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Magnetic Resonance Research Center
University of Pittsburgh
MRRC 002: MRRC Scheduling

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure document is to outline scheduling policy.

POLICY

The MRRC bills $647.00 per hour ($323.50 per half hour), the schedule is booked and billed in 30-minute increments with a 30-minute minimum.

The online schedule can be found using this link:

http://www.mrctr.upmc.edu/mrlib/login.php?

The MRRC does not provide scheduling services for studies. Scheduling is a study team responsibility. Users must use the online system to schedule. The user must be on a UPMC secure network or connected to it remotely through UPMC MyApps to access the schedule.

The MRRC has 2 different categories for slots:

> **Fixed:** refers to times reserved for studies to run a scanning session at the same time every or every other week. Fixed slots are awarded on the promise that greater than 50% of them will be used. The MRRC oversight council suggests an allocation rate of approximately 1 hour per week for every 50 participants run annually. This can be increased if a group is using more than 75% of their slots over a 3-month period. If usage falls below 50% in a three-month period, the MRRC will reduce a study's allocation. The MRRC reserves the right to modify this policy at any time.

> **Ad-Hoc or "on demand" scheduling:** refers to scheduling a slot as needed, using available time, unused fixed slots, and canceled time.

Fixed Slot Scheduling

- PIs/ Groups of PI that have fixed slots are required to provide the full information for an actual participant at least 5 days prior to the scheduled slot.
- A reminder email is sent to the user to submit this subject information approximately one week prior to the schedule time.
    - Monday slots: Reminder sent Tuesday of week before

- Tuesday slots: Reminder sent Wednesday of week before
- Wednesday slots: Reminder sent Thursday of week before
- Thursday slots: Reminder sent Thursday of week before
- Friday slots: Reminder sent Friday of week before
- Saturday slots: Reminder sent Monday of same week

- When an actual participant is not confirmed 5 days prior to a fixed slot, the slot will be open for all users.
- When coordinators or PIs who know that a fixed slot will not be used (e.g., vacations), they are obligated to open the slot up as soon as possible. This can be completed by the user:
  - Users can do this by selecting their slot for the particular day and time
  - Select Edit Entry
  - Under "type" select Fixed slot available
  - Then hit save
  - **Do not delete the slot**

Ad hoc or "on demand" Scheduling

You must use the online scheduling software to request available time (white on calendar), unused fixed slots (light blue), cancelled time from other groups (red). Users are not permitted to make scheduling arrangements with the MR techs or other staff regarding scheduling. This creates opportunities for miscommunication.

In general, scheduling a study through the ad hoc process is a two-step process. The first step is getting a slot allocated to your study. The second step is providing participant information.

- Before requesting a slot, ensure the participant is available to come in at the time you are requesting. Look at the MR schedule for available time (white), unused fixed slots (light blue), or canceled slots (red). Schedule requests are on a first come, first served basis.
- First, you must have the time allocated to your study. If the slot you are interested in is completely available (white), simply click the calendar at the start of the desired time and fill in the form being sure to provide a study team contact and precise study duration. If the slot you are interested in is an unused fixed slot (blue) or cancelled time (red), use the "priority request" or "urgent request" buttons on the scheduling system to initiate the request. Again, be sure to fill in all requested fields. Although, in the past, there was a difference in response time between urgent and priority requests (urgent were responded to faster), there is no longer a functional difference. Both types of request are responded to as soon as possible.

- If you requested available time, you can immediately click the slot and enter participant information.
- If you requested an unused fixed slot or cancelled time, the MRRC will review your request. If the time is not available, the MRRC will contact the user with the provided contact information.
- If a time is allocated to your study through an urgent or priority request, your scheduler will receive an email notification when the slot is created. At this time, you must click the slot and provide the participant information.
- Scheduling requests will be promptly reviewed and confirmed Monday through Friday 8am to 4pm. Requests submitted after 2:30pm may be addressed the following business day.
- Once you have entered participant information, do not edit the slot in any way unless participant information changes. Any edits made by the user may revert the status of the slot and make it available to the community.
- Always check the schedule the day of your study session to ensure the slot is confirmed prior to coming to the MRRC.

Day of Scan

- Users must check the schedule the day of their study session to ensure it is confirmed. Any questions or concerns can be addressed during business hours by calling or emailing.
- Users and participants are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled slot time to complete a safety screening and get ready for the MRI. Failure to arrive 15 minutes early could impact the start of the scheduled MRI time or cancel it, as there may not be adequate time to complete the scan.
- Due to circumstances beyond the control of the MRRC, scheduled slots may be delayed. Please plan accordingly with your participants.
- Users that arrive after the start of their scanned time may need to be rescheduled, have their protocol abbreviated or will have to wait until a slot opens later in the day.

Switching slots with other groups

Users are encouraged to reach out to other groups directly to switch or borrow slots. Please forward written communication of the agreement to the MRRC to authorize slot switches.

Protocol Testing of New or Current Protocols

Arrangements are to be made with the lead technologist, Andrew Reineberg (aer126@pitt.edu), and the MRRC Faculty Physicist assigned to your protocol. The MRRC suggests finding canceled or available time to test current or new MRI protocols.

Ongoing protocols that would like to do additional testing or training on their existing protocol are expected to reach out to the MRRC Operations Manager or other MRRC staff to authorize this use of the scanners or control rooms. Provide a description of what you are testing. Testing of ongoing protocols or any use of the scanner or control rooms outside of the single, complementary testing session may be billable. However, users are encouraged to reach out to the MRRC to assist with testing to ensure high quality science is being conducted at the center.

Other considerations

When setting up the MRI protocol, the scan time includes the time it takes to get the subject into the magnet at the start of the session and out of the magnet at the end of the session. Users who go over the scheduled time will be contacted to shorten their sequences or will be charged for additional time and instructed to schedule additional time in the future. Setup takes approximately 10 minutes for routine studies. Studies that require more extensive monitoring or study specific devices/procedures may require more time.