

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre (Sunnybrook) Research Ethics Board (REB)

Guidelines for Research Study Participant Recruitment Materials: Advertisements, Flyers, Posters, Brochures, etc.

The Sunnybrook REB considers direct advertising for research participants to be the start of the informed consent process. The recruitment methods and materials used to recruit research participants for research that is being conducted within or on behalf of Sunnybrook must be reviewed and approved by the Sunnybrook REB and [Communications & Stakeholder Relations](#) prior to distribution, publication or posting.

The REB will review the recruitment materials to evaluate the visual effects, and assure that it is not unduly coercive and does not state or imply a favourable outcome or benefit beyond what is outlined in the informed consent form and the protocol. Once you have received REB approval for your submitted recruitment materials, they must be forwarded to [Communications & Stakeholder Relations](#) and be reviewed for consistency with the Sunnybrook Brand and [Social Media: Policy and Guidelines for Use](#) (as applicable).

All forms of recruitment materials should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. **Full study title** as it appears on the protocol, REB application and informed consent form.
2. Name of Sunnybrook **Principal Investigator**.
3. The person to **contact** for further **information** and how to contact him/her.
4. The **Sunnybrook logo** needs to be clearly indicated on the poster. Only approved Sunnybrook logos should be used. If you have any questions about how the Sunnybrook brand or logos are used, please consult the guide available at <http://sunnynet.ca/Default.aspx?cid=100516&lang=1>. If you have further questions, contact Communications & Stakeholder Relations.
5. **Purpose** of the research.
6. A brief summary/list of the main **eligibility criteria**.
7. The **time commitment** required of participants.
8. The **location** where the research will take place.
9. State if **compensation** is provided. Do not state amount or emphasize compensation by such means as larger or bold type.
10. **Paper sizes** of 8½ by 11 inch or 8½ by 14 inch are acceptable.

11. Language:

- a. Use “research” in place of the terms “study” or “trial”
- b. Use “participant” or “subject” in place of the terms “patient” or “volunteer”
- c. Use “healthy participant” or “healthy subject” in place of “healthy volunteer”
- d. Use “investigational” in place of “experimental”
- e. Use “at no cost” in place of “free”
- f. Use simple/lay language
- g. Avoid acronyms, abbreviations or mnemonics unless they are well known to the public or to the group you are targeting AND are not enticing.
- h. Avoid terms such as “new treatment”, “new medication” or “new drug” without explaining that the test article is investigational.

12. Only if recruitment is time limited, outline **timing**.

13. **Illustrations** need to be sensitive and appropriate to the target audience. Be aware of copyright regulations.

14. Recruitment materials should **avoid**:

- Statements that may be considered coercive.
- Stating or implying a favourable outcome or benefit beyond what is outlined in the informed consent form and the protocol.
- Claims, either explicitly or implicitly, that the drug, biologic or device is safe or effective for the purposes under investigation, or that the test article is known to be equivalent or superior to any other drug, biologic or device.
- Promising “free medical treatment” when the intent is only to say that participants will not be charged for taking part in the research.
- Featuring monetary compensation as a lead in before the description of the study purpose.
- Using the name of the commercial sponsor or product manufacturer.

Revision History	
Version Date	Summary of Changes
June 21, 2023	Removal of outdated information regarding studies unaffiliated with Sunnybrook. Sunnybrook does not support recruitment posters/ads for research unaffiliated with Sunnybrook
April 19, 2022	2nd Paragraph: Addition of link to Sunnybrook “Social Media: Policy and Guidelines for Use” Revision History: Addition of “Revision History” section
January 16, 2009	Original version