

STREAMLINING IRB MEETINGS: WHAT YOU CAN DO?

1. **Be prepared.** Come to the meeting having already read your protocols and with some notes jotted down to focus your verbal comments.
2. **Don't read the study title.** We all have an agenda in front of us. If we all used protocol numbers instead of titles, we could shave 20 minutes off each meeting!
3. **Focus on questions and problems.** A brief overview of the design may be appropriate. But, since all members receive study packets, it is not necessary to provide an in-depth description of the study. We've all read our packets (right?).
4. **Don't discuss typos and grammatical errors unless they present a risk to the subject.** Only edits to the informed consent document that would affect a subject's comprehension are worth discussing. Please forward any other typo corrections directly to the Chair.
5. **Don't treat modifications like opportunities for protocol overhauls.** Focus on the proposed change(s) and any legitimate regulatory or subject safety problems. Let minor issues, like typos that don't affect comprehension, slide until continuing review.
6. **Communicate with the Chair.** Contact the chair with questions or problems (e.g., something left out of your packet, serious concerns about a protocol that were not raised in the administrative review, request for expert consultation, etc.). That's what they're there for.
7. **Talk with the PI before the meeting.** Clarifying issues with the PI in advance of the meeting can facilitate a more efficient discussion of the protocol and recommendations for action.
8. **Make a motion.** After all of the concerns have been discussed, the primary reviewer can help the group to stay on task by initiating a motion for committee vote.
9. **Keep interruptions to a minimum.** The committee loses momentum when cell phones and pagers interrupt discussion and voting. Please keep these devices on vibrate and be conscious of the quorum requirement when leaving the meeting to answer a call.
10. **Plan to attend and stay until the end.** Please respond to rsvp requests and plan to attend for the whole meeting unless something truly urgent requires your attention. It wastes time when we have to jump around the agenda.