Connect Care Research - Including research studies with your site launch

Participation in research studies is part of a patients’ care journey, and when it can impact the patient’s care with AHS, this participation must be reflected in their health record. Research team members, including study coordinators and research nurses, are better suited to ensure the accuracy of research-related information, so AHS has invited them into the Connect Care Clinical Information System to perform workflows including; scheduling research-related visits to clinical areas, queuing up research tests and procedures, and documenting research activities in the patient’s chart.

*Research teams have a more active role in maintaining the patient’s health records and clinical teams have easier access to research information that may impact care decisions for their patients.*

An important responsibility of the research teams is to indicate to our pharmacy, lab, and imaging departments when the placed orders are research-related or standard of care. Performing the orders in-system will partially or completely replace the paper requisitions.

*This represents a key workflow change for our pharmacy, lab, DI, ECG, and diagnostics departments supporting research. Like any change, the implementation of these workflows may raise some questions.*

Not all research studies are in Connect Care. Research participation documentation and workflows are done in-system when a study meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Interventional trials (including drug trials) and device studies
- Survey-based or observational studies where;
  - Research-specific visits are occurring in AHS clinical spaces The use of recruitment tools is requested, or if there is any research-study specific order entry or documentation
  - Release of information to outside study monitors is required
  - Study coordinators require notifications of ED arrivals or admissions
  - Pharm/lab/DI/ECG will be invoicing the study for services rendered in support of research (i.e. observational studies with labs or other testing)

**How will research be visible in Connect Care for your site at launch?**

1. **All patients** enrolled in research studies (that meet the study inclusion scope — as per the above) **will be flagged** as participating in research, and the clinically relevant details of the respective studies will be available to clinical care teams. These patients will be easily identified by the presence of the research icon on their storyboard therefore enhancing patient safety and supporting clinical decisions.

2. **Individuals** who previously did not have direct access to the patient chart, including university-employed research coordinators, will have access and **responsibilities to keep the patient record** (as it relates to research), **up-to-date**.

3. **Training** in all CIS research-related workflows will be research role-specific. Users requiring access to inquiry tools and workflows will be assessed and assigned a user role. Individuals who have never been included in electronic health systems will for the first time have a role.
Preparing Clinical Operations Staff

1. Include research as part of your site readiness meetings, specifically how it impacts your team’s workflows and how you and your team will be able to identify the research-related activities. By clicking on the research icon in the patient’s storyboard, users will have access to the research study name and brief description, and the name of the Principal Investigator responsible for that research study.

2. The research icon in visible in several areas of the patient chart and is intended to create awareness that activities such as lab tests, medications, procedures, encounters, notes, etc., are associated with a research study.
   a. It is important to be aware of the research icon throughout Connect Care to avoid inadvertently canceling orders, labs, appointments that are associated with research. Clinical staff, especially in acute settings, may not be accustomed to seeing research orders in-system.

3. Even if a paper requisition is created for research orders, those orders must be placed in system just like any clinical order.

4. Associating a patient to a research study may also trigger some automated in-system actions, such as medication contraindication warnings that will only be seen by research team members assigned to that patient. In order to view actions associated with the research navigator, you must have a research sub-role and be associated with an in-system research record.

5. When patient records, encounters, and orders are not correctly associated to the relevant research study, downstream workflows for lab, pharmacy, DI and ECG as well as the research teams are impacted.

Preparing Health Service Departments

1. Identify service areas or departments providing in-kind or cost-recovered services in support of research (i.e. pharmacy, lab, DI, ECG, diagnostics). Each site should provide the names of those individuals in service departments to the Connect Care Support Team for Research (cc.research@ahs.ca) and ensure that these individuals have the opportunity to work in their departments to ensure their operational staff;
   a. Are aware how to receive, process, result and invoice research-related orders in-system. Q: What can services expect to see when research orders come in? Will it be apparent in work queues that orders are research or SOC? Q: What will change with research orders at launch from the perspective of the service areas? Q: What happens to paper requisitions for research? Research kits?
   b. Are familiar with research-related in-system reports, work queues or other system functions.
   c. Have been assigned the appropriate sub-roles to view research-related reports (i.e. billing, invoicing). Q: What research-related roles (reporting) should service area staff apply for to be ready for launch? Q: Where in their training support materials can they find information to help when they have questions?
   d. Know the impact of in-system orders on their legacy processes
   e. Are aware of which studies are ongoing at their site and know how to reach out to research teams or Connect Care support if there are delays or issues at or after launch. Q: Who can they call from the research team or from Connect Care research to get more information?

We are here for you
You are not alone! The Connect Care Support Team for Research is dedicated to support all sites and users undergoing the Connect Care – Research Module implementation. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions at cc.research@ahs.ca.