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SOCIAL MEDIA AS RESEARCH RECRUITMENT TOOL A New Guidance Document from Petrie-Flom and Harvard Catalyst



By [Luke Gelinas](#) (Fellow in Clinical Research Ethics)

Imagine this scenario: you are a researcher conducting a clinical trial on a promising treatment for a rare but serious heart condition. Unfortunately, you are struggling to locate and enroll enough eligible participants and your study is at risk of not completing. Then you discover a Facebook support group for precisely the condition you are studying. The group is open: you do not need to be invited or to suffer

from the condition to become a member—anyone can join. Here are the eligible participants you have been looking for!

But what are your obligations in approaching members of this group for recruitment? Would such recruitment be ethically advisable? Under what conditions? And what ethical norms apply when approaching sick and potentially vulnerable people for recruitment over social media? How should you (and the IRB) evaluate this type of activity from an ethical perspective?

To address this potential obstacle, a working group composed of members from the [Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics](#) at Harvard Law School and [Harvard Catalyst | The Harvard Clinical and Translational Science Center at Harvard Medical School](#) has authored an open-access guidance document: "[The Use of Social Media in Recruitment to Research: A Guide for Investigators and IRBs](#)." The document contains a number of detailed case studies as well as two practical checklists (one for investigators proposing and one for IRBs reviewing social media recruitment techniques).

Download the [full guidelines document](#) now and [learn more](#) about the collaboration between the Petrie-Flom Center and Harvard Catalyst on issues in clinical research ethics!

DON'T MISS OUR OCTOBER EVENTS!



[Health Care after the Election](#)

October 24, 2016 12:00 PM

[Wasserstein Hall, Milstein West AB \(2019\), Harvard Law School
1585 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA](#)



[Concurrent Surgeries: Medical, Legal, and Ethical Issues](#)

October 27, 2016 12:00 PM

[Pound Hall 101, Ballantine Classroom, Harvard Law School, 1563
Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA](#)

Scholarship from Petrie-Flom Affiliates



Is Medical Tourism Ethical? Profile of I. Glenn Cohen's work as a Greenwall Foundation Faculty Scholar

by The Greenwall Foundation, featuring I. Glenn Cohen (Faculty Director)

September 2016

EBOLA and FDA: reviewing the response to the 2014 outbreak, to find lessons for the future

by Emily A. Largent (Student Fellow Alumna)

Journal of Law and the Biosciences, September 16, 2016



The morality of risks in research: reflections on Kumar

by Frances M. Kamm (Senior Fellow)

Journal of Medical Ethics, September 19, 2016

Social Media Use in Research Recruitment: A New Guidance Document from Petrie-Flom and Harvard Catalyst

by Luke Gelin (Fellow in Clinical Research Ethics)

Petrie-Flom Center / Harvard Catalyst, September 21, 2016



News from Petrie-Flom Affiliates



Professor offers basics of bioethics and the law in 90 minutes: Harvard expert breaks down complex topic for Ed Portal and online audience

by Deborah Blackwell, reviewing lecture by I. Glenn Cohen (Faculty Director)

Harvard Gazette, September 20, 2016

Faculty Director I. Glenn Cohen Joins National Academy of Sciences Committee: Cohen and HMS Center for Bioethics Director Robert Truog to Advise on Issues in Organ Donor Intervention Research

by Petrie-Flom Center, featuring I. Glenn Cohen

September 26, 2016

EpiPen Maker Quietly Steers Effort That Could Protect Its Price

by Eric Lipton and Rachel Abrams, quoting Rachel E. Sachs (Academic Fellow Alumna)

New York Times, September 16, 2016

Generic EpiPen Will Likely Secure Profits For Mylan

by Dani Kass, quoting Rachel E. Sachs

Law360, September 22, 2016





PFC Spotlight: Academic Fellow Alumnus Christopher Robertson
by Petrie-Flom Center, featuring Christopher Robertson
(Academic Fellow Alumnus)
Petrie-Flom Center, September 22, 2016

Recent Blog Posts



Bill of Health
Examining the intersection of law and health care, biotech & bioethics
A blog by the Petrie-Flom Center and friends

**HARVARD
LAW**

Bioethics:

- "[Social Media Use in Research Recruitment: A New Guidance Document from Petrie-Flom and Harvard Catalyst](#)," by Luke Gelin
- "[Initial Quick Thoughts on the Announcement of the Birth Through Mitochondrial Replacement in Mexico](#)," by I. Glenn Cohen

General health law/policy:

- "[Regulating the Statutory Duty of Candour](#)," by John Tingle
- "[The Federal Government Should Consider Medical Marijuana a Potential Ally in the Fight Against Opioid Addiction](#)," by Shailin Thomas
- "[Undiagnosed Cancer under Alabama's Statute of Repose](#)," by Alex Stein
- "[The Once and Future Regulation of Biotechnology](#)," by Seán Finan

Health insurance, health care reform/finance:

- "[Medical Malpractice in Pennsylvania: What is MCARE and how does it work?](#)," by Matthew Young

Pharmaceuticals:

- "[Sarepta: Where Do We Go From Here?](#)," by Rachel E. Sachs

'The Week in Health Law' podcasts:

- "[Melinda Buntin on 'The Week in Health Law' Podcast](#)," by Nicolas Terry and Frank Pasquale
- "[Paul Lombardo on 'The Week in Health Law' Podcast](#)," by Nicolas Terry and Frank Pasquale

If you'd like to join us as a guest blogger or if you have something you'd like us to post, please contact us at petrie-flom@law.harvard.edu.

Petrie-Flom Center Events

Check out our [website](#) for a more complete listing of events as well as full co-sponsorship information about our collaborators. Remember, you can find materials from many of our events, including slide presentations and full event videos, online in our [events archive](#).



Health Care after the Election

October 24, 2016 12:00 PM

[Wasserstein Hall, Milstein West AB \(2019\), Harvard Law School](#)
[1585 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA](#)



Concurrent Surgeries: Medical, Legal, and Ethical Issues

October 27, 2016 12:00 PM

[Pound Hall 101, Ballantine Classroom, Harvard Law School, 1563 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA](#)



NEW EVENT! 21st-Century Advanced Illness Care Team: How Team-based Care is Moving Medicine Beyond the Clinic into the Home and Community

November 2, 2016 12:00 PM

[Pound Hall, Room 101, Harvard Law School, 1563 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA](#)

Check Out These Other Great Upcoming Events!

- [REGISTER NOW! The Ethics of Early Embryo Research & the Future of the 14-Day Rule](#), November 7, 2016
- [Half A Life: Legal and Policy Implications of Releasing Youth Incarcerated for Murder](#), November 15, 2016
- [Book Launch: Nudging Health - Health Law and Behavioral Economics](#), November 16, 2016
- [Conference: The Animal Welfare Act at 50](#), December 2-3, 2016
- [REGISTER NOW! Paying Research Participants: Ethical and Regulatory Parameters](#), December 9, 2016
- [5th Annual Health Law Year in P/Review](#), January 23, 2017
- [CALL FOR ABSTRACTS! 2017 Annual Conference: Transparency in Health and Health Care - Legal and Ethical Possibilities and Limits](#), April 28, 2017

Health Policy and Bioethics Consortia

- [International Trade and Access to Medicines: A Health Policy and Bioethics Consortium](#), **October 14, 2016**
- [The Hope and Hype of Precision Medicine: A Health Policy and Bioethics Consortium](#), **November 16, 2016**
- [Returning Results to Research Participants: A Health Policy and Bioethics Consortium](#), **February 10, 2017**



Other Harvard Events

Connect @ Cocktail Hour: Health Disparities Research Networking Reception

October 6, 2016, 4:00 - 6:00 PM

[Waterhouse Room, Gordon Hall, Harvard Medical School, 25 Shattuck St., Boston, MA](#)

Hosted by [Harvard Catalyst Health Disparities Research Program](#)

Consciousness Unbound: The Ethics of Neuroimaging After Severe Brain Injury

October 25, 12:30 - 2:00 PM

[TMEC 227 Amphitheatre, Harvard Medical School, Longwood Ave., Boston, MA 02115](#)

Sponsored by the [Center for Bioethics, Harvard Medical School](#)

Health Law Policy & Bioethics Workshops

The 2016-2017 [Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics Workshops](#) provide a forum for discussion of new scholarship in these fields from the world's leading experts. Harvard graduate students may register to take the workshop for course credit, but it is also open to the

public.

This year, the workshop is led by Professor [I. Glenn Cohen](#), and meets on selected Monday evenings from 5-7 PM on the Harvard Law School [campus](#). The invited presenter generally speaks for about 30 minutes, after which the floor is opened for Q&A. It is recommended to read the papers in advance. Papers will usually be posted on the [website](#) one week before they are scheduled for presentation, but occasionally are available by request only.

Questions about the workshop should be directed to Jennifer Minnich (jminnich@law.harvard.edu).

Upcoming workshops include:

October 17: [W. Nicholson Price II](#), University of Michigan School of Law

October 24: [Lindsay Wiley](#), Washington College of Law at American University

November 7: [Trudo Lemmens](#), University of Toronto Faculty of Law

November 21: [Elizabeth Weeks Leonard](#), University of Georgia School of Law

November 28: [Frances Kamm](#), Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

February 6: [Judith Daar](#), Whittier Law School

February 13: [Brendan Maher](#), University of Connecticut School of Law

March 27: [Kathryn Zeiler](#), Boston University School of Law

April 10: [Leo Beletsky](#), Northeastern University School of Law

Harvard Opportunities

[Petrie-Flom seeks RA for project on human subjects research](#)

Petrie-Flom Center, Harvard Law School

Application Deadline: Open until filled.

Other Opportunities

All opportunities are posted once in our newsletter. For the full posting and for other available positions, please visit our [website](#).

[Health Care Project Manager](#)

Health Care & Fair Competition Bureau

Application Deadline: October 7, 2016

[Tenure Track or Tenured Professor For a New Initiative in Practical Ethics](#)

University of California, San Diego

Application Deadline: October 14, 2016

[Call for Papers: Mid-Atlantic Health Law Works-in-Progress Retreat](#)

Seton Hall Law School's Center for Health & Pharmaceutical Law & Policy

Application Deadline: November 18, 2016

[Postdoctoral/Post Baccalaureate Bioethics Fellowship](#)

NIH Department of Bioethics

Application Deadline: December 31, 2016/January 15, 2017

[2017 Mollie and Paul Hill Student Writing Competition](#)

Florida State University Center for Innovative Collaboration in Medicine and Law

Application Deadline: January 2, 2017

Summer Ethics Fellowship for Law Students and Recent Graduates

FASPE (Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics)

Application Deadline: January 12, 2017

The Sherwin B. Nuland Summer Institute in Bioethics

Yale's Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics

Application Deadline: January 23, 2017

Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty Position

Center for Health Law Studies at Saint Louis University School of Law

Application Deadline: Open until filled

International Legal/Regulatory Intern

Broad Institute

Application Deadline: Open until filled

Assistant Director, Master's Program

Center for Bioethics, Urban Health, and Policy at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University

Application Deadline: Open until filled

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