Consent – Group Consent vs Group Recruitment

Modified: January 2018

Q: What is the difference between “Group Consent” and “Group Recruitment”?

Group Consent – would involve obtaining informed consent from a group of individuals all at the same time, with no individually signed consent form. Group Consent is not allowed by the UF IRB. If community consent is the cultural norm, it may be appropriate to obtain community consent in advance of obtaining informed consent from individuals. Community consent cannot replace the informed consent from individuals.

Group Recruitment – could occur in a situation where a group of potential study subjects are presented information regarding a study all at the same time, which could include a group review of the information within an IRB approved consent form.

Q: If a “Group Recruitment” process is approved, how should I obtain informed consent from the members of that group?

The process would include the following:

1. All recruitment materials, including the text for the group recruitment presentation, must be reviewed and approved by the IRB.
2. Presentations must inform the potential subjects that:
   a. This is only the presentation,
   b. General questions will be answered during the presentation,
   c. Each person will have the opportunity to ask individual questions in a private setting, and
   d. Following the presentation, potential subjects choose whether or not to participate in the research.
   e. People can leave the general presentation without feeling any coercion to participate from the presenter or the others in the group,
3. Consent Process
   a. Must include a description of how potential subjects can ask questions in a private location.
   b. If the IRB approved a written consent form, where and when people who want to participate will sign the informed consent form; and receive a copy of the consent form.