

IREx July Quarterly Call Summary

This summary was generated by Microsoft Copilot and was edited and finalized by an IREx team member.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the July IREx Quarterly Call. Below is a summary of key updates.

New IREx Resource Pages

Based on user feedback, the IREx website resource pages have been redesigned to improve usability. Key changes include:

- Resources organized by topic using expandable accordion-style sections.
- Cleaner, easier-to-navigate layout.
- Frequently requested resources prominently highlighted for quick access.

Mid-Year IREx Metrics

IREx continues to grow significantly:

- **900+ active studies** across **51 unique single IRBs**
- Nearly **6,000 participating sites**
- **570 unique participating institutions**
- **64 new studies** in the first half of 2026, putting IREx on pace to meet or exceed last year's totals.

Additional insights:

- **70% of studies** involve five or fewer sites, demonstrating that IREx supports both small and large studies effectively.
- **73% of sIRBs** have more than one study in IREx, indicating strong repeat usage.
- Participating sites average about **10 studies each**, with some participating in >40 studies.
- **92% of sites** ultimately receive initial approval.
- Median time from sIRB submission to approval remains efficient at **13 days**.

New Features & Enhancements

- **Reviewing IRB Number in Email Notifications**
 - IREx emails now include the reviewing IRB number, enabling users to quickly locate studies within their local IRB systems.
- **Local Reliance Instructions Added to Emails**
 - Institution-specific reliance instructions entered in the Institutional Profile are now automatically included in site notification emails. Users were reminded to keep Section 3 of their Institutional Profile up to date.
- **Indemnification Enhancements**

New functionality allows institutions to:

- Offer the SMART IRB Indemnification Addendum.
- Provide multiple indemnification options on a study.
- Archive outdated indemnification agreements.
- Disable indemnification for specific studies when no longer needed.

- **Local Considerations Improvements**

Updates to the automated local considerations workflow now allow:

- Screening questions to hide non-applicable sections.
- “N/A for this study” response options for certain requirements.
- Reduced review burden and cleaner submissions for both relying sites and sIRBs

EFIC (Exception From Informed Consent) Workflow Update

The team provided a refresher on the EFIC workflow (launched September 2024). The goal is to help study teams and sites manage the additional documentation and coordination required for EFIC studies.

Current EFIC usage:

- 2 active EFIC studies in IREx.
- 10 participating relying sites.
- All sites have achieved initial approval.

The workflow guides sites through:

1. Upload and distribution of Community Consultation Plan (CCP) templates.
2. HRPP review and confirmation.
3. PI submission of site-specific plans.
4. sIRB review and acceptance.
5. Upload of community consultation results.
6. Final review and approval.

The team noted that EFIC studies involve substantially more coordination than standard sIRB studies and emphasized the importance of strong study manager support.

Upcoming Development Priorities

- **Reliance Site Progress Bar**

A visual progress tracker will help study teams understand:

- Where they are in the reliance process.
- Which party is responsible for the next step.
- What remains before initial approval can be granted.

- **Survey Change Requests**

Lead study teams will be able to request HRPP or PI survey revisions directly within IREx rather than managing those requests through email.

- **Lead Study Team Study Creation**

Future functionality may allow lead study teams to initiate studies directly in IREx, helping accelerate study startup and reduce administrative burden on sIRBs.