



Research  
Manitoba



## RITHIM January 1, 2022 - Launch Communication

Research Improvements Through Harmonization In Manitoba (RITHIM) is beginning its launch on January 1, 2022. An important first step to launching RITHIM are **amendments to the Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)**, which will be proclaimed January 1, 2022, and enable:

- 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 however held by any trustee, including by government or government agency.
- 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 has been developed to launch RITHIM, 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 will be minimized during this initial implementation of RITHIM.

The full RITHIM program, including the electronic RITHIM Provincial Research Administration System (RITHIM PRAS) will be implemented later in 2022.

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

#### Personal Health Information/Privacy Applications

- The PHIA amendments bring a **NEW REQUIREMENT** for researchers. Effective January 1, PHRPC is the **ONLY** committee that has authority to provide approval for research projects requesting **USE** of personal health information, **however held by any Manitoba trustee**, including by government or government agency.
  - PHRPC review is required if your study requires access to personal health information held by any Manitoba trustee (health institution, government/government agency, non-government organization or Manitoba Centre for Health Policy).
  - Trustees retain the authority to approve **DISCLOSURE of** personal health information held by that trustee (**grant access and provide data**).
  - For researchers, this means that **ALL** requests for research projects for **USE** of personal health information, however held, **REQUIRE** PHRPC approval. For additional information on PHRPC, including submission forms, please visit: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/hipc/index.html>.
  - To accommodate the introduction of the new Provincial Health Research Privacy Committee (PHRPC), researchers will use forms similar to the current Health Information Privacy Committee's (HIPC) application forms which have been modified for use by PHRPC.

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- **PHRPC REQUIRES** satisfactory confirmation that the proposed research project has been approved by CHIPER, **prior to its decision.**
  - For the initial January 1 implementation, this means that CHIPER becomes responsible for ensuring that the Research Ethics Board decisions have been completed 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 will not undertake review and approval for ethics, and therefore, will be 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 has occurred later in 2022.

#### Organizational Impact Applications

- Researchers will continue to use existing processes. Trustees retain the authority to approve **DISCLOSURE** of personal health information held 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.

A “Frequently Asked Questions” page has been developed to provide additional detail and address questions received from stakeholders.

- <http://rithim.ca/rithimlaunchfaq>

Please visit [RITHIM.CA](http://RITHIM.CA) for more information and updates. Questions can also be sent directly to [RITHIM@researchmb.ca](mailto:RITHIM@researchmb.ca).

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To facilitate broad communication, we request your organization to consider distributing and posting the above information.