BOARD QUALITY PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
BRIEFING NOTE
Date: June 17, 2026

Agenda Item	Fraser Health Research Ethics Board (FHREB) Annual Report
Submitted By	Dr. David Zygun, Vice President, Quality & Safety
Guests Participating	Julie Fraser, Chief Nursing and Allied Health Officer & Executive Director, Learning Strategies and Professional Practice Kate Keetch, Director, Department of Evaluation and Research Services
Time Required	10 minutes
Expected Outcome	□ Decision □ Discussion X Information

Purpose
Submission to the Board regarding the annual update concerning activities of the Fraser Health Research Ethics Board (FHREB).

Background
The FHREB is appointed by the institution to provide oversight for the ethical conduct of research conducted in Fraser Health and/or under Fraser Health auspices.

In accordance with the Fraser Health Policy on Ethical Conduct of Research and Other Studies Involving Humans and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2), the FHREB is required to provide an annual report of activities conducted to the Fraser Health Board of Directors.

The attached 2025-2026 Annual FHREB Report provides an overview of the key activities, workloads, challenges and successes of the FHREB during the past fiscal year.

Highlights include:

- Increased research activity
- Growth in active studies
- Expanded full board oversight
- Strong provincial and national collaboration
- Efficient review timelines maintained
- Regulatory readiness and process improvements
- Ongoing education and capacity building
- Compliance assurance

Recommendation
That the Board Quality Performance Committee endorse the 2025-2026 FHREB Annual Report as presented in Item 1.

Specific Measurable
FHREB annual metrics are provided within the report.

Timelines
Fiscal year 2025-2026 (April 1, 2025-March 31, 2026).

FRASER HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT:

2025-2026

May 13, 2026

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Table of contents

Authority & Purpose 3

Board Composition & Administrative Supports 4

Education and Training 5

Research Ethics Harmonization 5

Number of Active Studies at the End of Fiscal 5

Demand for Review 6

Review Timelines 8

Initiatives & Successes 8

Conclusion 9

INTRODUCTION

The Fraser Health Research Ethics Board (FHREB) is established and empowered under the authority of the VP responsible for Research to review and approve all research involving human participants in Fraser Health jurisdiction and/or under Fraser Health auspices, as defined by the Fraser Health Research Policy, prior to the initiation of any research related procedures.

In accordance with the Fraser Health Policy on Ethical Conduct of Research and Other Studies Involving Humans and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2), the FHREB is required to provide an annual report of activities conducted to the Fraser Health Board of Directors.

Authority & Purpose

The purpose of the FHREB is to protect the rights and welfare of human participants enrolled in research. The FHREB reviews and oversees the research to ensure that it meets ethical principles and that it complies with all applicable regulations and guidelines pertaining to human participant protection. These include, but are not limited to, the Food and Drugs Act and applicable Regulations, the International Council on Harmonization Good Clinical Practice Guidelines, the Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, and where applicable, US Federal Regulations.

The FHREB has the authority to ensure that all research conducted under its oversight is designed and conducted in such a manner that it protects the rights, welfare, and privacy of research participants.

Specifically, the FHREB has the authority to:

- Establish the ethics review processes, and provide research ethics oversight to ensure the ethical conduct of the research,
- Approve, require modifications to, or disapprove, any research activity that falls within its jurisdiction,

- Ensure that the researcher has policies and procedures to protect the rights, safety and welfare of research participants,
- Request, receive and share any information involving the research that the REB considers necessary to fulfill its mandate, while maintaining confidentiality and respecting privacy,
- Conduct continuing ethical review to protect the rights and welfare and privacy of research participants,
- Suspend or terminate the ethics approval for the research,
- Place restrictions on the research,
- Take any actions considered reasonably necessary, and consistent with policies and procedures, to ensure the protection of the rights, safety, and well-being of participants in research conducted under the FHREB's jurisdiction.

Board Composition & Administrative Supports

As of March 31, 2026, the FHREB was composed of 11 members.

VOTING MEMBER NAME FIRST LAST	HIGHEST DEGREES EARNED	PRIMARY SCIENTIFIC OR NONSCIENTIFIC SPECIALTY	AFFILIATION WITH INSTITUTION
*Stephen Pearce Male / Canadian Citizen	MD, FRCPC	Cardiology	Yes
*Lindsay Meredith Male / Canadian Citizen	PhD	Business, Ethics	No
** Anu K. Sandhu Female/Canadian Citizen	LLB	Law	No
** Tamsin Miley Female / Canadian Citizen	LLB	Law	No
Kim Macfarlane Female / Canadian Citizen	BSN, MA	Tertiary Critical Care, Ethics	No
Tim Leung Male / Canadian Citizen	PharmD	Pharmacy	No
Mickaël Francoeur Male / Canadian Citizen	MD, FRCPC	Emergency Medicine	Yes
Sarah Crowe Female/ Canadian Citizen	MN, PMD-NP(F), CNCC(C)	Critical Care	Yes
Samantha Pollard Female/Canadian Citizen	PhD	Research Methodology	No
Russ Froese Male/Canadian Citizen	BA	Community Member	No
***Rochelle Gellatly Female/ Canadian Citizen	PharmD	Pharmacy	Yes
* Co-chair ** Alternating Member *** Alternate Member			

Administrative support for the FHREB is provided by 3.0 FTE position in the REB Office in the Department of Evaluation and Research Services (DERS): the Research Ethics & Compliance Manager, Research Ethics & Regulatory Specialist, and Research Ethics Coordinator.

Education and Training

The REB Office staff provided the following workshops for researchers:

- Ethical Approval Process Workshop for SMH Family Practice Residents, August 28, 2025 (delivered by Soodi Jolaei)
- Ethical Approval Process Workshop for Pharmacy Residents, February 19, 2026 (delivered by Soodi Jolaei)

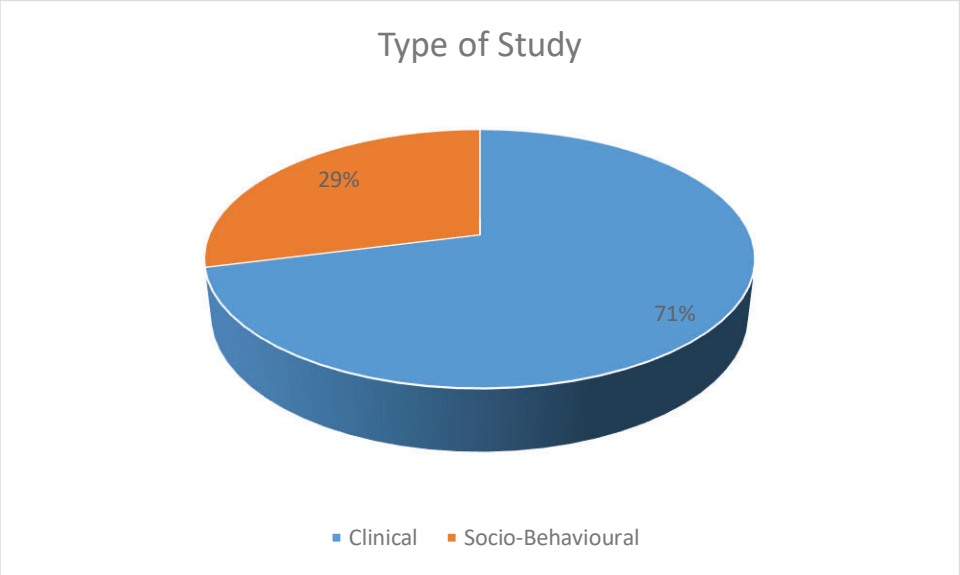
Research Ethics Harmonization

Multi-jurisdictional research and research in partnership with academic institutions and health authorities in BC accounts for the majority of research submitted for review to the FHREB. REBC provides support for the provincial, harmonized system for research ethics review of multi-jurisdictional studies involving humans from more than one BC institution, including facilitating the Provincial Research Ethics Platform (PREP). The FHREB is an active partner in this initiative, including representation by Sara O'Shaughnessy, Research Ethics & Compliance Manager, on the REBC Advisory Council, the Subject Matter Expert Committee on the BC Ministry of Health's Research Approvals Process Project, and the Validation Tactical Committee for CANReview, which is a national initiative to adopt single review of Clinical Trials.

Number of Active Studies at the End of Fiscal

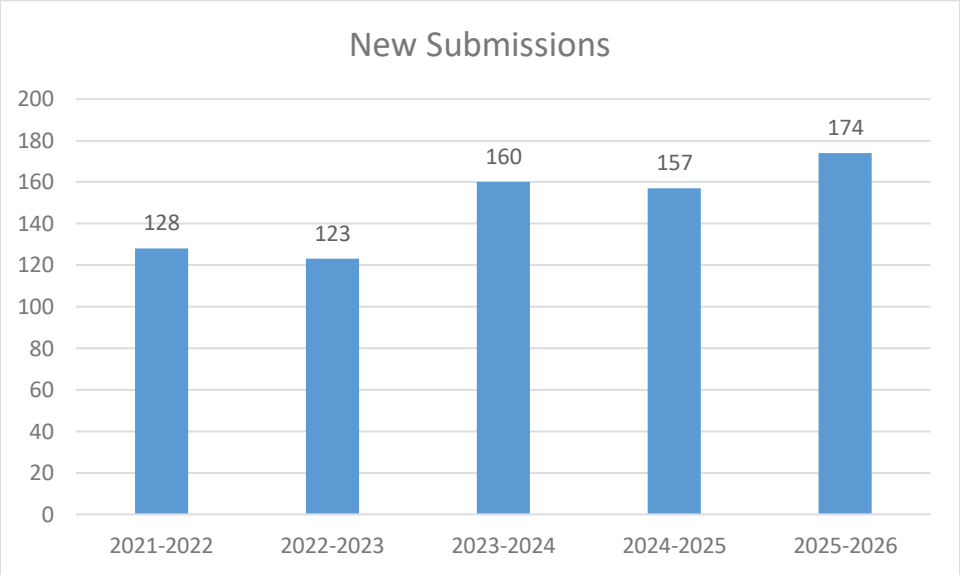
At the end of the fiscal year, there were 512 FHREB approved studies, which represents a five percent increase from the previous fiscal year (486). Seventy-one percent of these studies were clinical in nature and 29 percent were socio-behavioural in nature. Clinical research is defined as studies with the goal of improving the diagnosis, and treatment (including rehabilitation and palliation), of disease and injury; and improving the health and quality of life of individuals as they pass through

normal life stages. Behavioural research is defined as involving the study of human and social attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours in which no invasive procedures or measurements occur. Separate application forms exist for clinical and behavioural studies on both the Fraser Health ROMEO platform and the PREP platform to distinguish between submission types.



Demand for Review

During the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the FHREB received 174 new submissions for review. Of these, 40 were reviewed by the full board. The number of new submissions represents an 11% increase in overall volume compared with the previous fiscal year (157 submissions) and 43% increase in studies reviewed by the full board (28 reviewed at full board in the previous fiscal year).



One hundred and six new submissions (62%) were submitted on the PREP platform, which is hosted on the UBC RISe system. Of these 106 new submissions, the FHREB served as the board of record (i.e. primary board responsible for the administration of the harmonized review) for 38 studies (36%). This represents a slight decrease from the previous fiscal year in which the FHREB served as board of record for 38% of the submissions.

Post-approval submissions also accounted for a significant portion of the demand for review. The FHREB received 640 requests for amendment, 455 requests for renewal, 172 requests for acknowledgement, and 109 requests for study close-out. The total number of review requests is 1550, which represents a notable twenty-two percent increase from the previous fiscal year (1270 total requests over the previous fiscal year).

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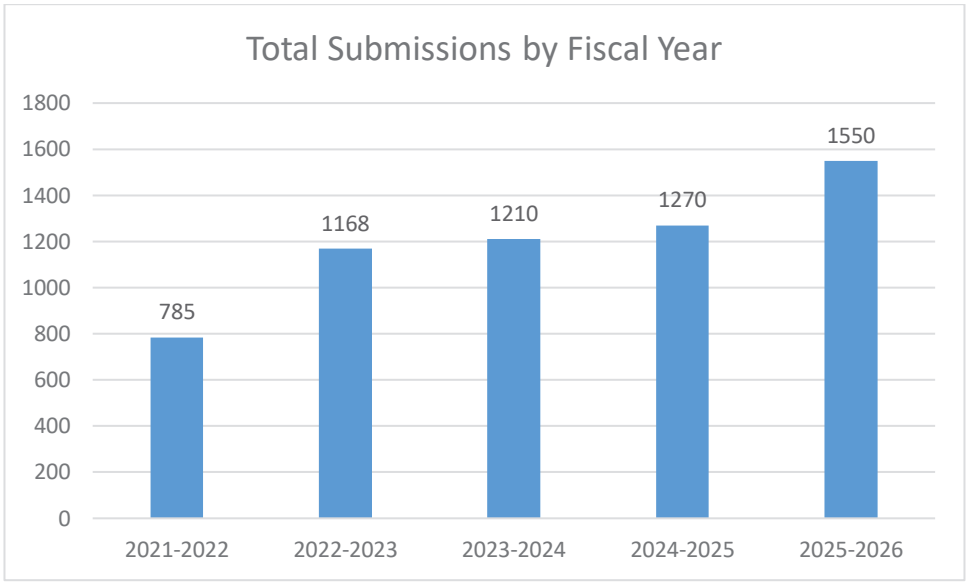

Review Timelines

The median timeline for submission of new studies to approval was 29.5 days. The median for studies submitted for harmonized review on the PREP platform was 27 days, and 32.5 days for new studies submitted on the ROMEO platform.

Initiatives & Successes

The FHREB's primary focus of the 2025-2026 fiscal year was the review of the FHREB's compliance with the newly announced Health Canada clinical trial regulations and INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HARMONISATION OF TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PHARMACEUTICALS FOR HUMAN USE GUIDELINE FOR GOOD CLINICAL PRACTICE E6(R3) revisions. The FHREB application forms, guidance notes, and Standard Operating Procedures were extensively reviewed by the FHRERB office staff and updated where necessary to ensure alignment with the regulatory changes. In addition, a new procedure for Student-led Research was launched to ensure better oversight of these projects.

Conclusion

The undersigned are pleased to confirm that the Fraser Health Research Ethics Board has been in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Conducting Research Involving Humans and other regulatory requirements, as applicable, for the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year. The FHREB approved the 2025-2026 annual report at its May 13, 2026 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Stephen Pearce
FHREB Co-Chair

Dr. Lindsay Meredith
FHREB Co-Chair