

Voluntary Informed Consent

For any research or data collection activity

Introduction

Before any research or data collection activity is undertaken it is important to ensure that participants provide their voluntary, informed consent. This may be given by signing a form or indicating verbally that they understand the details of their involvement and they agree to participate in the data collection activity.

It is important to ensure that what is communicated to the participants is well understood by them, so if you are asking them to read a form or listen to someone else reading out the information it is a good idea to check back with the participant periodically to ensure that the content is well understood.

The language used to communicate the following information and principles should be reviewed by your local research team to ensure they are relevant and appropriate for your audience.

What should you consider?

- The age of the respondent
- The language that they speak
- Any additional needs or adaptations they may require to understand the consent procedures i.e. whether it needs to be translated, read aloud, provided in sign language etc.
- Whether they are capable of giving informed consent themselves, or require a guardian or carer to do that
- Whether it is safe for them to participate and give consent for the research activity
- What are you specifically asking them to consent to? If there is any chance that the information they provide will be used or shared in different ways to the originally intended purpose it is important to ensure that this is communicated and understood.

It is important to prepare and read out the full script for the consent process to make sure nothing is missed.

Key areas that must be included when seeking voluntary, informed consent.

1.	Name of researchers / data collectors, and name of organisation undertaking the data collection activity
2.	The purpose of the research – why are you doing this?
3.	What is involved in participating and why they have been asked to participate
4.	Benefits and risks of participation
5.	Right to withdraw at any time
6.	Compensation that will be provided to them for their participation (transport, child care, data costs etc.)
7.	How data will be used
8.	How data will be kept confidential
9.	What will happen with the research - if it will be made public and shared on internet, and if so is there is a chance that it might be shared or published by other parties for other purposes.
10.	How the research findings will be fed back to them
11.	Details on how to file a complaint if they are unhappy or concerned about anything related to the data collection exercise