IRB News

The IRB had a busy Fall semester with over 160 new studies coming in for review. IRB staff completed our second annual IRB Metrics report—see some of the results on the second page of the newsletter. We also completed a redesign of our website which we hope will make information easier to find. Please also note the new web video tutorials of how to do common actions in IRBManager—links to these tutorials can be found on the IRBManager FAQ page embedded into the responses for specific questions. Many thanks to our student worker Shoua for her hard work on these!

Take the 2015 IRB User Satisfaction Survey

It is time again for the biennial IRB User Satisfaction Survey. The feedback we received in 2013 was critical in allowing us to identify and improve several IRB processes and communications. This year's survey focuses on our newly redesigned website as well as general IRB feedback. Click on the link below to begin the survey and thank you in advance!

Click here to complete the 2015 UWM IRB User survey

Research Data Stewardship

UWM’s Information Security team has recently released its top 10 tips for storing research data safely and security.

1. Practice Safe Internet Use
2. Update operating systems and browsers as soon as new patches are released
3. Back-up data in a secure manner
4. Use a dedicated research workstation
5. Install and run only trusted applications
6. Encrypt computers, external hard drives, USB devices and others that contain research data
7. Use up-to-date anti-malware/anti-virus software
8. De-identify research data if possible
9. Store encrypted research data on a shared network folder
10. Control access to data

For more information on each of these tips along with helpful links and explanations please see the full document:

UWM Research Data Stewardship: Top 10 Security guidelines

Upcoming IRB meeting Dates:

♦ April 3, 2015 (deadline for Full Board submissions March 18)
♦ May 1, 2015 (deadline for Full Board submissions April 15)
♦ June 5, 2015 (deadline for Full Board submissions is May 20)

**The IRB staff and Board members review studies year round including the summer**
What is FERPA and how does it apply to my research?

Many of the studies submitted to the IRB for review involve using student data. Sometimes investigators are unaware of the FERPA regulations that govern these data. FERPA stands for Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. This set of regulations governs how the data of students at an educational institution may be used. Similar to informed consent, signed permission must be given by the student (or parent if under 18) for the use of the educational data for research purposes.

In another similarity to the informed consent process, there are exceptions to this rule although you must justify and have the exception be approved by the Institutional Review Board. UWM has a FERPA website which contains pages specifically for faculty and staff. The US Dept. of Ed’s FERPA pages are also helpful and contain many resources for understanding the regulations.

UWM’s FERPA page

Dept. of Ed FERPA website

Snapshot of 2014 IRB Metrics

- 421 New studies received
- 295 Amendments received
- 339 Continuing reviews
- 17 Deferrals to other institutions
- 1893 currently active studies

Advancing Ethical Research Conference 2014

by Jessica Rice

In December of 2014, I was fortunate to attend the Advancing Ethical Research conference in Baltimore MD. This conference brings together IRB professionals and other regulatory staff to discuss issue around the review and approval of human subjects research. One of the hot topics of the conference was on privacy in the era of “big data”, mobile devices and cloud computing. Each of these data collection and storage methods has its own set of issues around the confidentiality of the data, how to maintain the participants privacy and how the data can be used for research purposes. Attending these sessions allowed me to obtain a better understanding of each of these topics and how we can best advise our researchers on steps they can take to maintain the privacy of their research participants and the confidentiality of their data.