

Does this make sense?

Facilitating a lay review of study materials

Inviting lay representative(s) to a review

Keep the language of your communication jargon-free: avoid words like *patient information sheet*. Provide clear information on the following:

- Will the review be conducted face-to-face individually, or with a group, or by email?
- How much time do you anticipate the lay rep will spend on the review?
- When will the review happen?
- If reviewing by email, how long will the lay rep have to respond?

Facilitating a review session

- **Present the document to the lay person in the way it will be presented in the study.** So, for example, if you will be posting a letter with an information sheet to a potential participant, give it to your reviewers in an envelope with the salutation and the address as you plan to have it.
- **Create a comfortable physical environment**
- Emphasise that **this is not at test** of the lay rep's understanding of the English language.

If at all possible, conduct the review with a group rather than with one individual on their own: typically you get richer feedback from a group discussion. If working one-on-one, use the Think Aloud technique, asking the lay representative to speak out everything they are thinking about the materials they are reviewing.

¹**Remember:** although legislation demands that you include particular content in a PIL, creative use of layout and design features allows you to prioritise content that the user considers essential, yet include all obligatory information.

Review process

Be prepared - give the lay representative(s) a highlighter and pencil. Explain briefly how the review process will work: perhaps a short review initially, a brief discussion, then longer review, as follows:

Allow 5 minutes initial review (or longer, depending on complexity of material) of the document, asking the lay representative(s):

- Highlight words that **someone in your life might find hard to understand**
- **Don't worry** if you don't get to the end of the document in the first 5 minutes, just get an **overall impression** of the document.

After initial review ask:

- **What is your first impression?**

After a short discussion at this point, ask the lay representative(s) to start reading again keeping the following in mind (use a flash card perhaps):

1. Identify what is **essential information**¹
2. Identify what **information is missing**
3. Identify what is **too much information**

If appropriate, ask the lay person to underline essential information and draw a line through ~~too much information~~ (or use margin notes).

Gathering feedback

After allowing considerable review time:

- Ask the lay person to explain in their own words **why** the study is being conducted; **what** they would have to do if taking part; **how** they might benefit from taking part.
- Discuss the three questions above, to understand the reviewers' responses
- If you have other specific questions, ask them now.