

Implementation Guide for CTO Participating Sites

Introduction

CanReview is a pan-Canadian collaboration to enable a single research ethics review for multi-site clinical trials conducted across Canada, while ensuring the highest ethical standards. By extending the Stream platform beyond Ontario and establishing nation-wide timelines, CanReview supports improved efficiency, national collaboration, and greater competitiveness for Canadian-led trials.

This Implementation Guide is intended for organizations that already participate in Clinical Trials Ontario (CTO)'s Stream platform, and would like to join CanReview.

Key Differences & Requirements

While CanReview operates on the same Stream platform and uses similar workflows, participation in CanReview presents key differences and requirements for CTO users:

- Separate CanReview Inter-Institutional Agreement and Terms of Service
- Separate Institutional Ethics & Administration Profile
- New pan-Canadian scope, timelines, fees and requirements (outlined below)

When Should I use CanReview?

Use CanReview when a study involves, or may involve, two or more sites in **two or more** provinces or territories.

- Studies with sites **only in Ontario** continue to use CTO as usual.
- Studies that **expand beyond Ontario** use CanReview for a single pan-Canadian ethics review.

If you anticipate that your study will have sites outside of Ontario, we encourage you to submit it as a CanReview study.

Steps to Getting Started

1. Sign the CanReview Agreement

Participation in CanReview requires execution of a **separate CanReview Agreement**, even if your organization already participates in CTO. Signing the CanReview Agreement allows your organization to become a CanReview Participating Organization, either as a Recruiting Site, a REB Host Institution, or both.

Organizations with a CTO-qualified REB do not need to complete an additional validation process to participate in CanReview. If your REB is already reviewing studies in Stream, it is considered validated for CanReview purposes; however, intention to review CanReview studies must still be indicated on the CanReview Agreement.

Download the CanReview Agreement and find an FAQ document [here](#). When you're ready to execute the Agreement, submit a signed copy to info@canreview.ca.

2. Review and approve Institutional Ethics & Administration Profile

Once the CanReview Agreement has been executed, Recruiting Sites submit a CanReview Institutional Ethics & Administration Profile. This form mirrors the Documented Institutional Ethics Requirements (DIER) and SRERS form used by CTO, in which Participating Sites outline specific ethics requirements particular to their institutions, and the Primary and Secondary Institution Representatives who serve as the main institutional contacts for studies involving their institution.

To facilitate onboarding, the Stream team will replicate your institution's DIER/SRERS information into the CanReview Institutional Ethics & Administration Profile. It will be shared with your institution for review and updating (if needed) to support Canada-wide ethics review. Please note, Stream requires that Primary and Secondary Institution Representatives be the same for both CTO and CanReview studies.

Once completed, the CanReview Institutional Ethics & Administration Profile is published and publicly available on the CanReview [Participating Sites webpage](#) next to your institution's name.

To see the CanReview Institution Ethics & Administration Profile, click [here](#).

3. (Optional) Onboarding meeting with Institution Representatives

When forms are submitted, CanReview typically schedules an onboarding meeting with the Primary and Secondary Institution Representatives named in the Institutional Ethics & Administration Profile. Because CTO and CanReview use the same Stream platform, this step is optional for CTO participating site representatives.

- No new user accounts are required
- No system re-training is needed for basic functionality

Technical support, ticketing, and issue resolution remain the same as with the CTO process, with the added benefit of support now being available in both English and French.

4. Communicate with your research community to support internal adoption

Once onboarding is complete, organizations begin internal communication with their REB, research offices, and researchers as applicable. Clear internal communication helps avoid confusion and delays, especially given CanReview's pan-Canadian scope and timelines. Key messages to communicate include:

- CanReview applies to studies that involve (or may involve) **more than one province** or territory.
- CanReview operates on the Stream platform, and existing Stream users do not need to create new accounts
- REBs will be clearly notified in Stream when a submission is a CanReview study.
- Local REB processes and CTO processes for your institution continue unchanged for non-CanReview studies.
- CanReview introduces new frameworks (timelines, fees, forms, etc.) – find these outlined below.

What's Different Between CanReview and CTO Stream?

Participating Sites: CTO only supports multi-site Ontario studies. CanReview supports multi-site studies involving more than one province or territory

Agreement: CTO participation does not automatically enable CanReview participation. Institutions must sign the CanReview Agreement to participate in CanReview studies.

Strict Timelines: Strict and fair timelines are placed on both the applying research teams and the reviewing Research Ethics Board. These timelines ensure that Canadian-based trials remain globally competitive while maintaining the highest ethical standards. High-quality ethical review is paramount. Timelines will be paused when warranted. Find timelines and details [here](#).

REB Assignment: CanReview assigns a single REB of Record for each study using an equitable, national next-in-line model. This differs from Ontario-only models. Find the assignment process [here](#).

Forms and Requirements: CanReview uses a dedicated Institutional Ethics & Administration submission to capture pan-Canadian requirements. While similar to CTO DIERs, there is an additional focus on requirements that apply across provinces.

Fees: Ethics review fees apply only to industry-sponsored or industry-supported studies. Invoices are sent directly to the sponsors and/or the Contract Research Organization listed in the ethics application forms. Find the fee schedule [here](#).

To learn more about how CanReview works, please visit our website [here](#).

Here to Support You

The CanReview team is available to help institutions, REBs and researchers walk through initial questions to support readiness and onboarding with the system. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or for more information:

- Email: info@canreview.ca
- Website: www.canreview.ca

To stay up to date with CanReview, please [subscribe to our newsletter](#).