

3/10/2008

Dear iStar users,

iStar will be down for upgrades on Sunday, March 15th.

This means NO access! please plan accordingly!

Included in this upgrade are two important changes. These are:

1. Consent Documents:

Documents that are stamped by the IRB for use in the consent process will be made into PDFs. There are a number of reasons for this, the most important consideration being the management of the stamped (IRB approved) documents. As PDFs, they will have the IRB stamp on each page, be more secure, and printing will be more consistent. Please note that the IRB stamp will be located in the right side margin. All documents must therefore maintain an 1" margin on the right side. The stamp will show up as text running sideways down the page indicating the IRB number and dates valid (documents stamped by the CCI will also have a CHLA logo watermark on every page). If you have documents that have complicated tables and graphics, you may wish to test whether printing to PDF will preserve the formatting of your document. We anticipate, that there will be many fewer problems with consent forms than before. Please also note that following this change, documents that will be stamped must retain the same orientation throughout the document (Portrait (i.e. 8/12 x 11) or Landscape (i.e. 11 x 8 1/2)). Documents that mix orientations will not stamp correctly.

2. (USC ONLY) Conflict of Interest questions:

(USC ONLY) The questions relating to Conflict of Interest that you will be required to answer for new studies and new continuing reviews have changed. The intent is to make it easier for actual and potential conflicts to be identified. The USC policy for conflict of interest in research has **not** changed. Previously in iStar, there was one question that dealt with all the specific arrangements that could cause conflicts. From March 16th onward, there will be three more direct questions with the possibility of a small number of follow up questions depending on your answer. The page will also direct you to further specific actions with which you must comply under the terms of the conflict of interest policy. Questions about this policy and/or help with understanding whether a potential conflict exists should go to the USC Office of Compliance at 213.740.8258 or complan@usc.edu.

The official USC policy for conflict of interest in research is available at:
<http://policies.usc.edu/policies/conflictresearch070108.pdf>

In addition, there are a number of other improvements to the system that will also be made. Most notably, some Data Safety monitoring reports will be auto-acknowledged, and some loopholes closed (such as allowing PIs to be changed without new PI assurances being given and preventing expiration dates to be over 12 months from approval date).

As always, we thank you for your patience. Special thanks also goes out to those who help us become aware of problems in the system or enhancements that they would like to see.

Please let us know if you have any concerns or issues at istar@usc.edu.