Consent Presentation Guide for Researchers Enhancing Participant Understanding

TEACHERS COLLEGE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Purpose

This guide is designed to help researchers present informed consent information in an ethical and effective manner that supports participant comprehension and autonomy. This is especially critical for individuals who may face language, literacy, cultural, or cognitive barriers.

Core Consent Requirements (*must always be provided*)

Researchers must ensure participants receive:

- ☐ A written, IRB-approved informed consent form (ICF) that includes all required regulatory elements.
- ☐ Adequate time and opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ A clear explanation that participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time without penalty.

Recommended Enhancements to Support Comprehension

Researchers are strongly encouraged to supplement the standard ICF using one or more of the following participant-centered presentation strategies:

1. **Video or Audio Summary**
   - Create short videos (with captions) or audio recordings that explain each section of the consent form.
   - Tools: Canva, Loom, Zoom recordings.
2. **Illustrated Slideshows or Infographics**
   - Use visuals and plain language to explain procedures, risks, and benefits.
   - Particularly helpful for participants with lower literacy or for whom English is a second language.
3. **Live Verbal Walkthrough**
   - Verbally walk participants through the form during interviews or Zoom calls.
   - Use a consistent script or summary points.

Key Reminders for Your Presentation

- ☐ Use the current IRB-approved version of the consent form.
- ☐ Know your audience: Adapt explanations for ESL, neurodiverse, or low-literacy populations.
- ☐ Use plain language: Example: say *"chosen by chance"* instead of *"randomized controlled trial."*
- ☐ Be inclusive: Offer translations or alternate formats when feasible.
- ☐ Clarify the distinction between consent and participation: individuals can say "no" or stop at any time.
- ☐ Provide participants with a copy of the signed consent form and retain the original per IRB documentation policies.

Examples of Tools You Can Use

- PlainLanguage.gov (readability and simplification strategies)
- Canva (for visual aids and animated walkthroughs)

- Loom (for pre-recorded video presentations)
- Google Slides or PowerPoint (for narrated slide decks)

Case Examples from Research Practice

1. **Vanderbilt University's GROW Trial**

   - Used four visual aids to supplement the ICF, including procedural overviews and compensation timelines.
   - Result: Enhanced understanding, particularly among participants with limited health literacy.
     i. A Tool Kit to Enhance the Informed Consent Process for Community-Engaged Pediatric Research

2. **Pediatric Surgery Consent (RCT)**

   - Standardized visual aids were used for children undergoing appendectomy.
   - Result: Increased comprehension and reduced anxiety among both participants and guardians.
     i. Use of standardized visual aids improves informed consent for appendectomy in children: A randomized controlled trial

3. **Colectomy Procedure Education**

   - Visual teaching aids improved the retention of surgical risks and led to more informed decision-making.
     i. Visual teaching aids improve patient understanding and reduce anxiety prior to a colectomy

Resources for Further Support

- TC IRB Guidance for Drafting a Readable Consent Form
- National Academies of Science. (2015). Informed Consent and Health Literacy: Workshop Summary

Questions? Need Help?

Consult the IRB early in your study planning:

- Submit a ticket via AskIRB
- Contact irb@tc.edu

Teachers College, Columbia University
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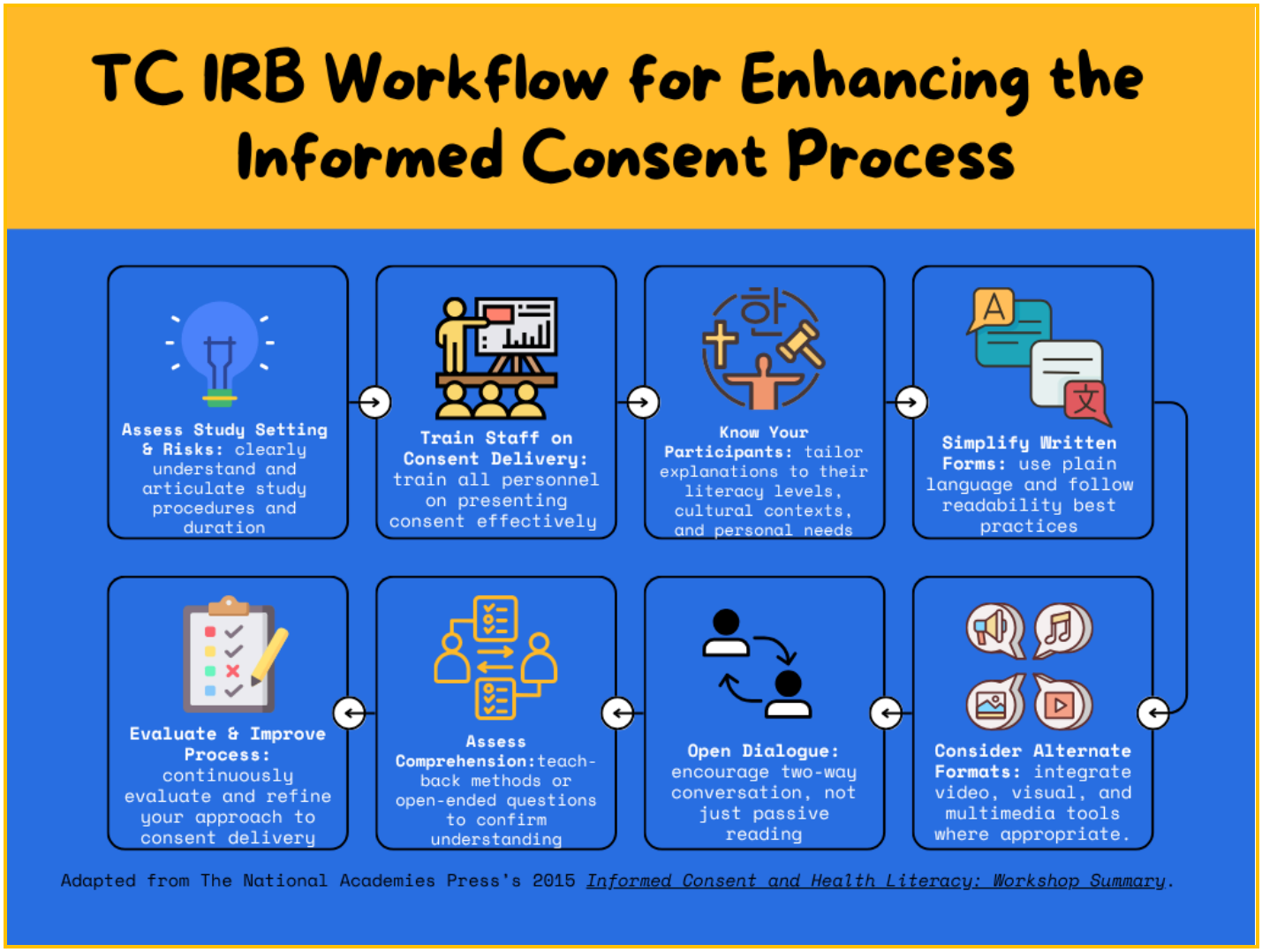
212-678-4105 | IRB@tc.edu | RH 13 | tc.edu/IRB

Appendix A: Consent Presentation Workflow

Use the graphic below to guide your team:



Please find an accessible version of this infographic here: Appendix A: Consent Presentation Workflow Accessible

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