**Recruitment vs. Screening (HRPP Policy Reference: IV.A, X.G)**

* Study screening procedures are frequently confused with study recruitment. The two activities may overlap but are distinctly different. Recruitment does not require the consent of the prospective participant whereas screening DOES.
* **Recruitment:** includes all activities where information is provided to the prospective participant. This includes flyers, advertisements, recruitment over the telephone, review of medical record, My Health at Vanderbilt messages, etc.
  + Recruitment over the telephone: Provided the study team only **gives** information about the study and does not **solicit or record information** about the participant to determine eligibility, then this activity is considered recruitment and consent is not required.​
    - Ex: “*To be eligible for this study you must meet all of the following criteria: \_\_\_\_\_. Are you interested in learning more?*”
  + Review of medical records: Provided the study team only **looks** at patient medical records to identify potentially eligible patients and does not **remove** PHI from the medical record and record it, this method of recruitment does not require consent or a waiver of HIPAA authorization.
* **Screening**: includes obtaining information from prospective participants.
  + Screening activities start the moment an investigator obtains information about a prospective participant to determine if they are eligible for the research study. ​
  + Screening individuals to **obtain and** **record** information to determine eligibility involves obtaining identifiable private information and is considered human subjects research for research subject to 45 CFR 46. ​
  + **Example of screening activity**: Asking participants questions or taking a medical history to determine if they meet study eligibility criteria (in person, via REDCap survey, or over the telephone).
  + Information should not be solicited from the subject without first obtaining their consent.​
* **Screening Consent Requirements:** The consent form can be limited to only information about screening activities (e.g., a screening consent form) or it can include all study activities.​ All elements of consent are required for phone and REDCap screening activities.​
  + A waiver of documentation is required for phone screening consent where participants will not sign and return a consent form. (see HRPP Policy IV.A.2 for list of required elements)
    - **Note:** A waiver of documentation is not permissible for screening activities that involve asking a potential participant screening questions AND obtaining data from their medical record. There is no regulatory allowance for a waiver of documentation of HIPAA Authorization – a signature is required in order for HIPAA authorization to be valid.