**Guidance for Conducting a Community Meeting**

This document provides suggestions for conducting community consultation meetings.

**Before the meeting:**

* Plan the meeting at least 1 month in advance and provide at least 2-3 weeks of prior notice for participants attending the meeting.
* Determine the audience for the meeting and time it to maximize attendance (i.e. determine whether evening meeting is better than daytime meeting or whether weekend meetings are better).
* Provide refreshments for the meeting (eg. sodas, donuts, water, cookies, chips etc). Refreshments can be catered or bought in bulk from a grocery store or bulk store.

**Meeting Agenda:**

* Meetings should be planned for no more than 1 hour in length and the presentation itself should not last more than 20 minutes. The idea of the meeting is to get input from the community.
* Presentation Methods: you can use the following presentation methods;
  + Powerpoint presentations (templates provided)
  + Informal lecture
  + Handout or brochure (template provided)

**Meeting Notes:**

* Whenever possible, audio tape the meeting. If you are recording the meeting, ensure that participants are aware that the meeting is being taped. If your institution requires you to get permission for taping then be sure to do so.

Be sure to have a meeting note taker whose sole job is to take notes during the meeting. The note taker should record all substantive comments and when possible, quantify the number of similar comments (see template for taking notes).

**Meeting Tips**

Meeting Preparation

* **Answer the following questions when recruiting community members:** 
  + How many can you handle?
  + How many does the IRB want?
  + How many will the location hold?
* **Consider the following things when choosing a location:**
  + Room
  + Seating (best estimate)
  + Audiovisual capabilities
  + Parking
  + Safety

Meeting Day

* **Get there early and be ready to go**
* **Resource table**
  + Set up in the entry foyer or back of room, in a location which attendees cannot bypass.
  + Staff resource table by a volunteer(s) the entire meeting in case attendees wander in and out.
  + Resource table should have:
    - Extra chairs
    - Sign-in sheets
    - Study brochures and flyers
    - Refusal forms

Leading the Meeting

* **Start on time and finish on time**
* **Establish the following at the beginning of the meeting:**
  + Introductions
  + Goals for the meeting
  + Rules of the meeting and taking questions at the end