

Physician Referrals

The Piedmont Healthcare Institutional Review Board (PHCIRB) understands the important role physician referrals can play in ensuring the success of a research proposal. Investigators engaging in human subjects research are charged with maintaining patient confidentiality and privacy per federal guidelines. This level of research participant protection is expected to span every phase of the proposed research inclusive of the initial patient contact.

It is the expectation of the PHCIRB that physician's referring potential research study participants for inclusion in a study will make the initial patient contact. This is a two-fold duty that requires the following:

1. Informing eligible potential participants of the research, and
2. Obtaining the patient's permission to allow a study team member to contact them regarding the research.

Absent the completion of the two steps above by a referring physician, the local PI/study team should not commence contacting ('cold-calling') potential research participants.

Below is some suggested language that can be included in your 'Dear Physician' letter:

'It is the policy at Piedmont Healthcare that physicians providing referrals for the inclusion of patients in research at Piedmont do the following:

- 1. Inform eligible patients about the research being performed at Piedmont, and***
- 2. Obtain the patient's permission to allow a study team member to contact them about the research.***

By referring any eligible potential participants to this research proposal you attest that the two items above are true.'