Alberta
SPOR SUPPORT Unit

NEWS

A Decade of Leadership in Data Meets Next-Generation Innovation: Introducing the Alberta Trusted Research Environment (TRE)

Alberta's new **Trusted Research Environment (TRE)** is a person-centred innovation that connects the province's health data while advancing our capability to work with that data.

Built on Snowflake infrastructure the TRE is a secure, closed-loop workspace brought to you by a collaboration between AbSPORU with Health Shared Services' Provincial Research Data Services (PRDS), the AI + Health Hub within the Dianne and Irving Kipnes Health Research Institute (University of Alberta), and the Centre for Health Informatics and Nelson Pulse Center (University of Calgary).

Secure and Accessible

The TRE is a secure, governed workspace where researchers can query, analyze and model linked administrative and clinical data. Analysis happens where the data lives. Patient-level data never leaves the environment, access is role-based and logged, and only reviewed, de-identified outputs are released.

AbSPORU remains central for all health research data requests and analytical support in Alberta

The Alberta TRE is an expanded capability delivered through AbSPORU's existing service pipeline—**it is not a separate application.**

How to Get Started:

1. Start your project where you always have, by submitting a service request through AbSPORU at **https://absporu.ca/research-services/service-application/**.
2. Once your project is approved, AbSPORU and PRDS will determine whether your approved project is best served by the TRE, a conventional extract, or direct analytic support.
3. Approved projects receive their own scoped workspace, and all outputs go through disclosure review before leaving the environment.

Connected Nationally for Broader Impact

Achieving the TRE development in Alberta will continue to advance access to data across the country. Alberta has now joined VITAL—a national health data platform linking Alberta hospitals with 160+ hospitals across the country. This, along with AbSPORU's continued partnership with

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Health Data Research Network (HDRN) Canada, will serve as convenors connecting the Alberta TRE directly into pan-Canadian networks enabling cross-jurisdictional analyses while Alberta data stays safely behind Alberta's health system firewall.

We're also working with universities across Alberta to train the next generation of students and data scientists in translational research.

Background

The Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit (AbSPORU) provides expertise, training and resources to the health research community to increase capacity for patient-oriented research. AbSPORU has been contributing to the advancement of Alberta's data landscape since inception.

Since launching in 2014–2015, AbSPORU has achieved significant successes for researchers and health system partners that access data:

- **Slashing Access Timelines:** Reduced median health data access wait times from over three years down to approximately six weeks.
- **Expanding Data Holdings:** Increased accessible linked health datasets from 16 to more than 70 holdings.
- **Driving Research Impact:** Contributed to more than 3,800 research and health system projects across the province.
- **Building Analytical Capacity:** Expanded the embedded analyst model from a single analyst in 2012 to 43.6 full-time equivalents (FTEs) today, supporting roughly 300 new data requests each year.

Read our Impact Story 'A Decade of Data in Alberta' to learn more.

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