

HIPAA Preparatory to Research and Screening Activities at Meriter

The “preparatory to research” provisions of HIPAA permit researchers to access PHI without authorization or a waiver of authorization to plan their research. The activities below are allowed; however, **PHI may NOT leave the Meriter premises or servers.**

Preparatory to Research Activities

- The development of research questions
- The determination of study feasibility (in terms of the available number and eligibility of potential study participants)
- The development of eligibility criteria (inclusion and exclusion)
- The determination of eligibility for study participation for specific individuals

UW Researchers are NOT employees of Meriter or members of the Meriter workforce for research purposes and may NOT contact potential participants for recruitment as part of preparatory to research activities.

Pre-enrollment Activities that Require a Waiver of HIPAA Authorization

You will need a Waiver of Authorization granted by an IRB and a compliance plan approved by the Meriter Research Integrity Office if you plan to remove Meriter PHI from its premises or servers.

Some examples of types of activities include:

1. The study team extracts names, diagnoses, and contact information to a UW department server to determine eligibility.
2. The study team writes down names and hospital room numbers to hand-off to another study team member to do in-person recruitment. The hand-off occurs outside of Meriter hospital.
3. The study team extracts names and contact information to a UW department server or REDCap to
 - a. Send a letter via US mail or an email introducing the study.
 - b. Place a phone call to once the person has agreed to be contacted.

This is not an exhaustive list.