CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE BUSY COORDINATOR
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Guidelines to Contacting & Recruiting Potential Research Subjects

Scenario

Principal Investigator (PI), Dr X, referred a potential subject who is interested to participate in his clinical research study to Clinical Research Coordinator (CRC), Crystal. Dr X is the attending healthcare professional of the potential subject. As the research study require fasting for blood taking, CRC Crystal will need to arrange for the potential subject to come back on another day.

1) When can CRC Crystal contact the potential subject for recruitment?

The potential subject's permission to be contacted must be obtained by the PI prior to direct contact by CRC Crystal. This method of identifying potential subjects must be in compliance with institutional requirements and have prior approval by the DSRB.

As stated in the PDPA guideline, study team members are not allowed to collect subject's personal data unless the subject has given his/ her consent. The subject will have to agree to the types of data collected and give consent to be contacted. After the participant has agreed to be contacted, CRC Crystal may approach the subject to share more about the research study

2) How should the PI, Dr X, and CRC Crystal obtain informed consent from the potential subject?

If the potential subject is agreeable to participate in the research, the PI/ CRC may proceed to obtain consent through a physical face-to-face interaction with the research subject. If it is not feasible, the PI/ CRC may consider obtaining consent remotely, including phone calls, email correspondence and e-Consent. According to the NHG Investigator Manual (IM), delegated staff who took the consent has to document the informed consent process.

3) Recommendations for Dr X and CRC Crystal to improve their recruitment process.

A. As recommended by NHG PCR SOP 501-C02, Study team members who are delegated to do recruitment can provide approved study recruitment materials to participants who may be keen to participate in the study. In the recruitment materials such as invitation letters, PI can notify subjects that if they respond to the recruitment materials, they have inherently given their consent to be contacted.

B. In the informed consent form, PI can consider to include subject's consent to be contacted for future research. By doing so, PIs can contact participants who has consented previously for future research.

C. PI may also consider making amendments to ask the other doctors for help to refer more subjects to the research study to improve the recruitment rate. All amendments have to be approved by the IRB.

References:

1. NHG PCR SOP 501-C02: Subject Screening and Recruitment (Effective 07-Apr-2021)
2. NHG PCR SOP 501-C01: Informed Consent Form and Process (Effective 01-Mar-2022)
3. Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (Current Version as at 1 Oct 2022)
4. Investigator's Manual (IM) 4th edition (4 October 2022)

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