REACHnet Prep to Research Queries – Q&A

- PTRs are feasibility queries based on finalized technical specifications.
- REACHnet acknowledges requests within five business days.
- Post-delivery changes are treated as new work and re-enter the queue.

Q: What is a prep-to-research (PTR) query?

A prep-to-research (PTR) query is a preliminary, feasibility-focused query used to estimate how many patients meet inclusion criteria for a proposed project. Counts are used to support funding applications and inform study design.

Q: How do I submit a PTR query request?

A: To request a prep-to-research (PTR) query, investigators must complete and submit the REACHnet Query Request Form through REACHnet's online submission portal available at https://www.reachnet.org/resources/forms.

Q: What information do I need to include in my request form?

A: At minimum, please provide target population, key inclusion and exclusion criteria, and time period of interest. It is also helpful to know how you plan to use results and whether your project is funded. Providing clear and detailed information helps ensure accurate and timely results.

Q: What are technical specifications?

A: Analysts will review your query request and prepare a technical specifications document that outlines cohort definitions, code lists, time windows, and outputs. Analysts will be in touch with questions as they formalize these details for your query. Creating technical specifications is a collaborative process whereby you provide clinical expertise so that analysts can accurately translate clinical concepts into a PTR query to capture desired output. You are required to approve the technical specifications before analysts begin programming your query.

Q: What happens if I want to request changes after I approve the specifications?

A: We strongly encourage requestors to review technical specifications carefully prior to approval to help minimize delays. However, we understand that project goals and scopes can evolve. If changes are requested after specifications have been approved, we are happy to work with you to revise them. Please note that substantive changes will be treated as a new request and may require additional feasibility review, partner approval, and processing time.

Q: Will I receive counts for all sites that I requested?

A: Not necessarily. Counts are provided only for sites that both have the requested data available and approve inclusion of their data in your report. Some sites may decline participation or be unable to contribute data for the requested time period or criteria.

Q: How will you share results?

A: We will return aggregate counts only in a standard Word or Excel document format via email. Counts may be stratified by year, demographic categories, or other reasonable covariates when appropriated and approved.

Q: What timelines should I expect?

A: A staff member from the REACHnet Coordinating Center will acknowledge your query request within five business days. Results are typically returned within 2-6 weeks. Timelines for query completion vary and are dependent on programming complexity, number of participating sites, and analyst capacity. We cannot guarantee a standard turnaround time but are committed to working with interested researchers to meet reasonable proposal deadlines.