INFORMED CONSENT FORM TEMPLATE FOR CLINICAL STUDIES

Adapted from the WHO Informed Consent Template
(http://www.who.int/rpc/research_ethics/informed_consent/en/)

(*This template is for either clinical trials or clinical research. Language used throughout form should be at the level of a Filipino local student in Grade 6 to 8.*)

[INSTITUTIONAL LETTER HEAD]

Informed Consent Form for [Name the group of individuals for whom this informed consent form is written. Because research for a single project is often carried out with a number of different groups of individuals - for example healthcare workers, patients, and parents of patients - it is important that the group for whom this particular consent is identified.]

[Name of Principle Investigator]
[Name of Organization]
[Name of Sponsor]
[Name of Project and Version]

PART I: INFORMATION SHEET

INTRODUCTION

Briefly state who you (researcher) are and explain that you are inviting them to participate in the research you are doing. Inform them that they may talk to anyone they feel comfortable talking with about the research and that they can take time to reflect on whether they want to participate or not. Assure the participant that if they do not understand some of the words or concepts, that you will take time to explain them as you go along and that they can ask questions now or later.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Explain in lay terms why you are doing the research. The language used should clarify rather than confuse. Use local and simplified terms for a disease (e.g., local name of disease instead of malaria, mosquito instead of anopheles, "mosquitoes help in spreading the disease" rather than "mosquitoes are the vectors"). Avoid using terms like pathogenesis, indicators, determinants, equitable etc. There are guides on the internet to help you find substitutes for words which are overly scientific or are professional jargon.

TYPE OF RESEARCH INTERVENTION

Briefly state the type of intervention or procedure that will be undertaken. This will be expanded upon in the procedures section (below) but it may be helpful and less confusing to the participant if they know from the very beginning whether, for example, the research involves a vaccine, an interview, a biopsy or a series of finger pricks.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

State why this participant has been chosen for this research. People often wonder why they have been chosen to participate and may be fearful, confused or concerned.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Indicate clearly that they can choose to participate or not. State, what the alternative - in terms of the treatment offered by the clinic - will be, if they decide not to participate. State, only if it is applicable, that they will still receive all the services they usually do whether they choose to participate or not. This can be repeated and expanded upon later in the form as well, but it is important to state clearly at the beginning of the form that participation is voluntary so that the other information can be heard in this context.

Include the following section only if the protocol is for a clinical trial:

INFORMATION ON THE TRIAL DRUG [Name of Drug]

1. Give the phase of the trial and explain what that means. Explain to the participant why you are comparing or testing the drugs.
2. Provide as much information as is appropriate and understandable about the drug such as its manufacturer or location of manufacture and the reason for its development.
3. Explain the known experience with this drug
4. Explain comprehensively all the known side-effects/toxicity of this drug, as well as the adverse effects of all the other medicines that are being used in the trial

PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL

Describe or explain the exact procedures that will be followed on a step-by-step basis, the tests that will be done, and any drugs that will be given. Explain from the outset what some of the more unfamiliar procedures involve (placebo, randomization, biopsy, etc.) Indicate which procedure is routine and which is experimental or research. Participants should know what to expect and what is expected of them. Use active, rather than conditional, language. Write "we will ask you to…." instead of "we would like to ask you to….".

In this template, this section has been divided into two: firstly, an explanation of unfamiliar procedures and, secondly, a description of process.

A. Unfamiliar Procedures

This section should be included if there may be procedures which are not familiar to the participant.

If the protocol is for a clinical trial:

1. Involving randomization or blinding, the participants should be told what that means and what chance they have of getting which drug (i.e., one in four chances of getting the test drug).
2. Involving an inactive drug or placebo, it is important to ensure that the participants understand what is meant by a placebo or inactive drug.
3. Which may necessitate a rescue medicine, then provide information about the rescue medicine or treatment such as what it is and the criterion for its use. For example, in pain trials, if the test drug does not control pain, then intravenous morphine may be used as a rescue medicine.

If the protocol is for clinical research:

Firstly, explain that there are standards and guidelines that will be followed for the treatment of their condition. Secondly, if as part of the research a biopsy will be taken, then explain whether it will be under local anesthesia, sedation or general anesthesia, and what sort of symptoms and side effects the participant should expect under each category.

For any clinical study (if relevant):

If blood samples are to be taken explain how many times and how much in a language that the person understands. It may, for example, be inappropriate to tell a tribal villager that blood equal to a wine-glass full will be taken but it may be very appropriate to use pictures or other props to illustrate the procedure if it is unfamiliar.

If the samples are to be used only for this research, then explicitly mention here that the biological samples obtained during this research procedure will be used only for this research, and will be destroyed after _____ years, when the research is completed. If the tissues/blood samples or any other human biological material will be stored for a duration longer than the research purpose, or is likely to be used for a purpose other than mentioned in the research proposal, then provide information about this and obtain consent specifically for such storage and use in addition to consent for participation in the study - (see last section).

B. Description of the Process

Describe to the participant what will happen on a step-by-step basis. It may be helpful to the participant if you use drawings or props to better illustrate the procedures. A small vial or container with a little water in it is one way of showing how much blood will be withdrawn.

DURATION

Include a statement about the time commitments of the research for the participant including both the duration of the research and follow-up, if relevant.

SIDE EFFECTS

Potential participants should be told if there are any known or anticipated side effects and what will happen in the event of a side effect or an unexpected event.

RISKS

Explain and describe any possible or anticipated risks. Describe the level of care that will be available in the event that harm does occur, who will provide it, and who will pay for it. A risk can be thought of as being the possibility that harm may occur. Provide enough information about the risks.

BENEFITS

Mention only those activities that will be actual benefits and not those to which they are entitled regardless of participation. Benefits may be divided into benefits to the individual, benefits to the community in which the individual resides, and benefits to society as a whole as a result of finding an answer to the research question.

REIMBURSEMENTS

State clearly what you will provide the participants with as a result of their participation. WHO does not encourage incentives. However, it recommends that reimbursements for expenses incurred as a result of participation in the research be provided. These may

include, for example, travel costs and money for wages lost due to visits to health facilities. The amount should be determined within the host country context.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Explain how the research team will maintain the confidentiality of data, especially with respect to the information about the participant which would otherwise be known only to the physician but would now be available to the entire research team. Note that because something out of the ordinary is being done through research, any individual taking part in the research is likely to be more easily identified by members of the community and is therefore more likely to be stigmatized.

SHARING THE RESULTS

Where it is relevant, your plan for sharing the information with the participants should be provided. If you have a plan and a timeline for the sharing of information, include the details. You should also inform the participant that the research findings will be shared more broadly, for example, through publications and conferences.

RIGHT TO REFUSE OR WITHDRAW

This is a reconfirmation that participation is voluntary and includes the right to withdraw. Tailor this section to ensure that it fits for the group for whom you are seeking consent. The example used here is for a patient at a clinic.

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATING

Include this section only if the study involves administration of investigational drugs or use of new therapeutic procedures. It is important to explain and describe the established standard treatment.

WHO TO CONTACT

Provide the name and contact information of someone who is involved, informed, and accessible (a local person who can actually be contacted. State also that the proposal has been approved and how).

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

This section should be written in the first person and have a statement similar to the one in bold below. If the participant is illiterate but gives oral consent, a witness must sign. A researcher or the person going over the informed consent must sign each consent. The certificate of consent should avoid statements that have "I understand…." phrases. The understanding should perhaps be better tested through targeted questions during the reading of the information sheet (some examples of questions are given above), or through the questions being asked at the end of the reading of the information sheet, if the potential participant is reading the information sheet himself or herself.

This section is mandatory

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have

been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Print Name of Participant: _____
Signature of Participant: _____
Date: [MM/DD/YYYY]

If Alternatively Schooled

A literate witness must sign (if possible, this person should be selected by the participant and should have no connection to the research team). Participants who are illiterate should include their thumb print as well.

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Print name of witness_____ Thumb print of participant:
Signature of witness _____
Date: [MM/DD/YYYY]

STATEMENT BY THE RESEARCHER OR PERSON TAKING CONSENT

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:
1.
2.
3.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher or person taking the consent _____
Signature of Researcher or person taking the consent _____
Date: <MM/DD/YYYY>