**Post-Study Reports:** General Study Guide

**Guide to Disseminating your Research Results to Participants**

# **What are post-study reports?**

Post-study reports are simple research summaries intended to inform participants and community members about the results of a completed study. These reports provide an opportunity for participants to more fully understand how their participation has contributed to the research findings.

A post-study report includes a plain language summary of the study description, aggregate results, and final conclusions to provide readers with a clear understanding of the research that was carried out, the results of the study and potential next steps.

***Note:*** *There should be no individual participant data or results included in the post-study report.*

# **When to share post-study reports?**

Participants may indicate on their consent form if they wish to receive the results of the study. If they have consented to receive the study results and have provided contact information, the study team is obligated to provide the post-study report. Post-study reports may be shared with the community at any time.

Post-study reports must be delivered to participants at study closure, either before or after peer-review publications have been published.

# **Are post-study reports required?**

Yes, post-study reports are required for all studies in which human participants were recruited and signed a consent form.

All post-study reports are required to be shared with the IMHR administration team, via e-mail ([alexis.dorland@theroyal.ca](mailto:alexis.dorland@theroyal.ca)) at time of study closure.

# **Can we use a different format for our Post-Study Report?**

Yes. Posters are preferred and can be created easily using [Canva](https://www.canva.com/) . Canva is a website that allows people without graphic design experience to create a variety of attractive and effective communication products. The website offers countless templates that can be used to create tailored products for all your projects.

* Anyone can create a free account with Canva, and this basic version includes over a quarter million free templates and a million + free photos and graphics: [Canva Free](https://www.canva.com/free/)
* To access more advanced graphic design features, you can upgrade:
  + Canva Pro account: [Canva Pro](https://www.canva.com/pro/)
  + Canva Pro for Teams (first 5 team members): [Canva for Teams](https://www.canva.com/for-teams/)

# **Other Guidance**

# **Plain Language Definition**

One of the most important and challenging aspects of a post-study report is to write about the study in a way that participants will understand. To do this, we use plain language.

*Plain language* means using terminology that is understandable by someone with at least an 8th grade education. This means avoiding the use of jargon, limiting the use of acronyms, simplifying explanations, and defining scientific terms into language that most people will understand. For non-confidential items like consent forms, readability levels can be tested using: <https://readabilityformulas.com/readability-scoring-system.php>

**Tips for plain language:**

* Use everyday/commonly-used words instead of complex words
* Avoidthe use of adverbs
* Do not assume any prior knowledge or education on the subject
  + Avoid jargon or science vocabulary with dual meanings and define terms/acronyms/abbreviations
* Use short and concise sentences and paragraphs, ensure the entire written sections of the summary are each no longer than 1 to 2 pages
* Use second-person and active voice language whenever possible, addressing the reader directly

Consider testing the summary by asking someone outside the scientific community to read it (e.g. a client or family member), then assess whether they can explain it back to you. If they cannot do this, revise your summary for clarity.

**Additional Resources:**

[Plain Language Result Summaries](https://www.ctontario.ca/patients-public/resources-for-engaging-patients/toolkit-to-improve-clinical-trial-participants-experiences/plain-language-summaries/#tab11)

[Strategies for Disseminating Research Findings](https://www.idaea.csic.es/sites/default/files/CARE-Beyond-Scientific-Publication-Strategies-for-Disseminating-Research-Findings.pdf)

# **Accessibility**

For improved accessibility, consider using the following for all written documentation:

* Use 14-pt Arial font (18-pt Arial font if large print is requested).
* Do not use italics or text in all capital letters.
* Pictures, videos, and graphics should have descriptive text attached.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Resources:

* + [Guidelines on Inclusive Language and Images in Scholarly Communication](https://c4disc.pubpub.org/guidelines-on-inclusive-language-and-images-in-scholarly-communication)
  + [Plain language, accessibility, and inclusive communications](https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/communications-community-office/communications-101-boot-camp-canadian-public-servants/plain-language-accessibility-inclusive-communications.html)

**Post-Study Reports:** Template Instructions

**Post-Study Report Templates for Participants**

The post-study report template is below.

Please complete the required information. **Remove instructions (this page and above) prior to distributing.**

**Helpful Tips:**

* Replace the [text in square brackets]with your study information.
* Use plain language.
* All results must be described aggregately. **No individual participant results should be included**.
* For clinical trials, you may wish to provide additional information about phases by describing each trial phase or by linking to Clinical Trials Ontario webpage or another credible website to provide a description of the study phase.
* Consider using graphics and simple charts to explain and/or illustrate results.

* If sending electronically, send a PDF version of the final document so it cannot be edited.

**Please note:** this template was adapted from the template provided by [Clinical Trials Ontario](https://www.ctontario.ca/patients-public/resources-for-engaging-patients/toolkit-to-improve-clinical-trial-participants-experiences/plain-language-summaries/#tab12), in collaboration with Clinical Trials British Columbia and their clinical trials community (i.e., participants, investigators, sponsors, research ethics representatives), as well as the current examples provided by Atlas.

**[Study Title]**

**Post-Study Report**

**Principal Investigator**

**[Name of PI]**

[Title]

**Research Ethics Board Number**

[REB number at ROHCG REB]

**Funding**

[Name of funding source]

**Why complete this research?**

**i**

[Provide a brief background and goal(s) of this study, approximately 1 paragraph. Consider using wording from the consent form, if applicable. Define any scientific or medical terms required to understand the study.]

**What did the researchers do?**

[Describe the remaining method of the study in approximately 1 paragraph, ex:   
  
From 9 February 2022 to 22 November 2023, the research team surveyed participants from the Ontario, Canada, using the online platform Qualtrics. Participants shared their views on receiving online therapy. These results were analyzed to identify the most common beliefs about online therapy and factors that could be changed to help improve online therapy.]

**The study was conducted at:**

[The University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research (IMHR) and/or list all sites]

**Who participated in this study?** [Describe the study participants, including demographic break down. If multi-site, these demographics should be separated by site)]

**What did the researchers find?**

[Please describe the results as they relate to the goal(s) of the study – recommend including graphs as applicable]

**What did we learn from this research?**

[Please describe what this means for people who live with the condition studied – e.g. clinical care, etc. and the limitation of the study along with how these may be addressed in the future]

**For more information**

[link to publication, lab website, clinicaltrials.gov link, and/or study contact information]

**Thank you**

[Language to consider: We thank our participants for volunteering their time and effort for this study. We sincerely appreciate their contribution in helping advance medical knowledge.]