



Research
Manitoba



RITHIM FAQs – November 2022

Please visit regularly as these FAQs will be updated as additional questions are received from stakeholders.

We encourage you to share the link to this document with colleagues, students, staff, and stakeholders.

Research Improvements Through Harmonization In Manitoba (RITHIM) launched on January 1, 2022.

An important first step to launching RITHIM were **amendments to the Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)**. The amendments were proclaimed on January 1, 2022, and enabled:

- Formal implementation of the RITHIM program
- Establishment of the Provincial Health Research Privacy Committee (PHRPC) as the authority to provide approval for research projects requesting **USE** of personal health information maintained by any Manitoba Trustee, including government or government agencies
- Establishment of the Committee for Harmonized Health Impact, Ethics and Privacy Review (CHIPER) to approve research projects requiring privacy review prior to PHRPC decision.

A transition plan was developed to launch RITHIM, to comply with the changes to PHIA and allow for necessary changes to policies and procedures within stakeholder organizations to occur.

To support research, temporary changes were minimized during this initial implementation of RITHIM.

The full RITHIM program, including the electronic Provincial Research Administration System (RITHIM-PRAS) will be implemented **early in 2023**.

CHANGES FOR JANUARY 1, 2022 - Required to comply with PHIA legislation

Personal Health Information/Privacy Applications

- The PHIA amendments brought a **NEW REQUIREMENT** for researchers. Effective January 1, 2022, PHRPC is the **ONLY** committee that has authority to provide approval for research projects requesting **USE** of personal health information in Manitoba, however, maintained by any Trustee, including government or government agencies.
 - Trustees retain the authority to approve **DISCLOSURE** of personal health information maintained by that Trustee (grant access and provide data).
 - To determine if your research requires PHRPC review please visit [Does my Project Require PHRPC Review?](#)
 - For additional information on PHRPC, including submission forms, please visit: <https://www.rithim.ca/phrpc-overview>.
- PHRPC REQUIRES satisfactory confirmation that the proposed research project has been approved by CHIPER, prior to its decision.
 - For the initial January 1, 2022, implementation, CHIPER is now responsible for ensuring that a Research Ethics Board has approved a research project prior to PHRPC decision.
 - Researchers DO NOT have to complete an application for CHIPER.
 - The form and mandate of CHIPER will evolve with the full implementation of the RITHIM Program.
 - For this initial implementation, CHIPER does not conduct an ethics review and therefore, has been established as a smaller committee with members from the existing University of Manitoba Health Research Ethics Board (HREB) and Biomedical Research Ethics Board (BREB) memberships. Additional members will join CHIPER once the full launch of the RITHIM program occurs in early 2023.

Organizational Impact Applications

- Researchers will continue to use existing processes. Trustees retain the authority to approve **DISCLOSURE** of personal health information maintained by that Trustee (grant access and provide data).

Research Ethics Board Applications

- Researchers will continue to use existing processes. Ethics Board approval is required as input to CHIPER and PHRPC decisions.

CHANGES FOR EARLY 2023 – with RITHIM-PRAS Launch

What changes for PIs in early 2023?

- **Personal Health Information/Privacy assessment**
 - With the launch of RITHIM-PRAS in early 2023, a single electronic application form will be used, eliminating the need for a separate PHRPC application form.
- **Organizational Impact Applications**
 - With the launch of RITHIM-PRAS in early 2023, a single electronic application form will be used, allowing researchers to identify impacted organizations and receive site approvals as part of the overall project submission.
- **Research Ethics Board Applications**
 - In early 2023, CHIPER will become the new provincial research ethics board responsible for health research project reviews province wide.
 - The single RITHIM-PRAS application form will be used for CHIPER review, eliminating the need for a separate application.

What changes for REBs in early 2023?

- In early 2023, CHIPER will become the new provincial research ethics board responsible for health research project reviews province wide.
- Post-secondary REBs will delegate their health research ethics reviews to CHIPER.

What changes for Organizational Impact Reviews in early 2023?

- With the launch of RITHIM-PRAS in early 2023, a single electronic application form will be used, eliminating the need for separate institutional impact application forms.
- Trustees retain the authority to approve **DISCLOSURE** of personal health information maintained by that Trustee (grant access and provide data).

What training and support can the research community access to guide the adoption and continuing usage of RITHIM-PRAS?

- Training videos and guidance documentation will be available beginning in early 2023 on the RITHIM website.
- Targeted, guided virtual training sessions will be delivered to the research community for all users of the RITHIM-PRAS platform prior to implementation. Sign-up will begin in early 2023 with ongoing sessions available throughout the transition.
- Long-term support for RITHIM-PRAS will be available through videos and supplemental training materials or by contacting RITHIM.

Who has been involved in the development of RITHIM?

- RITHIM has had consultation with and participation from many post-secondary institutions, the health system and service delivery organizations, government and industry.

How is health research involving First Nations, Metis or Inuit affected by the RITHIM-PRAS launch?

- With the launch of RITHIM-PRAS early in 2023, applicants will submit evidence of the appropriate approvals within RITHIM-PRAS.
- Numerous Indigenous groups have been engaged in the creation of questions on our electronic application form.

RITHIM – Additional Questions?

Still have questions? Please email rithim@researchmb.ca.

What do the acronyms mean?

CHIPER - Committee for Harmonized Health Impact, Privacy, and Ethics Review – Committee for Harmonized Health Impact, Privacy, and Ethics Review – CHIPER was established on January 1, 2022, and will evolve with the launch of RITHIM-PRAS early in 2023.

- As of January 1, 2022, CHIPER was established as required by the PHIA legislative changes, in order to approve research projects prior to a decision by the new Provincial Health Research Committee (PHRPC).
- Early in 2023, CHIPER will become the new provincial health research ethics board replacing the other health research ethics boards province wide. It will continue to operate under RITHIM and will meet monthly along with PHRPC to review applications. It will review all health research ethics applications in Manitoba.

RITHIM - Research Improvements Through Harmonization In Manitoba - RITHIM is a new provincial program for harmonizing health research reviews in Manitoba. An initial implementation of RITHIM began on January 1, 2022, which included the creation of CHIPER and PHRPC. Early in 2023, the role of RITHIM will expand to include its full mandate and introduce RITHIM-PRAS, the new software solution to support applications and reviews.

PHRPC - Provincial Health Research Privacy Committee - Provincial Health Research Privacy Committee - PHRPC replaced Manitoba Health's Health Information Privacy Committee (HIPC). Effective January 1, 2022, PHRPC is the **ONLY** committee that has the authority to provide approval for research projects requesting **USE** of personal health information in Manitoba, however, maintained by any Trustee, including government or government agencies. PHRPC is made up of members appointed by Manitoba's Health Minister.

PI - Principal Investigator - The lead researcher on a team who is responsible for the overall conduct of a research project including:

- conducting all research and research-related activities ethically;
- managing the activities of all members of the local research team, in compliance with all applicable policies, guidelines, and regulations; and
- authorizing activity and expenses on a funded research project.

RITHIM-PRAS - Provincial Research Administration System – RITHIM-PRAS is RITHIM's electronic application that will be the single point of entry for all health research ethics, privacy, and impact applications and reviews. It is currently in development, and we expect it to be ready early in 2023.