

West Park Healthcare Centre Research Data Management Proposed Strategy

Introduction.....	2
What is a Research Data Management (RDM).....	2
Research Data Management Governance	2
Scope.....	3
Oversight and Review.....	3
Institutional Support.....	3
Awareness-Raising Activities	3
Enhance RDM Training	3
Promote RDM Wise Practices	4
Provide and/or Support Access to RDM Tools, Resources, and Infrastructure	4
Stakeholders.....	4
Ethical Considerations	4
Other Relevant Strategies and Policies	4
Definitions.....	5
Timelines	5
Looking Ahead.....	5

INTRODUCTION

In March 2021, the Tri-Agency released the Tri-Agency Research Data Management (RDM) Policy. The objective of this policy is to support Canadian research excellence by promoting sound RDM and data stewardship practices. The policy requires each post-secondary institution and research hospital eligible to administer Tri-Agency funds to create an institutional RDM strategy, publicly post the strategy and notify the agencies when completed.

The Policy that requires institutions to implement an Institutional RDM Strategy. Two additional policies adjacent to this strategy pertain to Agency grant applicants. This strategy aims to support researchers in their obligations to research data management.

- Requirement for researchers to complete Data Management Plans for specific grants and,
- Institutions to provide infrastructure for Data Deposit

This document outlines West Park Healthcare Centre (WPHCs) planned strategy for research data management. This plan is a working draft that will be updated as needed.

What is a Research Data Management (RDM)

Research Data Management (RDM) refers to the processes and practices applied throughout the research lifecycle—i.e., as data are planned for, collected, organized, documented, stored, preserved, shared, and reused—in support of analysis, research, creative works, and dissemination that are beneficial to society. Applying good RDM practices improves the efficiency and impact of research, increases research visibility, facilitates collaboration, protects intellectual property, enables reuse and verification of research results, and supports a culture of reproducibility. Developing, learning, and implementing good RDM practices are a shared responsibility of researchers (whether faculty, students, staff, or community collaborators), their communities of practice, institutions, and funding agencies.

Research Data Management Governance

Research data management is governed through WPHCs joint research ethics board (JREB) and WPHC Research and Education Council. These two committees at West Park have a shared vision for RDM. The vision is as follows:

West Park's is in the early stages of creating the services, repositories, and necessary documentation for an institutional Data Management Strategy. The goal is to provide a range of clear and accessible tools, technologies, and support services to meet the needs of researchers throughout the research data life cycle. Our research-centered approach means we will promote wise practices around data management planning and data deposit, permitted uses, preservation, and disposal. Our aim is to identify pathways to research data management, to build on areas of strength and expertise, and to improve on tools, technologies and service supports that allow WPHC researchers to enhance research excellence and adapt to the research environment.

Scope

This strategy applies to all WPHC researchers, including staff, students, and departments across the organization. Our initial focus is to ensure that our Tri-Agency-funded researchers have the necessary tools, technologies, and service support to aid their work and demonstrate strong data management practices as leaders in this transition to RDM best practices. A longer term focus will be to ensure all researchers at WPHC have the necessary tools for appropriate RDM practices. We will regularly revisit this document to accommodate evolving requirements, needs, services, and associated initiatives.

Oversight and Review

Progress against this Strategy will be monitored by West Park’s Research and Education Council and the JREB. The Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as needed.

Institutional Support

To support the adoption of our institutional strategy and the implementation of RDM practices amongst researchers, WPHC will engage in awareness-raising activities, enhance RDM training, promote RDM wise practices, and provide or support access to RDM tools, resources, and infrastructure. The following practices are part of our institutional support:

Year 1 (2023/2024):

Awareness-Raising Activities

- Communications of RDM education products available through Tri-Agency resources (“RDM Resource webpage, Tips Sheets, FAQs) provided to the WPHC research community.
- Undertake a survey and assessment of existing institutional data assets and data management practices on campus
- Participate in any future Tri-Agency consultations around RDM to effectively develop resources and support for WPHC researchers

Year 2-3 (2024-2026):

Enhance RDM Training for WPHC Research Stakeholders

- Finalize and disseminate “RDM Wise Practice Guidelines” for internal purposes.
- Provide internal training and education:
 - Workshops, Lunch and Learns and other training for faculty, students and staff on aspects of RDM (e.g. DMP Assistant training; data sharing deposit and preservation, etc.)
 - Offer new research staff members RDM training using tools outlined by Tri-Agency and provided by Digital Research Alliance of Canada.
- Provide access to external Professional Development to build access to tools and supports to enhance strong data management practice.

Promote RDM Wise Practices for WPHC Research Stakeholders

- Providing RDM-specific sessions to WPHC research staff as needed
- Liaise with internal experts at the hospital, such as consultations with the privacy officer, to ensure our practices align with institutional policies and procedures.
- All RDM resources will be housed on an “RDM Resource Hub” webpage, an internal web-page for West Park researchers.

Year 3-5 (2026-2028):

Provide and/or Support Ongoing Access to RDM Tools, Resources, and Infrastructure

- Identify repository storage option for West Park staff for data deposit use.
- Data management planning, discovery and access tools, including offering training on the DMP Assistant Tool offered by the Digital Research Alliance of Canada
- Investigate new tools for data deposit, discovery and access including Dataverse (Borealis), and the Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR).
- Work with WPHC Research Ethics Board to update application form and other tools to capture RDM practice details as needed.

Stakeholders

Implementing this Strategy and realizing its goals requires collaboration between WPHC researchers, IT service providers, JREB and other service units that support West Park’s research infrastructure, as well as affiliated research hospitals, funding agencies, research communities, community organizations, and industry partners. Building on the responsibilities articulated in the Tri-Agency Statement of Principles on Digital Data Management, each stakeholder group plays an important role in promoting, supporting, and applying best RDM practices.

Ethical Considerations

Research projects involving human participants are reviewed by the Joint Research Ethics Board (JREB). In addition, the Tri-Agency’s Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans - TCPS2 (2018) is a resource for researchers to consider ethical conduct in research involving human participants. Chapter 9 details considerations in research with Indigenous Peoples. West Park recognizes that a distinctions-based approach is needed to ensure that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit are acknowledged, affirmed, and implemented (Tri-agency RDM Policy, Government of Canada 2021).

Other Relevant Strategies and Policies

Other relevant policies at West Park include West Park’s Privacy Policy, which is the policy to protect the privacy and confidentiality of patient/client personal health information (PHI) as required by law. This applies regardless of the format of the information. (i.e. verbal, written or electronic).

DEFINITIONS

Data Management Plan: A ‘data management plan’ (DMP) is “a living document, typically associated with an individual research project or program that consists of the practices, processes and strategies that pertain to a set of specified topics related to data management and curation. DMPs should be modified throughout the course of a research project to reflect changes in project design, methods, or other considerations. DMPs guide researchers in articulating their plans for managing data; they do not necessarily compel researchers to manage data differently” (Tri-Agency Research Data Management Policy, Frequently Asked Questions, Government of Canada 2021).

Metadata: Metadata is data about data and is the information needed to make a dataset discoverable, citable, and usable by others.

Research: Research is creative and systematic work that is undertaken to increase knowledge in a particular area or discipline. It involves the collection, organization and analysis of information to increase understanding of a topic or issue.

Research Data: ‘Research data’ are data that are used as primary sources to support technical or scientific enquiry, research, scholarship, or creative practice, and that are used as evidence in the research process and/or are commonly accepted in the research community as necessary to validate research findings and results. Research data may be experimental data, observational data, operational data, third party data, public sector data, monitoring data, 6 processed data, or repurposed data. What is considered relevant research data is often highly contextual, and determining what counts as such should be guided by disciplinary norms.” (Tri-Agency Research Data Management Policy, Frequently Asked Questions, Government of Canada 2021).

Research Data Lifecycle: The points throughout the research process where data is conceived, created, collected, manipulated, stored, shared, archived and destroyed where Research data management practices must be considered and implemented.

Timelines

The Strategy will be socialized and implemented over the next three years, after which it will be updated with new priority focus areas for continually moving towards our ideal end state.

Looking Ahead

We recognize that RDM is quite new in the centre context, and it will be several years for us to establish a level of staff expertise, researcher understanding and capacity, and infrastructure that is required to reach our “ideal” state. This Strategy outlines planned activities over the next two to five years to keep West Park moving towards an end state. Beyond that, we will plan future areas to address based on evolving requirements from Tri-Agency, the needs of West Park researchers and the type of research that is undertaken at the centre.