

Report to AASRO

***The Human Subjects and Interviewer Compliance Committee:***

Members include: Dianne Anderson  
Robin Bebel  
Mary Ellen Colten (consultant)  
Kurt Johnson  
Ron Langley  
Mary Losch (consultant)  
Dana Lee Moore  
Beth-Ellen Pennell (chair)  
John Rogers  
Patricia Wamboldt

We had one conference call with a subset of committee members. We discussed three topics: issues with regard to IRBs; certification of interviewers; and recent notice in ORI Newsletter re: interviewer falsification.

***IRB Issues:***

Mary L. referred us to the AAPOR website to review the IRB materials there in order to identify any areas that AAPOR chose not to tackle that we might want to discuss further. The AAPOR materials can be found at: <http://aapor.org/fullaaporirbstatement?s=IRB> (copies attached).

Issues that were raised on the conference call or in subsequent e-mail exchanges for which AASRO may want to develop policy statements, best practices, etc.:

- studies covered by multiple IRBs (and contract obligations in relation to those);
- special issues around web surveys;
- studies involving deception;
- contact protocols and refusal conversions (ethical issues and varying state laws);
- withholding sponsorship information from respondents;
- issues with regard to studies involving deception;
- adverse events and other reportable events (stolen laptops, for example), and other reporting obligations when the event is unrelated to the research (death of respondent, for example);
- IRB 'mission creep'; what is in scope, what is not; variations in IRB practice across institutions;
- terminology, e.g, what constitutes coercion; and
- empirical evidence to guide IRB decision-making.

***Certification of Interviewers:***

From a brief description of approaches that are being used by committee members' institutions to comply with the NIH certification requirements (attached), it is clear that there are wide variations in how these requirements are being interpreted and met.

We propose that a module to this topic be included on any upcoming web survey of the AASRO membership. In the end, the idea here is document and promote flexible and effective approaches to this issue.

***ORI Announcement re: Interviewer Falsification***

I have attached the newsletter as a reminder of this topic (see p. 6 of ORI newsletter attached). A number of AASRO members were present at the original meeting in Ann Arbor to discuss how we might approach this issue. Subsequently, both AAPOR and ASA adopted these recommendations for best practice (see <http://www.aapor.org/resources?s=falsification> and <http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/index.html>). The ORI newsletter doesn't appear to recognize the above best practices and is also somewhat unclear as to what steps are to be taken. We felt this was at least worth a discussion with the full AASRO group to see if AASRO should take any further steps to try and clarify these issues.