

22/23 Annual Report





About CTO

Vision

Our vision is to make Ontario a preferred location for global clinical trials, while maintaining the highest ethical standards.

Mission

Our mission is to strengthen, promote and capitalize on Ontario's competitive advantages to conduct high-quality clinical trials.

Strategic Priorities



Streamline

Streamline processes to help make high-quality clinical trials more timely, efficient and cost-effective.



Engage

Engage with patients and the public to increase awareness, foster collaboration and improve how clinical trials are conducted.



Promote

Promote Ontario's competitive advantages and clinical trial capacities to attract more trials and industry investment to the province.

Fuelling a thriving clinical trials sector

Joint message from Susan Marlin, President & CEO, and Rafi Hofstein, Board Chair

Clinical Trials Ontario (CTO) was established with a goal of making trials more efficient, effective and accessible, and promoting Ontario as a leading location to conduct clinical trials. Today, CTO is an essential pillar in the clinical trial ecosystem, helping to fuel Ontario's thriving life sciences sector. We are dedicated to strengthening, promoting and capitalizing on Ontario's competitive advantages for conducting high-quality clinical trials.

CTO Stream, our flagship program that allows a single ethics review for multi-site clinical trials, has cemented its place in Ontario's clinical trials ecosystem and it continues to grow. This visionary program, built by the clinical trials community, plays a key role in making clinical trials more efficient and cost-effective. Today, the program supports over 2,100 research studies, with participation from 19 CTO-Qualified REBs, 117 trials sites and more than 195 pharmaceutical and medical device companies, and has led to an estimated \$18 million in estimated cost savings to Ontario.

Improving on how we conduct trials and making them available sooner to Ontarians underpins all the work we do at CTO. Our QuickSTART program works to reduce trial start-up times, our Research Ready program helps ensure that Ontario research institution staff have the skills and knowledge to conduct

effective and efficient clinical trials, and our Industry Concierge and Trial Site Network support industry in starting trials in Ontario. Working alongside patient groups and health charities, we are continually working to improve the clinical trial participant experience and make it easier for patients and the public to engage with clinical trials.

This year, building on the success of our programs, CTO has embarked on leading a new collaboration with institutions and industry in Ontario. The Ontario Leadership Table for Clinical Trials, established in the spring of 2023, is focusing on implementing strategies to bring clinical trial opportunities and new therapies to patients as quickly as possible. A key priority of this group is to shorten clinical trial activation times and reduce the effort required to execute the activation process. The work of this group will lead to more opportunities for Ontarians to access new treatments and technologies that will improve their daily life.

As we celebrate our shared achievements in this report, we would like to thank the Government of Ontario for its recognition of the vital role that clinical trials play in this province and for its continued support of our community's work. We also thank our dedicated team, our Board of directors, and the members of our clinical trials community who are tireless in their efforts to advance health research forward, faster for an even brighter future in this province.

Susan Marlin, President & CEO

Raphael Hofstein, Board Chair

Ontario is Canada's leading trials sector

Ontario has long been an attractive jurisdiction for conducting high-quality clinical trials. We have world-class talent, cutting-edge infrastructure, a diverse patient population. We lead the country in clinical trials activity, and we're ranked #1 in active clinical trials per capita among G7 nations.

4,800+

active clinical trials in Ontario – the highest number in Canada

2.5X

more active clinical trials per capita compared to the United States

19

of Canada's top 40 research hospitals

22,000+

employed researchers/staff in academic hospitals

\$1.73B

invested in health research at Ontario hospitals

65,000

annual STEM graduates in Ontario

**Global
leadership**

in cancer, focused ultrasound, nervous system disorders, cardiovascular disease, immunological illnesses and more.

Industry is choosing Ontario

2,400+

industry sponsored clinical trials in Ontario

over 50%

of Canada's R&D investment is in Ontario (\$466M)

340

pharmaceutical firms in Ontario

2,200+

biotechnology, medical device and digital health companies

30,000+

jobs in drugs and pharmaceuticals

26,000+

jobs in medical devices

New Rare Disease Development Hub

announced by AstraZeneca in March 2023. AstraZeneca is also expanding its existing Ontario-based Research & Development Hub, which focuses on leading global clinical studies in areas including breast, lung and prostate cancer, COVID-19, and chronic kidney disease.

A government dedicated to the clinical trials sector

550+

government sponsored clinical trials in Ontario - the highest number in Canada

Ontario Life Sciences Strategy

was announced in 2022, and aims to establish the province as a global biomanufacturing and life sciences hub

Accelerating Clinical Trials (ACT) Consortium

was created in 2023, and is a federally-funded clinical trials consortium that will accelerate, optimize, and facilitate national clinical trials and Canadian participation in international trials.



Impact and Achievements

At CTO, we are focused on improving Ontario's environment for conducting high-quality clinical trials, making them more efficient and effective for everyone – researchers and healthcare professionals, patients and families, and members of industry. This year, we worked alongside the clinical trials community to strengthen our programs. We are streamlining clinical trials processes, working to shorten clinical trial start-up times, improving clinical trial conduct, engaging with patients and members of the public, and promoting our province's advantages and assets.



Strategic Priority

Streamline

Facilitating faster, more efficient clinical trials

CTO Stream

CTO Stream enables research sites participating in a clinical trial to undergo a single ethics review rather than separately applying to their local research ethics boards, reducing the time and effort required to obtain research ethics approval. Today, CTO Stream is the gold standard for supporting efficient, high-quality multi-site studies and has become integral to Ontario's clinical trial ecosystem.



CTO Stream by the Numbers

8,800+	users of CTO Stream	2,100+	research studies
195+	pharmaceutical and medical device companies	6,200+	applications for research ethics approval received
117	participating hospitals and research sites, including Ontario's most active sites	15	days to approval for participating sites (average)
19	qualified Ontario research ethics boards provide multi-site ethics review	\$18M	in estimated cost savings to Ontario

QuickSTART

A typical clinical trial can take more than five months to get started. Our QuickSTART program helps sites and sponsors achieve activation quicker by developing authentic partnerships, setting targets and enhancing existing procedures without disrupting them. The program uses a custom-built digital platform and focuses on streamlining trial activation processes, such as budgets and contracts, identified as common hurdles by industry and institutions.



Ontario Leadership Table for Clinical Trials

Led by Clinical Trials Ontario in collaboration with leading institutions and industry in Ontario, the Ontario Leadership Table for Clinical Trials, established in the spring of 2023, will focus on strategies to bring clinical trial opportunities and new therapies to patients as quickly as possible. A key priority is to transform the current QuickSTART program to significantly shorten clinical trial start-up times and reduce the effort required to execute the start-up process. The Ontario Leadership Table is comprised of executive leaders from the top 10 research-intensive hospitals in Ontario and world-leading pharmaceutical companies conducting clinical trials in Ontario.

Research Ready

Research teams across Ontario are on the front lines of making clinical trials happen. They help design studies, recruit and support participants, and ensure all requirements are met to deliver high-quality clinical trials. CTO's Research Ready program is strengthening Ontario's world class health research infrastructure by providing research teams with high-quality training, education and mentoring resources that are relevant to the evolving needs of the community.

Join
Research
Ready

230+

Community
of Practice
Newsletter

participants of our online Community of Practice

which shares best practices, upcoming events and updates of interest to research staff

Hosted
7 Mentor
Spotlight
Webinars

on key topics including clinical trial budgets, metrics programs, clinical trial finance operations, missing data, patient engagement and recruitment, and financial sustainability.





Strategic Priority

Engage

*Improving patient and public engagement
with clinical trials*

CTO is committed to developing ways to better engage patients and the public with clinical trials and to improve the clinical trial experience. We collaborate with patients, patient organizations and health charities to co-develop and improve resources and tools that help patients and the public engage. CTO's goal is to help patients and the public make informed decisions about participation in clinical trials and help them be members of clinical trial teams.

CTO's College of Lived Experience

This year, the [College of Lived Experience](#) welcomed **12 new members** from across Ontario including patients, caregivers, and members of the public. Members of the College provide input on numerous key CTO projects and collaborate with external research community partners to improve proposed resources, research projects and clinical trials.



Raising Awareness as a Community

CTO works closely with [health charities and patient organizations](#) to co-develop and distribute informative clinical trials resources to their communities and to raise awareness to improve patient and public engagement with clinical trials. We've done this together through surveys, blogs, webinars, Facebook Live events, and conference presentations. Annually we also celebrate International Clinical Trials Day together through shared content and messaging on various social media channels. We thank this community for its ongoing support.



CTO's Tools & Resources for Supporting Patient & Public Engagement

CTO's tools and resources are helpful and accessible for patients, the public and the research community. The [CTO Clinical Trials Finder](#), the first web-based search tool of its kind in Canada that connects patients and the public with active clinical trials across Canada, has been used by over 30,000 site visitors. Our [online education modules](#) walk people through the process of what to expect when participating in a clinical trial so that they can make informed choices. And our [Participant Experience Toolkit](#), developed by a multi-perspective group, includes resources, templates and videos to help researchers ensure trial participants feel valued and informed.



View all of CTO's patient and public engagement tools.

Let's #TalkClinicalTrials

Help spread the word about why clinical trials matter on social media or on our #TalkClinicalTrials blog series, where trial participants, researchers and others share their experiences.

Learn
More





Strategic Priority

Promote

*Promoting Ontario's competitive advantages
and clinical trial assets*

Promoting Ontario's competitive advantages

We continue to promote Ontario's world-class research talent and infrastructure to attract more clinical trials investment to the province. Over the past year, we've highlighted Ontario successes, participated in key events and more.

Industry Concierge

Since its launch in 2017, CTO's Industry Concierge service has been connecting industry sponsors with resources and research sites in Ontario's clinical trials ecosystem. In 2019, we formally established our Trial Site Network, which now includes more than 200 academic hospitals, community hospitals and private research networks across the province. The network has proven to be a win-win: companies and start-ups connect directly with potential partners, and sites expand their research activities.

Co-hosted a panel discussion on how Canada can become a vaccines powerhouse at the BIO 2023 International Convention in Boston, Massachusetts.

Showcased Ontario's clinical trial assets at the MedTech 2023 Conference in Anaheim, California.

Collaborated with Invest Ontario to [publish a blog](#) about Ontario's recipe for a thriving clinical trials environment.

200+

trial sites participating in CTO's Trial Site Network

120+

companies have used the Industry Concierge service to connect into Ontario's clinical trials ecosystem

Watch the promotional video



CTO Conference

The CTO Conference is one of the most important knowledge exchange and networking opportunities in Canada's clinical trials ecosystem. The conference draws 400-500 people each year from all corners of the clinical trials community, including hospitals and universities, industry, research ethics boards, health charities, patient groups, government and more.

Speakers at the 2022 conference discussed the need for collaboration in clinical trials and advancing clinical trials across Canada. We heard from speakers on inclusiveness in clinical trials and the importance of conducting research in community hospitals. The evolution of patient engagement over the past decade and the impact of the pandemic on Research Ethics Boards were other key topics at this year's conference.

The annual Innovation Showcase allowed for opportunities to network and generate partnerships. Hosting the annual conference is just one of the ways that CTO improves the climate for clinical trials in Ontario and attracts business to the province.

CTO 2022 By the Numbers

8th

annual conference

400+

registrants

11

exhibitors

38

speakers



Governance and Financials

We have strong governance and oversight from a skills-based Board of Directors dedicated to advancing patient care by attracting and improving the quality of clinical trials in Ontario.

Raphael Hofstein Chair	Former President and CEO of Toronto Innovation Acceleration Partners (TIAP)
Bradly Wouters Vice Chair & Secretary	Executive VP, Science and Research, University Health Network
Bev Heim-Myers Treasurer	Chair, Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness; Chair, Board of Directors for Dying with Dignity Canada ; Former CEO, Huntington's Canada
Tina Ceroni Member	Clinical Trial Participant
Anne Ellis Member	Associate Professor and Chair, Division of Allergy & Immunology, Department of Medicine, Queen's University
Mark Lundie Member	Global Medical Affairs Lead, Rare Neurology, Pfizer Canada
Clive Ward-Able Member	President, Clintell Inc., Pharmaceutical Industry Consultant
James Wilson Member	President, Brancorth Medical Inc.
Kym Boycott Member	Clinician Scientist, CHEO Research Institute; Professor of Pediatrics, University of Ottawa; Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Rare Disease Precision Health

Assets

	2022	2023
Cash	\$2,486,225	\$2,933,843
Guarenteed investment certificates	\$20,000	\$20,000
Accounts receivable	\$423,202	\$594,386
HST receivable	\$47,777	-
Prepaid software costs	\$156,172	\$198,066
Prepaid insurance and deposits	\$105,777	\$17,307
Prepaid rent	\$83,397	\$84,571
	\$3,322,550	\$3,848,173

Liabilities and Net Assets

	2022	2023
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$604,853	\$747,571
Deferred contributions	\$987,165	\$413,939
Net assets (unrestricted)	\$1,686,443	\$2,218,540



Contact Us

Clinical Trials Ontario offers a wide variety of programs to the clinical trials community to help collectively improve the environment for clinical trials in Ontario. Contact our team to learn more about how you can get involved with our services and programs.

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*CTO is proudly supported by
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