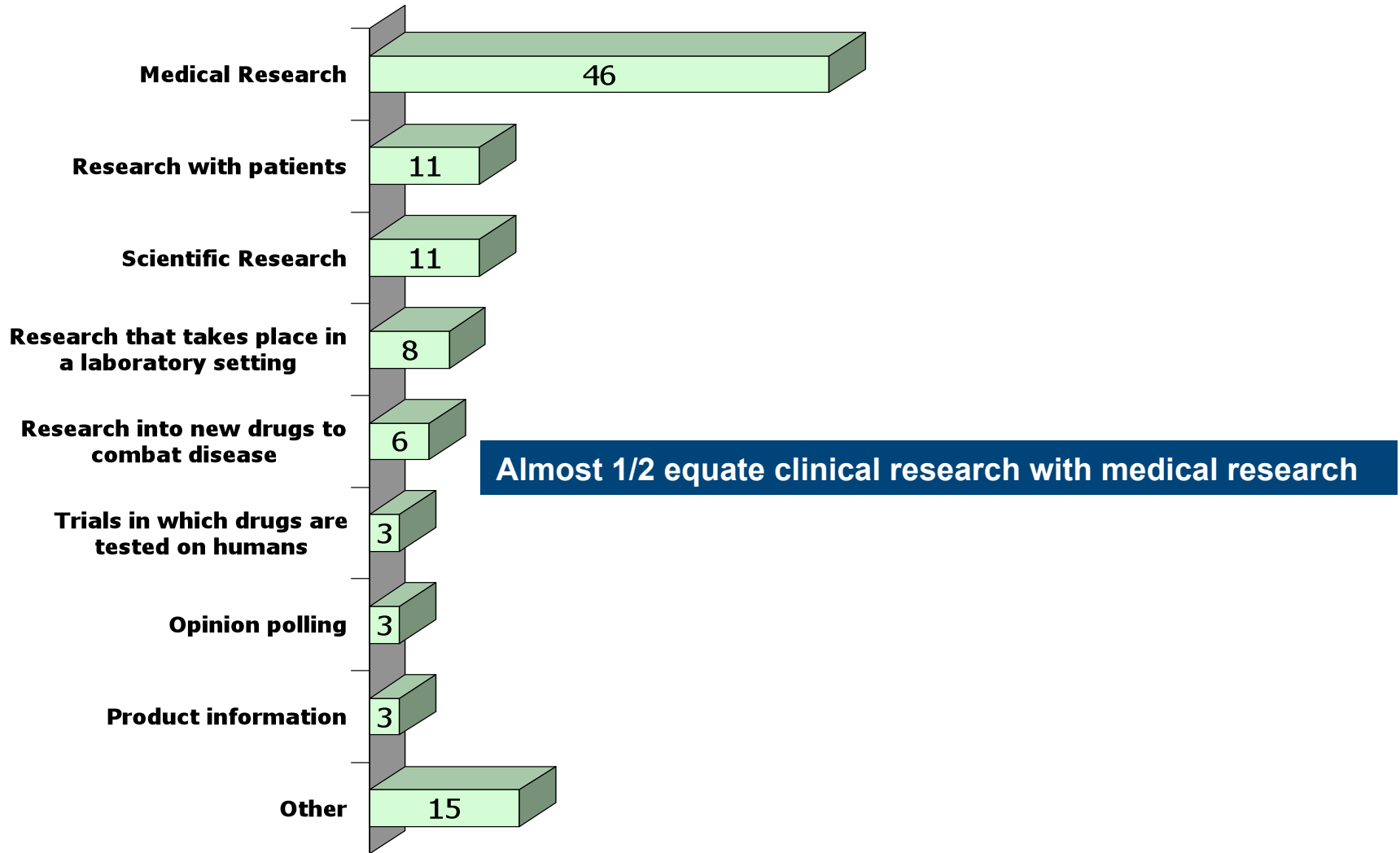
**F** 31%

Approximately 1/2 of the general population claim to understand the term clinical research

*{Base: n=1000, All adults}*

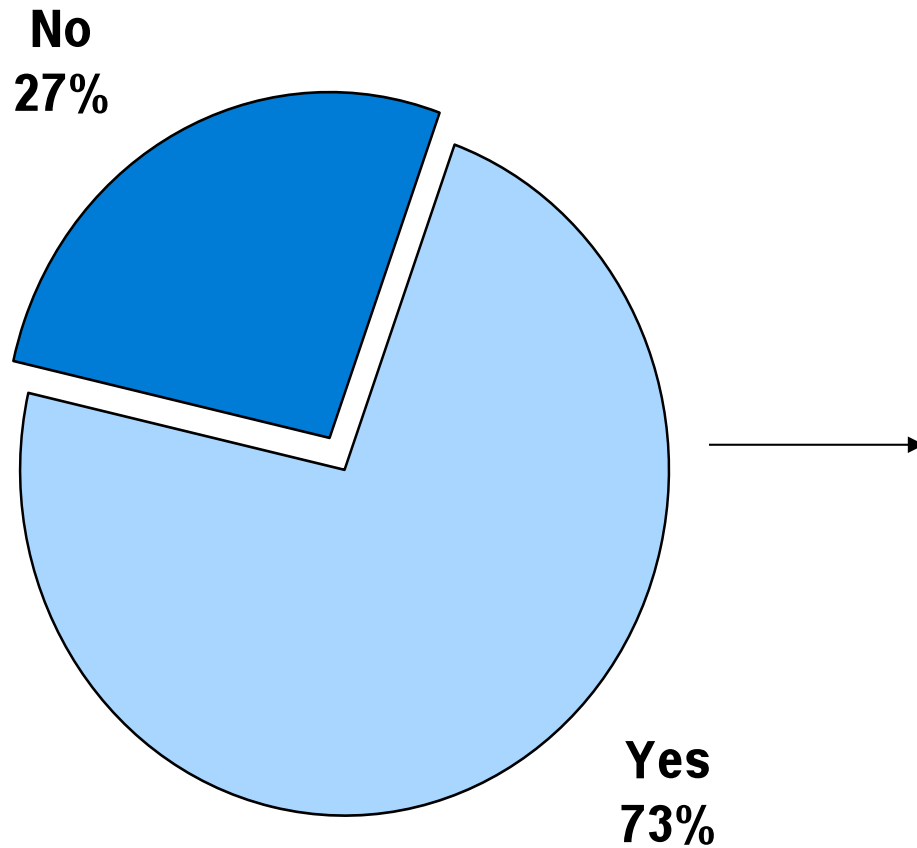


# What is Your Understanding of the term Clinical Research



*{Base: n=489: All who claim to understand the term clinical research}*

# Do You Understand the term Clinical or Medical Trials?



## Yes 73% (725)

**Male** 69%

Female 76%

**18-24** 56%

25-44 74%

35-44 73%

45-54 79%

55-64 70%

65+ 80%

ABC1 82%

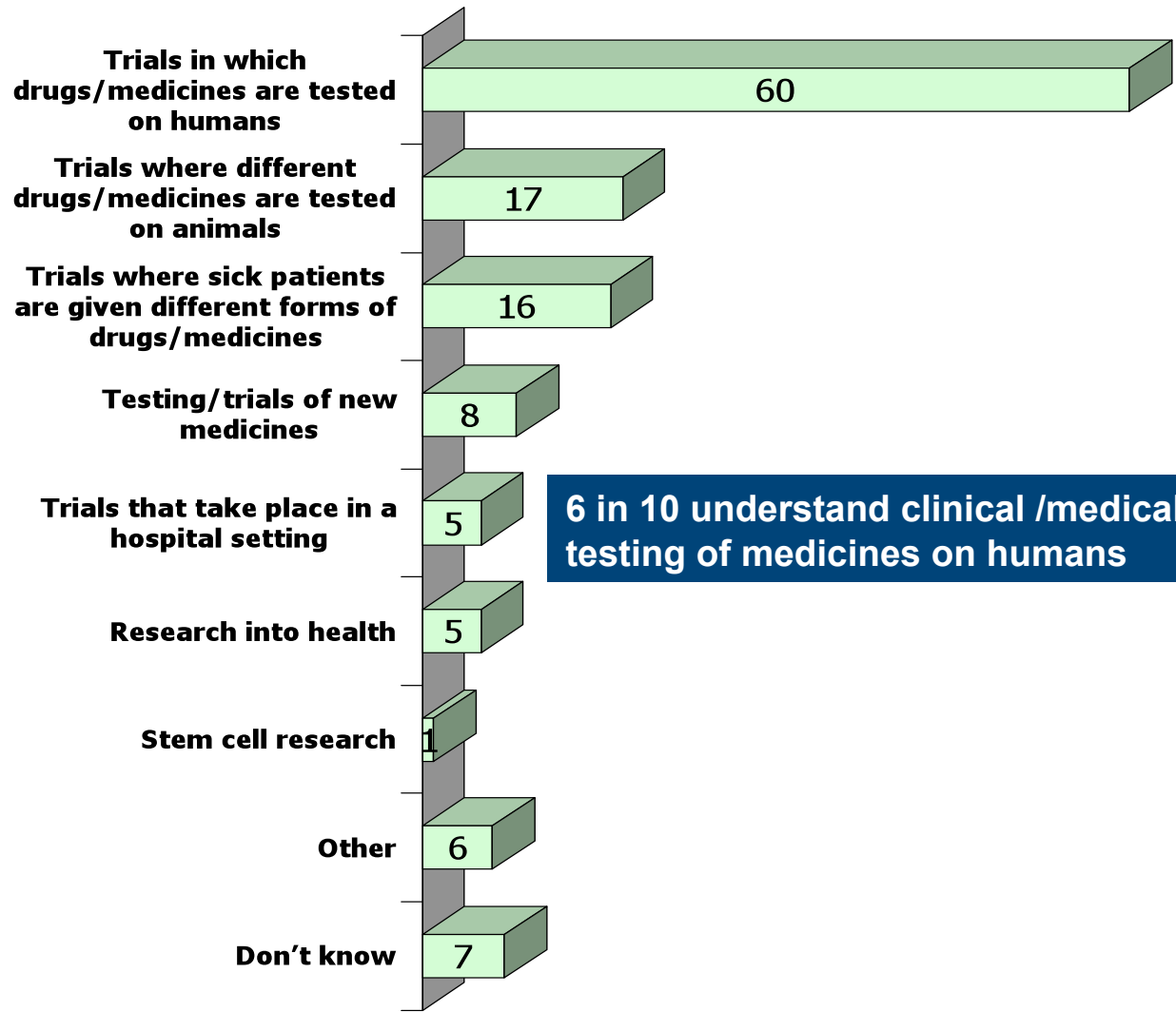
**C2DE** 68%

**F** 59%

Approximately 3/4 of the general population claim to understand the term clinical or medical trials

*{Base: n=1000, All adults}*

# What is Your Understanding of the term Clinical/Medical trials?



**6 in 10 understand clinical /medical trials to be the testing of medicines on humans**

*{Base: n=753: All who claim to understand the term Clinical research}*



# Summary- *Spontaneous Views*

- A low level of understanding of the term "*clinical research*" over and that it relates to "*medical research*"
- Struggle to differentiate between the terms "*clinical research*" and "*clinical trials*". Misconceptions abound:
  - First time drugs are tested on humans
  - Patient deaths
  - Financial incentives to encourage student participation
- Confusion and fear inhibit public engagement/participation
  - Fear of the unknown
  - Perceived "side effects"



# Summary- *Spontaneous Views*

- Although the public was negatively predisposed towards participating in clinical research/clinical trials due to the perceived risks, they remain very supportive of research:
  - Medical advancements
  - Improved patient care
  - Knock on benefits to the economy
- Respondents view clinical research as critical to
  - Find new cures for existing diseases
  - Facilitate medical and scientific progress





# Key Findings

## “Prompted Views”

# Summary-*Prompted Views*

- Following the presentation of factual information about the subject of clinical research a number of key findings emerged:
- **A notable positive attitudinal shift with regard to participation in clinical research**
  - Largely the result of an improved understanding of the different options to participate
  - The public were reassured by the information on **patient consent, confidentiality and the role of the independent ethics committee**



# Summary-Prompted Views

- **A steadfast reluctance to participate in clinical drug trials**
  - Although the factual information served to reassure respondents somewhat about participating in clinical research few reported a willingness to engage in a clinical drug trial
  - The key psychological barrier remains **a reluctance to take what they perceive to be an unnecessary risk with their health** by ingesting a drug with *potentially harmful side effects*



# Summary-*Prompted Views*

- **A positive attitude to Ireland operating as a central hub for clinical research/clinical trials**

- The creation of centres of excellence in medical expertise
- Improved quality of patient care
- Improved efficiency within the health system
- Knock on benefits to the economy

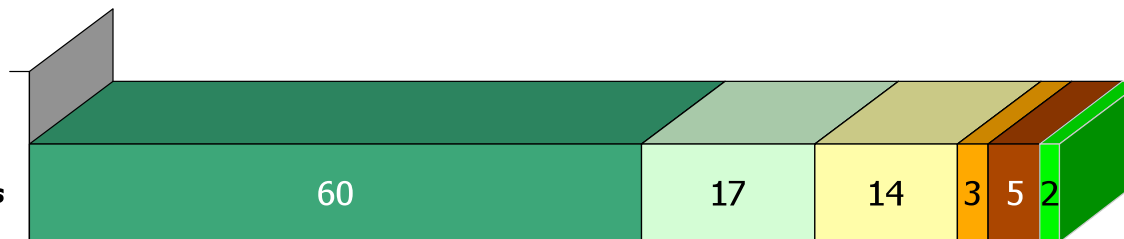
- **A positive attitude to bio banks**

- Little concern emerged amongst respondents towards storage of personal material (blood tissue) to be used for future testing

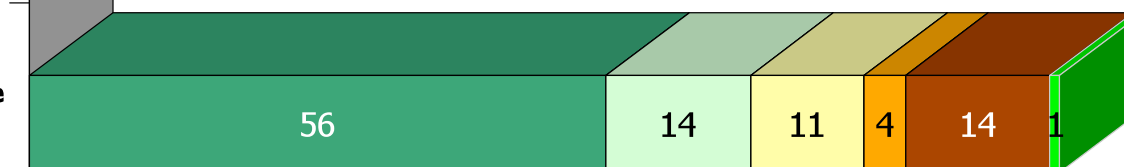


# Agree v Disagree with Attitudinal Statements RANKING 1 - 5

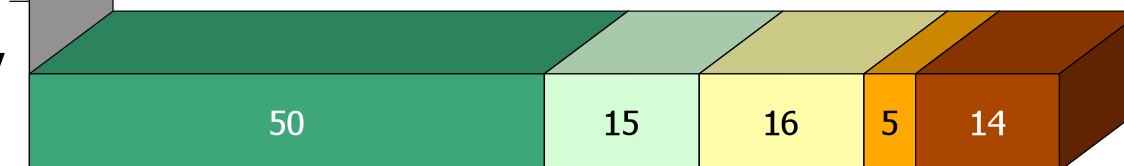
**I think carrying out clinical research in Ireland with the aim of developing new ways to treat many diseases is a good idea**



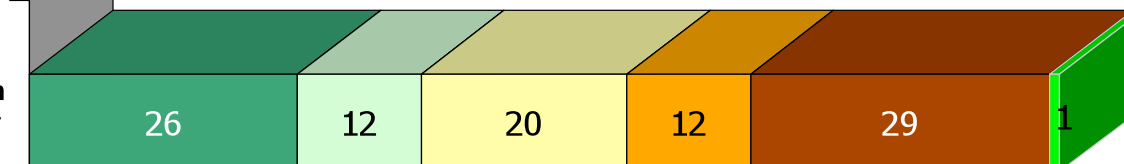
**I would be willing to donate blood to be used for clinical research**



**I would be willing to supply personal medical information for medical research if it is done in a confidential manner**

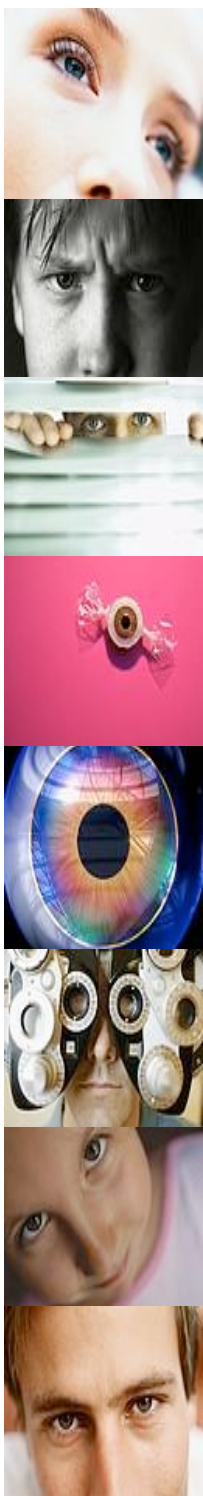


**I would only participate in clinical trials if I was very sick**



■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Neither/nor 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Disagree strongly 
 ■ DK

*{Base: n=1000, All adults}*





# Conclusion

# Summary-Conclusion

- The research indicates that an opportunity exists to tap into the public's readiness to participate
- A basic public information campaign about clinical research/clinical trials is likely to address many of the current barriers to patient participation namely:
  - Limited understanding of how the public can participate
  - Ethical concerns as to how such research/trials are managed/ conducted
  - Common misconceptions about patient risk



# Summary-Conclusion

- In the main the public were of the view that Ireland should be at the forefront of clinical research

***"Ireland needs to be at the forefront of research, we should be out there telling people what we are doing not hiding it behind closed doors somewhere"***  
***(Male 55-65, BC1, Galway)***

