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Lessons Learned in Conducting School Health Research in Massachusetts: A Massachusetts School Nurse Research Network (MASNRN) Project

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Presenter Information
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MASNRN Board & Members

Lessons for the researcher when collaborating with a school nurse (SN):

1. Follow-up on the SN's interest in participating in research.

2. Recognize that a basic review of research may be required by the SN including: the research process, research question, databases and indexes, research design and methods, consent and assent, confidentiality, conflict of interest, and reliability of results.

3. Use a transparent, collaborative agreement to ensure that the SN commits to participation in all aspects of the study, including timely return of the research results and debriefing.

4. Consider use of continuing education and other incentives to compensate SNs.

Lessons for the researcher when collaborating with a school administrator:

1. Encourage the school administrator's participation by: presenting a proposal for study that benefits students' health and academic performance; providing a consent form that is concise and transparent; and acknowledging the professionalism of the SN.

2. Discuss the complexity of the IRB process in initial discussions including: multiple IRBs and permissions may be needed; special consent issues involving parents and assent of children; and human subjects training required for those nurses participating in research.

3. Acknowledge the importance of the school administrator's cooperation.

4. Provide the findings to the administrator.

Lessons for the researcher when conducting school-based research:

1. Encourage and guide the SN's formulation of research inquiries.

2. Assess the SN's research capability .

3. Provide to the SN participants:
- A basic review of the research design
- Clear instructions prior to beginning a research study
- Packets of all study materials with enough copies & in appropriate languages
- Contact information of principal investigators
- Timeline
- Incentives
- Enthusiasm for school-based research.

4. Conduct debriefing groups.

5. Recognize and acknowledge SN participants' input and the value of their expertise in all publications and presentations related to the study.

6. Disseminate the findings through publication and presentations at professional conferences.

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