

# HDPBC Training and Education

## **HDPBC Pre-Publication Guidelines**

## Overview

Prior to public dissemination of materials created using Ministry of Health (MOH) administrative data, these items must be submitted for pre-publication review. Pre-publication reviews are a standard MOH requirement for Information Sharing Agreements, Information Sharing Plans under the General Health Information Sharing Agreement, and all Research Agreements. The pre-publication review process is supported by MOH Service Providers, including PopData BC, and in collaboration with health authorities and partners such as the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).

Because materials intended for public dissemination vary in terms of content, audience, and preparation timelines, they are reviewed contextually following common principles. The purpose of this document is to provide answers to common questions about pre-publication requirements and the review process.

The key requirements for publicly disseminated materials created using administrative health data are outlined in the Agreements for each data sharing situation. It is highly recommended that the relevant Agreement and the MOH [Access to Health Data for Research Policy](#) and the [DSC Policies Respecting the Disclosure of Information](#) are reviewed before submitting an item for pre-publication review. MOH Service Providers, other Data Stewards, and external partners may also have policies in place related to publications that applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with.

## Pre-Publications and Reviews

### What are pre-publication reviews?

Pre-publication reviews are a process designed to support the use of a public body's data in line with the purpose for which data access was approved.

### What are the requirements for pre-publications?

The item submitted must not yet be published and must be finalized apart from minor layout and editorial changes as required by the publishing outlet. For academic publications, this is the stage after all peer-review changes have been made and accepted by the reviewers, editor, and journal or other publisher.

All pre-publications are evaluated using principles-based criteria and must include:

- A clear connection to the project and alignment with the purpose data access was approved;
- Appropriate and complete citation of MOH datasets;
- Inclusion of a standard disclaimer (see your Agreement for the appropriate wording);
- and
- Privacy and ethical requirements, including no gross misuse of data (e.g., attempts to identify vulnerable groups using data accessed for another purpose).

### Do all public disseminations have to be submitted?

If an item, regardless of media or format, was created using data accessed under the terms of an Agreement with provisions requiring pre-publication review, it must be submitted prior to dissemination.

- Items for dissemination containing any novel data or interpretations of data must be submitted for review.
- Items for dissemination which do not contain novel data or interpretations of data must be submitted for notice and filing.

## Are there different kinds of pre-publications?

Yes. The general categories are:

- Presentation materials, such as abstracts, posters, or slides for conferences and lectures;
- Publications, such as academic or popular journal articles, theses, and monographs;
- Instructional materials, such as course materials or other items to support training or learning; and
- Interview materials, such as podcast, radio, television, or other digital broadcast items.

## How does the kind of pre-publication I submit change the review process?

There are two major differences:

1. The timeline required for MOH staff to review the item  
We aim to complete reviews of all presentation materials within 7 government working days, and all other materials within 45 government working days. We recognize that disseminations in the interview materials category are not likely to have a sufficiently long notice period for either of those timelines, thus we will accept them as soon as is practicable. They must otherwise comply with the requirements of pre-publication review.
2. The criteria MOH staff review for the item  
Purpose alignment and privacy and ethical requirements must be met by all types of pre-publication. The disclaimer is required for all formats apart from presentation materials. Full citation of MOH datasets is only required for academic publications such as articles, monographs, and theses.

## How do I submit a pre-publication for review?

If you access the data for your project through [PopData BC](#), your pre-publications should be submitted [through their process](#) for review by MOH staff.

Pre-publications can be submitted by making a request to Seek Data Verification through the [Health Sector Information Analysis & Reporting Request Management System](#).

## What should I expect from the review process?

PopData BC or MOH staff will acknowledge receipt of your item for review. The outcome of a pre-publication review will be communicated promptly to you by MOH staff or PopData BC. It may be:

- Approved as submitted;
- Conditionally approved, with a minor change required for approval (e.g. adding a disclaimer);
- or
- Not approved, the item may be re-submitted after revisions have been made.

## How long will it take for my pre-publication to be reviewed?

This depends on the type of pre-publication material you have submitted. Presentation materials require 7 government working days, and other categories require 45 government working days. Reviews of the latter category do not typically require the full timeline.

## How are review outcomes handled?

If your pre-publication is approved, MOH staff will document the approval and file the item, and it can proceed to dissemination as intended. If your pre-publication is not approved, reasons for that decision will be provided to you, and you will be invited to re-submit a revised version of the item. Further explanation with respect to the review outcome can be provided to support re-submission.

## What happens if my submission does not meet one or more requirements?

After review, you will be advised as to whether any changes are needed, and whether or not these are a conditional approval. If your item is not approved, you are invited to consider the feedback from review of your pre-publication and re-submit. However, the new version must not replicate the one which was not approved.

## What does a conditional approval of my pre-publication mean?

Conditional approvals are granted when most criteria are fulfilled but something minor is outstanding. Most frequently, a disclaimer or citation needs to be added, or a slight error corrected. If you make the appropriate additions or changes, you can submit the corrected version for filing and proceed to publication.

## When do I re-submit a pre-publication?

Re-submission is required for items which were not approved, or when there have been changes to the content of an item which was previously approved. Any item re-submitted will be reviewed again to ensure that the appropriate review criteria are met.

## What if I publish the same research in a different format?

Any item created using data accessed under the terms of an Agreement with provisions requiring pre-publication review must be submitted. However, if the content was already reviewed and approved in a different pre-publication submission and no novel data or interpretations of data are featured, it can be submitted for notice and filing without being subject to review timelines.

## Further Information

### I have a different question. Who can I contact?

For questions about PopData BC procedures related to pre-publications, please email [dataaccess@popdata.bc.ca](mailto:dataaccess@popdata.bc.ca).

For questions about MOH requirements and procedures, please email [HealthDataCentral@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HealthDataCentral@gov.bc.ca).

For DSC requirements, [data.stewardship.commsupport@gov.bc.ca](mailto:data.stewardship.commsupport@gov.bc.ca).

For Health Data Platform BC Data Council requirements, [hlth.hdpdcsecretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:hlth.hdpdcsecretariat@gov.bc.ca).