Creating Participant-Centered Informed Consent Forms at Your Institution

By Philipa Friedman

Informed consent is a critically important process of communicating with research participants. A well-written consent form gives information about a study that potential participants need to make an informed decision about participation and could facilitate recruitment and retention. It is also a way to meet the ethical obligation of respecting persons.

As part of its mission to protect the rights and welfare of people participating in research conducted or supported by the Department of Health and Human Services, OHRP develops educational programs and materials for the research community. Information about how to improve informed consent forms can be found on the new interactive Participant-Centered Informed Consent Training on OHRP's Human Research Protection Training webpage.

What will I learn in the interactive informed consent training?

OHRP's interactive Participant-Centered Informed Consent Training is designed to help investigators, Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewers, and IRB professionals understand how best to communicate with potential participants through informed consent forms. The training will also help those who develop consent templates and e-consent forms and modules.

The training demonstrates how to identify the most important information for potential participants to know, explain that information in a way that participants will find clear, meaningful, and relevant, and design consent forms so they are easy to read. The training consists of six modules that cover the ethical principles behind informed consent, the fundamentals of participant-centered design, and concrete suggestions to make informed consent forms easy for participants to read and understand. The training also provides a list of resources for writing meaningful consent forms.

A printable certificate is available upon the completion of all six modules.

What other trainings are available through OHRP and how can my institution stay up-to-date?

The Participant-Centered Informed Consent Interactive Training is only one of numerous educational offerings for the research community. On OHRP's Human Research Protection Training website, you will also find:

- The Human Research Protection Foundational Training, a 5-lesson program that covers the fundamentals of human research protections for investigators and key personnel.
- Considerations for Reviewing Human Subjects Research with interactive programs designed to enhance your knowledge of the §46.111 Common Rule review criteria for IRB review of research. These programs will instruct investigators on what IRB reviewers look for when they review human subjects research.
- A list of Webinars on the Common Rule regulatory requirements.

Bookmark the Human Research Protection Training webpage to access OHRP's interactive trainings and educational webinars anytime and at no cost.

Incorporate the Participant-Centered Informed Consent Interactive Training, and any other OHRP trainings, into your institutional training for investigators and research personnel.

Join our listserv for up-to-date news from OHRP!

Get a web button to link us on your website!

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References

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