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Guideline; Application for research to be conducted in Mercy University Hospital

Seeking approval to conduct a study in an action that should be based in knowledge and guided by purpose. (Burns and Grove, 1993).

Entering an Institution to conduct a study is a privilege, not a right; accordingly, written permission must be sought from the Executive Management Board..

Institutions review proposed studies for the following reasons:

- (1) To evaluate the quality of a study
- (2) To ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect human subjects.
- (3) To evaluate the impact of conducting the study on the reviewing institution.

Desired Outcome of Review:

To receive permission to collect data within the reviewing institution and to obtain support for the proposed study.

A research proposal is a written plan that identifies the major elements of a study, such as the research problem, purpose and framework and outlines the methods and procedures to conduct a study (Burns and Grove, 1993).

Seeking approval for conducting a study involves submission of a research proposal to a selected group for review and, if necessary, verbally defending that proposal. In a verbal defence, the reviewers can evaluate the researcher as a person, the researcher's knowledge and understanding of the content of the proposal and their ability to reason and provide logical explanations related to the study.

Members of institutions are particularly interested in the data collection process and the involvement of institutional personnel in the study. Any expected disruptions in institutional functioning need to be identified with plans for preventing these disruptions when possible. The researcher must recognise that anything that slows or disrupts employee functioning costs the agency money and can interfere with the quality of the service.

Document1

Indications in the proposal that the researcher is aware of these concerns and has addressed ways to minimize their effects will increase the probability of obtaining approval to conduct the study.

Conceptually, the ethical considerations for qualitative and quantitative research are similar – safety and protection of human rights. These are achieved by usage of the process of informed consent. Informed consent may have been said to be obtained when the person is knowledgeable (informed about all procedures) and no deceit or concealment has been used; has expressed voluntary choice, without coercion and was competent to freely choose. (Field and Morse, 1985). Cassel (1980) has argued that this method of obtaining consent is inappropriate for those conducting a qualitative study, however, to date, this is the only model for obtaining consent – and all ethical guidelines are written and proposals evaluated using this model. (Field and Morse, 1985). As part of the approval process, the researcher must determine and acknowledge the institution's policy regarding: -

- (1) The use of the institution's name in reporting findings.
- (2) Presentation and publication of the study.
- (3) Authorship of publications.

The depth of the proposal is determined by the guidelines developed by the institution where the proposed study is to be conducted. Guidelines provide specific directions for the development of a proposal and should be followed explicitly

Guidelines pertaining to Research Review System.

Gaining access to the Site

Information on the formal research review system of Mercy University Hospital may be obtained from:

- Ms. Mary Dunnion, Director of Nursing.

Proposals should be submitted in typed form, on quality paper, without spelling, punctuation or grammatical mistakes. A word limit of not more than 1,000 words is to be observed.

The researcher needs to document his/her background and supply a C.V. if requested.

Document1

If the researcher is a student from a 3rd level institution, the review committee may request verification from the faculty within the University, that the student is undertaking an approved study.

The institutions name is used when presenting or publishing a study only with prior written administrative approval.

The researcher may report findings that could be interpreted negatively in terms of the institution if the institution is not identified.

When seeking permission to conduct a study/survey in Mercy University Hospital– the researcher will approach the appropriate personnel in the following sequence:

- (a) Director of Nursing

The Director of Nursing, if appropriate will advise the nurse researcher to apply to:

CEO/ Chairman Executive Management Board, Mercy University Hospital

Document1

Criteria to be observed when seeking permission to conduct research within Mercy University Hospital

1. Written permission is sought from the Executive Management Board. The submission must include:
 - (a) An outline of the research proposal. The key of critical points in a proposal must be clear. Critical content includes:
 - The research problem
 - Significance of the problem
 - Purpose
 - Framework
 - Research objectives
 - Hypotheses/Questions
 - Methodological Procedures (Tomquist, 1986)
 - NB** The specific setting with the Institution; e.g. Outreach programme and the projected time span of the study must be identified.
 - (b) Covering letter from Institution/Employer researcher belongs to.
2. **The Executive Management Board** having received and sanctioned the study being undertaken, contacts researcher and indicates same*

Consent having been obtained

4. The researcher presents themselves to the area and is introduced to potential subjects.
 - (a) Initially, verbal consent will be obtained from the prospective subjects, having been given details of the format and the purpose of the study.
 - (b) Consent forms will then be distributed to the potential subjects and formal consent i.e. reading and signing of forms will be obtained.

Document1

*When replying in the affirmative to the researcher that the study may be carried out within the hospital, the Executive Management Board will indicate that:

- (a) Results of the study's findings must be furnished to the Board upon completion of the study and,
- (b) The inclusion of the Marcy University Hospital name on publication of findings may be withheld at the discretion of the Board (Guarantee of Anonymity).

Signed,

*Mary Dunnion,
Director of Nursing
January 2006*