The DRIVE Project
Delivery of Research Improvements

Top Tips: First Patient First Visit

Get ahead

Start to look for suitable potential participants during the study set up phase from being listed as a site on the R&D form and using the CRN pipeline report, refer to the study recruitment plan.

- Review inpatient admissions, clinic and theatre lists
- Review patient databases and patient records
- Hold introductory drop-in sessions for interested potential participants to meet the study team and learn more about becoming involved
- Prepare a list of potential pre-screened participants to be contacted when R&D permission for the study to start has been given

Spend time preparing and putting in place study paperwork during study set up to enable recruitment to be the priority when the study has opened:

- Have patient packs ready with the most up to date versions of information sheets and consent forms on Trust headed paper(to be updated with final approved versions where necessary)
- Draft invitation letters and "green light" emails for the study team ready to be issued when the study has permission to start
- Prepare information required for booking appointments and obtaining medical records in advance
- Use the Site Initiation Visit (SIV) checklist (see Top Tips: SIV) to get everything in place prior to the SIV meeting to support the study opening as planned

Use the set up period to organise, attend and deliver study related training to avoid gaps required for approaching and consenting patients at the first visit

Be available

- Ensure the recruiting team are available within the first 30 days of study permission to make appointments to speak to potential participants
- Make arrangements for staff cover for absence/leave
- Support a flexible workforce to enable the team to be available to recruit the first patient
- Prioritise newly opened studies directing resources from a flexible workforce to achieving FPFV within 30 days

Be visible

- Go out and talk to clinicians/specialist nurses/GP's/AHP's/Nurses and Health Practitioners who work in this disease area about the study
- Visit wards and clinics regularly to talk to health care teams about recent admissions and visits

Test and tweak

- Walk through interventional studies before they open with all members of the study team to become familiar with the protocol and procedures and foresee any potential problems

Plan in parallel

- Align the date for the Site Initiation Visit (SIV) as close to the date the study will obtain R&D permission by working alongside the R&D office throughout the set up process
- Book provisional dates for SIV in PI calendars to avoid last minute meeting clashes, monitor regularly with the R&D office for anticipated study permission date
- Work closely with the R&D office and trial co-ordinator to anticipate key dates to support planning for the first patient first visit e.g. the SSI transfer date, ethics approval, study permission date

Communicate

- Keep the study team informed of key dates and progress through the set up phase through to Trust permission
- Ensure the correct contact information is provided on all study advertising and promotional material and provided to healthcare professionals involved in referring potential participants and at MDT meetings

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*Developed in collaboration with the NIHR Clinical Research Network: South West Peninsula, the South West Academic Health Science Network and Partner Organisations as part of the DRIVE (**D**elivery of **R**esearch **I**mpro**VE**ments) initiative to enhance clinical research delivery and performance.*