HRA Basics

What is the Health Research Authority (HRA)?

The core purpose of the HRA is to protect and promote the interests of patients and the public in health and social care. The HRA make sure that research is ethically reviewed and approved, promotes transparency, oversees a range of committees and services and provides independent recommendations on the processing of identifiable patient information where it is not always practical to obtain consent, for research and non-research projects.

What is public involvement in research?

Public involvement in research is where research is undertaken 'with' or 'by' patients and the public rather than 'to' 'for' or 'about' them. Public involvement is not about taking part in research as a research participant or as a research subject. The public can get involved after participating as "subjects" in research studies or clinical trials. People can also participate be involved by being a part of an advisory group, a steering group or part of the project team for individual studies.

Why involve the public?

Involving the public can make health and social care research ethical. Involving the public makes research more relevant because the results are more likely to be useful and of benefit to patients and the public. Public involvement helps to define what is acceptable to participants in research that may be deemed controversial or sensitive. It allows the improvement of the process of informed consent so it is easier for prospective participants to understand the research and the potential risks that may come with it.

How do you gain HRA Approval?

If a project is eligible for HRA Approval there are four main steps that should be completed in the following order:

1) Complete a research application form on the Integrated Research Application System (IRAS).

2) Prepare your study documents.

3) Book your application in through the Central Booking Service.

4) E-submit your applications in IRAS.

Which study documents need to be submitted for HRA Approval?

When applying for HRA Approval the correct supporting documents are submitted in advance of submitting your application. The documents required are:

- A protocol, which is a full description of the research study, and will act as a manual for members of the research team.
- A Participant Information Sheet which describes clearly what a potential participant should expect if they agree to take part in the study.
- Organisation Information Document and, if the study is non-commercial, a Schedule of Events should also be completed. These allow the sponsor to make clear what activities will be undertaken locally and the cost type for each activity.
- Costing template which provides a framework for transparent cost display and calculation to support swift local site budget negotiations.
- Model agreements must be in the application.
- The CVs of chief investigators, principal investigators and academic supervisors, as well as research passports.

For further information:

https://www.hra.nhs.uk/

https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/