**Appendix A**:

Investigator checklist for proposing social media recruitment

Investigators proposing to recruit via social media are advised to take the following steps:

1. Provide the IRB with a statement describing the proposed social media recruitment techniques, including:

* + - A list of the sites to be used.
    - A description of whether recruitment will be passive and/or active.
    - If utilizing active recruitment, a description of how potential participants will be identified and approached, and their privacy maintained.

2. Ensure that the social media recruitment strategy complies with applicable federal and state laws.

3. Provide the IRB with a statement certifying compliance (or lack of noncompliance) with the policies and terms of use of relevant websites, OR if proposed techniques **conflict** with relevant website policies and Terms of Use:

* + - Seek an exception from the website to its terms of use; provide the IRB with written documentation of the exception, if granted.
    - Depending on IRB policy, in compelling circumstances make the case that the recruitment strategy should be allowed to proceed in the absence of an exception from the site.

4. Ensure that the proposed recruitment strategy respects all relevant ethical norms, including:

* + - Proposed recruitment does not involve deception or fabrication of online identities.
    - Trials are accurately represented in recruitment overtures.
    - Proposed recruitment does not involve members of research team ‘lurking’ or ‘creeping’ social media sites in ways members are unaware of.
    - Recruitment will not involve advancements or contact that could embarrass or stigmatize potential participants.

5. If the research team intends to recruit from the online networks of current or potential study participants:

* Provide the IRB with a statement explaining this approach and describing plans to obtain consent and documentation of consent from participants before approaching members of their online networks or to invite the individual themselves to approach members of their network on the research team’s behalf.

6. Consider whether a formal communication plan is needed for managing social media activities among enrolled participants, including:

* + - Steps to educate participants about the importance of blinding and how certain communications can jeopardize the scientific validity of a study (e.g., a section in the orientation or consent form)
    - Triggers for intervention from the research team (e.g., misinformation or speculation among participants on social media that could lead to un-blinding)
    - Interventions from the research team (e.g., corrections of misinformation or reminders about importance of blinding on social media)

**Appendix B:**

IRB checklist for evaluating social media recruitment proposals

IRBs evaluating protocols that propose to recruit via social media should take the following steps:

1. Seek to normalize social media recruitment to the extent possible, drawing analogies to traditional recruitment efforts.

2. Ensure that the proposed online recruitment strategy complies with all applicable federal and state laws.

3. Check that the investigator has certified compliance (or lack of noncompliance) between recruitment techniques and policies/terms of use of relevant websites.

* If a proposed technique conflicts with website policies and terms of use, request that the investigator seek a written exception from the site, OR
* Depending on IRB policy, request a written statement from the investigator explaining why the recruitment strategy warrants approval without an explicit exception, to be evaluated by the IRB with input from institutional legal counsel.

4. Ensure that proposed social media recruitment strategies respect all relevant ethical norms, including:

* + - Proposed recruitment does not involve deception or fabrication of online identities
    - Trials are accurately represented in recruitment overtures
    - Proposed recruitment does not involve members of research team ‘lurking’ on social media sites in ways members are unaware of
    - Recruitment will not involve advancements or contact that could embarrass or stigmatize potential participants

5. Ensure that investigators will obtain consent from current participants before they approach members of their online network for recruitment via their network or invite individuals to approach members of their network on research team’s behalf.

6. Ensure that a communication plan is in place for how the research team will handle online communication from enrolled participants that threatens the integrity of study.