Human Subjects System (HSS) for Institution Staff User Guide

June 11, 2025

NOTE: This user guide is an identical PDF version of the online help.

Contact Us

Additional Help Needed? Please contact the eRA Service Desk (https://www.era.ni-h.gov/need-help).

Toll-free: 1-866-504-9552; Phone: 301-402-7469

Hours: Mon-Fri, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Feedback on the user guide? Please email the eRA Communications Office (<u>eracommunications@mail.nih.gov</u>).

Disclaimer STATEMENT

No data shown in illustrations represents any real account, project, or individual. Any resemblance to actual accounts, projects, or individuals is purely coincidental.

Latest Updates

July 25, 2023

Updated the <u>How Do I Edit Studies?</u> topic to include the age data summary table with the Cumulative Enrollment data.

May 2, 2023

Updated Editing Studies and Roles & Privileges topics.

May 25, 2022

Updated Roles & Privileges topic.

March 17, 2022

Documentation refresh.

Table of Contents

Latest Updates	3
Table of Contents	4
The Human Subjects System (HSS)	7
Purpose	7
Key Changes	7
How NIH Grantees Use HSS	8
Resources	8
Access Human Subjects System (HSS)	9
Human subjects information might need to be updated in the following scenarios:	9
Here is a quick summary of the ways HSS can be accessed (more detailed instructions follow):	9
To edit an existing study, log into eRA Commons and access the Human Subjects link via the RPPR or Status tabs.	10
Access via Status1	10
SOs1	10
Pls	11
Access via RPPR1	11
Crosswalk Retween IMS & HSS	12

E	diting Studies	14
	Human subjects information might need to be updated in the following scenarios:	
	To edit an existing study, log into eRA Commons and access the Human Subjects link via the RPPR or Status tabs.	
	Option 1	15
	Option 2	16
	Editing Clinical Trial Information	18
	Exporting HSS data for ClinicalTrials.gov registration	19
	Using the Populate button to update clinical trial data	19
	Inclusion Enrollment Report	. 20
	Editing Inclusion Counts	23
	Planned Enrollment Counts	24
	Cumulative Enrollment Counts	. 24
	To use the template:	25
	PI and SO Actions	27
4	Adding Studies	28
-	low To Change the Application Status and Resubmit	. 30
	To revise and resubmit an application:	30
C	Convert Delayed Onset to Full Study Record	33
	Flow	33

Study Statuses	35
When Should I Access HSS via the Status Module?	36
When to Use the Status Module Instead of RPPR	36
Roles & Privileges	37
HSS ROLES & PRIVILEGES:	37
Additional Resources (HSCT form and more)	38

The Human Subjects System (HSS)

Purpose

The HSS system is a shared system that enables grant recipients to electronically update study data on human subjects and clinical trials and report that data to NIH. It also enables agency staff to monitor and manage that data. The information in HSS covers the current project period or competitive segment.

The HSS is automatically populated by human subjects and clinical trial data entered by the principal investigator on the Human Subjects and Clinical Trial Information form in applications submitted for due dates of January 25, 2018 and beyond. This data is then made available to PIs and signing officials through a Human Subjects link that is available on the eRA Commons Status screen and the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR).

Key Changes

- NIH migrated enrollment records in IMS to HSS. Updates to enrollment records must have been submitted to NIH no later than June 8, 2018 or entered in HSS. Updates not submitted by June 8, 2018 are not available in HSS and must be re-entered.
- 2. Grant recipients completing an RPPR (Research Progress Performance Report) are prompted to access HSS to update inclusion enrollment reports. Recipients can access the system through the Human Subjects link in the RPPR or the eRA Commons Status page.
- 3. Section 6: Clinical Trial Milestone Plan is intended for use in progress reports for competing applications submitted on or after January 25, 2018 and is required for clinical trials unless otherwise noted in the Funding Opportunity Announcement or terms and conditions of award. Recipients should refer to the RPPR Instruction Guide for guidance.

- 4. The HSS system includes a new interface and workflow. When submitting studies to the funding agency, Signing Officials (or delegated contact PIs) submit all study records associated with an application at one time rather than separately.
- Participant-level sex, race, ethnicity and age data may be submitted in a CSV file to populate the Inclusion Enrollment Report. Participant level data is required for applications submitted January 25, 2019 or later. See NOT-OD-116 for additional information.
- 6. Investigators and signing officials may make study updates or corrections (including just-in-time or off-cycle updates) by accessing HSS through the Human Subjects link in the eRA Commons Status page. Some changes, including those involving increased risk to human participants, may require <u>prior approval</u> by NIH.

How NIH Grantees Use HSS

Depending on their roles and privileges, grantees can use the Human Subjects system to:

- Edit existing studies
- Add studies
- Convert Delayed Onset studies

Resources

Additional resources such as video tutorials, crosswalk, and infographic on the Human Subjects System (HSS) are available at https://era.nih.gov/help-tutorials/era-training-hss.htm?

Additional information about the HHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form is available at https://grants.nih.gov/policy/clinical-trials/new-human-subject-clinical-trial-info-form.htm.

Access Human Subjects System (HSS)

The *Human Subjects System* can be accessed by Principal Investigators (PIs) or Signing Officials (SOs) through either the RPPR or through the *Status* screen in eRA Commons

Human subjects information might need to be updated in the following scenarios:

- Post-award for updates to the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR)
- Pre-award (post review) for just-in-time information or correction of human subjects data
- Off-cycle updates as required in the Funding Opportunity Announcement or terms and conditions of award
- Corrections to human subject data

Here is a quick summary of the ways HSS can be accessed (more detailed instructions follow):

- SO: Status module > General Search screen > Specific Award > three-dot ellipsis Actions button > Human Subjects link
- PI: Status module > General Search screen > Specific Award > three-dot ellipsis
 Actions button > Human Subjects link
- Both: RPPR tab > hyperlinked award number > G. Special Reporting Req tab > Human Subjects link

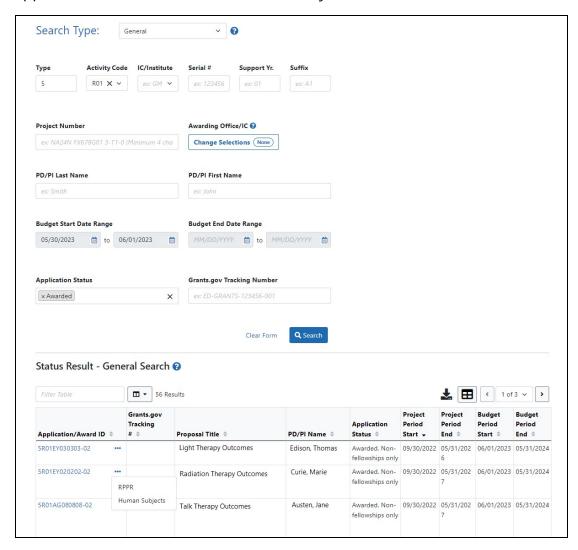
Each method results in access, via HSCT Post Submission, to information in regular study records, such as inclusion enrollment reports. Delayed onset study records are also accessible.

To edit an existing study, log into eRA Commons and access the Human Subjects link via the RPPR or Status tabs.

Access via Status

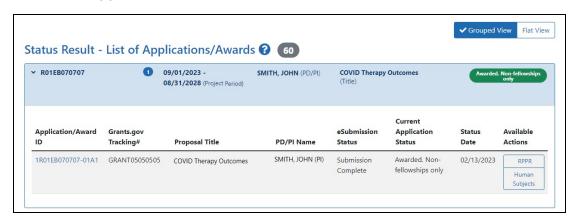
SOs

• Additionally, the SO can use the *General Search* on the *Status* screen to find a list of applications and then select the *Human Subjects* link in the *Action* column.



Pls

• A PI can click the *Status* button, and then click *List of Applications/Awards* to see a list of their applications.



The resulting search results have a **Human Subjects** button in the **Available Actions** column on those applications with exempt or non-exempt human subjects research.

Selecting the **Human Subjects** button opens the Summary page for that application with the HSCT Post Submission tab available to access the human subjects data and make necessary updates, such as updates to Inclusion Enrollment Reports (IERs). IERs replace the Inclusion Data Records (IDRs) used in the prior inclusion management system. 36

Access via RPPR

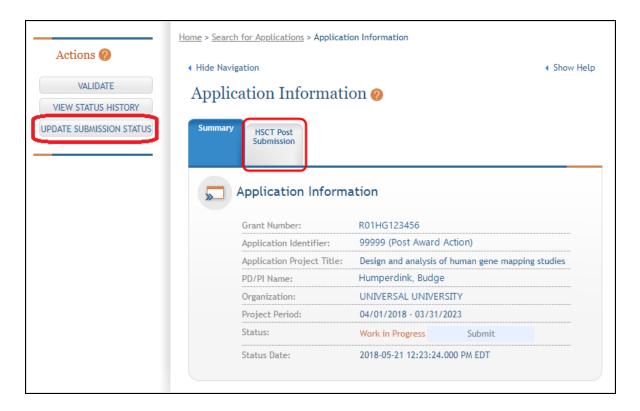
To access HSS via an RPPR, select the *RPPR* module, click a hyperlinked award number, then click the **G. Special Reporting Req** tab.

After selecting the G. Special Reporting Req tab, scroll down to section G.4 Human Subjects and then select the link for Human Subjects.



The above methods take the user to the *Application Information* screen and provide access to the *HSCT Post Submission* tab.

Click on the *HSCT Post Submission* tab. This takes you to a *Study Record(s)* screen where all study records and delayed onset studies associated with your grant are displayed.



NOTE: Click the **Update Submission Status** button if you want to change the Status to "Work in Progress" in order to edit the application.

Crosswalk Between IMS & HSS

There are differences in the way that inclusion data were accessed and managed in the retired IMS module compared to HSS. Please see this handy resource to figure out the differences.

Crosswalk between the Inclusion Management System and HSS - Word; May 16, 2018

Editing Studies

In order to edit study information, the principal investigators (PIs) or signing officials (SOs) can access the HSCT form using the *Human Subjects* links in either the RPPR or through the *Status* screen in eRA Commons. Refer to <u>Access Human Subjects System</u> (HSS) for details.

Human subjects information might need to be updated in the following scenarios:

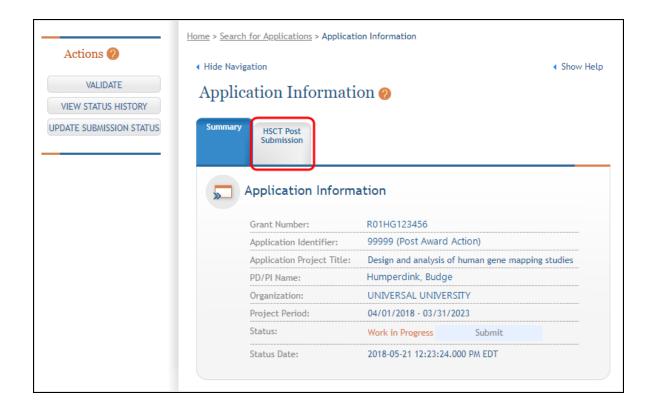
- Post-award for updates to the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR), including updates to inclusion enrollment reports and the Clinical Trial Milestone Plan (Section 6)
- Pre-award (post review) for *Just-in-Time (JIT)* information or correction of human subjects data
- Off-cycle updates as required in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) or terms and conditions of award

To edit an existing study, log into eRA Commons and access the Human Subjects link via the RPPR or Status tabs.

The *Application Information* screen is displayed, showing a summary of your grant. You have two ways of accessing and editing the study data. Both begin by accessing the *HSCT Post Submission* tab.

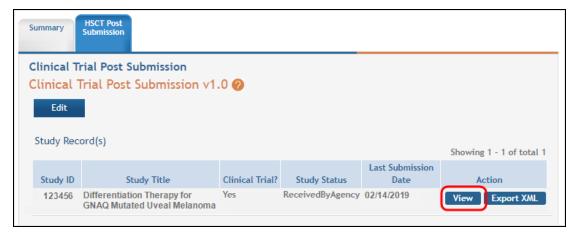
Click on the *Human Subjects Post Submission* tab. This takes you to a *Study Record(s)* screen where all study records and delayed onset studies associated with your grant are displayed.

Note: In order to edit, the HSS record must be in Work in Progress status. See <u>How To Change the Application Status and Resubmit</u> for instructions on updating the status.

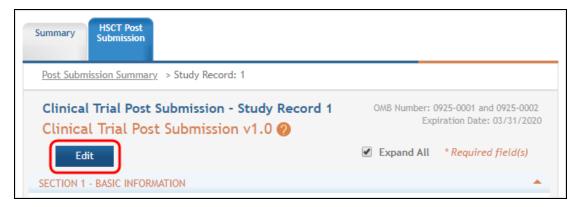


Option 1

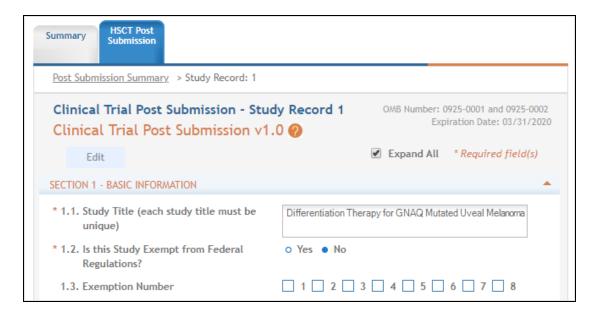
• Click on the **View** button to open the study record data.



• To update the human subjects information on that study, including inclusion enrollment data, click the **Edit** button at the top of the screen.



The study record is opened and the fields can be updated.



Option 2

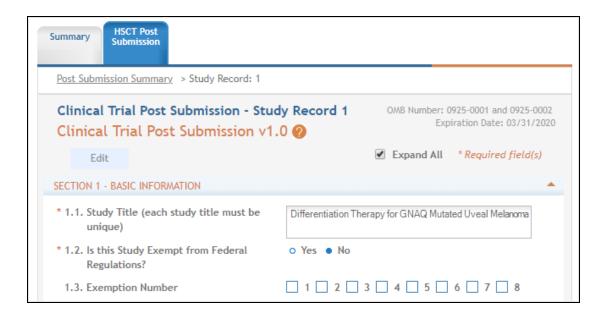
 Select the HSCT Post Submission tab and then click on the Edit button. (click to view)



• Now you see that the existing study has an **Edit** button available and there are additional buttons to add regular or delayed onset studies.



• Select the **Edit** button for the existing study to open the edit screen.



Editing Clinical Trial Information

Several fields in HSS are mapped to ClinicalTrials.gov to support clinical trial registration and reporting compliance. These fields include:

- 2.1 Conditions or Focus of Study
- 2.2 Eligibility Criteria
- 2.3 Age Limits*
- 2.6 Recruitment Status*
- 4.1 Detailed Description
- 4.1.b. Primary Purpose
- 4.1.c. Interventions
- 4.1.d. Study Phase*
- 4.1.e. Intervention Model

- 4.1.f. Masking*
- 4.1.g. Allocation*
- 4.2 Outcome Measures
- 6.1 Study Primary Completion Date*
- 6.2 Study Final Completion Date*
- 6.3 Enrollment of First Participant (Study Start) Date*
- 6.5 Reporting of Results in ClinicalTrials.gov*

See the <u>application guide</u> for more information. Generally, it is best to keep ClinicalTrials.gov information up-to-date and update HSS with this information as necessitated by the FOA or the terms and conditions of the award.

Exporting HSS data for ClinicalTrials.gov registration

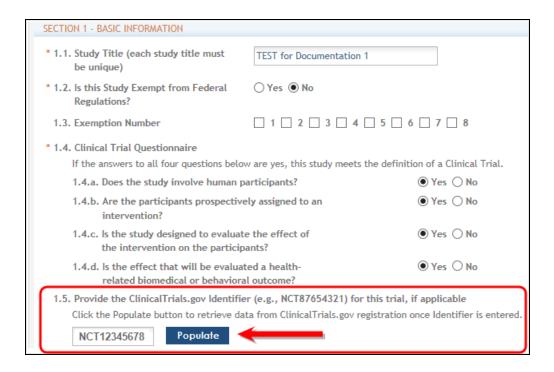
If HSS data entry occurred before ClinicalTrials.gov registration, the clinical trial data in HSS can be used to initiate registration in ClinicalTrials.gov. See the ASSIST Online Help, Export and Upload Data to ClinicalTrials.gov for instructions.

Using the Populate button to update clinical trial data

After a clinical trial has been registered in ClinicalTrials.gov, HSS fields that map to ClinicalTrials.gov can be updated with the information available in ClinicalTrials.gov.

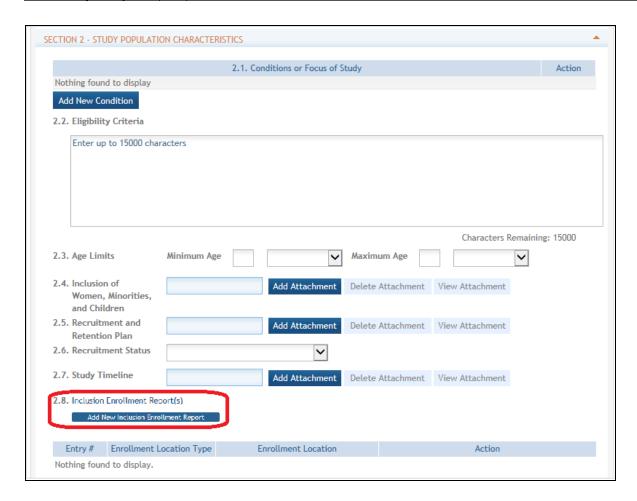
- 1. To perform this task, the ClinicalTrials.gov identifier (NCT number) should be entered in the field numbered 1.5.
- 2. Next, select the **Populate** button as shown below and the system does a best effort copy of form data from the official Clinical Trials records.

^{*}fields that are validated for congruence with ClinicalTrials.gov information



Inclusion Enrollment Report

Standalone PHS Inclusion Enrollment Report forms are no longer used. Instead, data collection for up to 20 *Inclusion Enrollment Reports* has been folded into each *Study Record*. Click on the link in *Section 2.8* of the *Study Record* screen to initiate the *Inclusion Enrollment Report*.



For each *Inclusion Enrollment Report*, applicants must create a title and indicate whether an existing dataset or resource will be used and whether the enrollment location type is domestic or foreign.

There are also a few optional fields in the report, including a text entry **Comments** section.

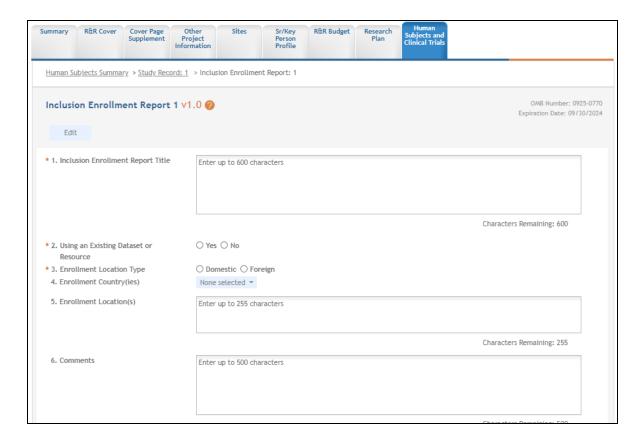


Figure 1: Top part of the Inclusion Enrollment Report screen

Planned and Cumulative enrollment data collection are in separate sections. Planned data are shown in one table. The cumulative enrollment data are displayed in separate tables for sex, race, and ethnicity information, and for the age data.

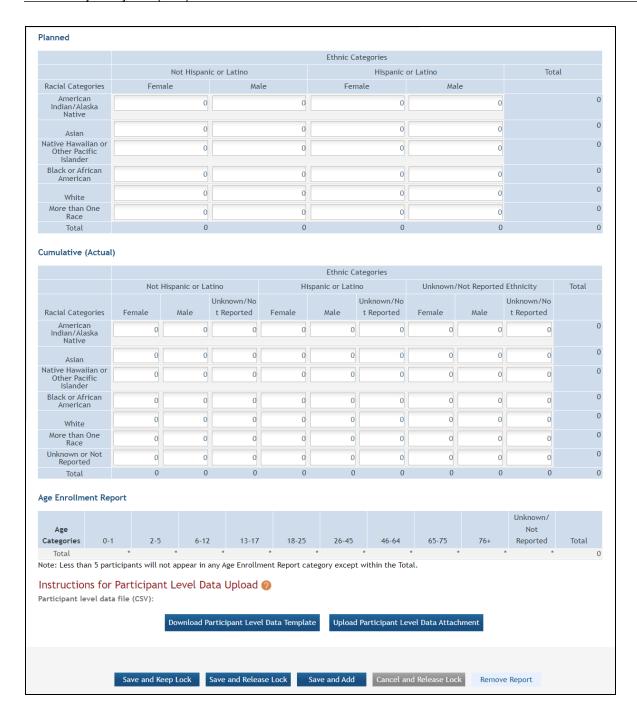
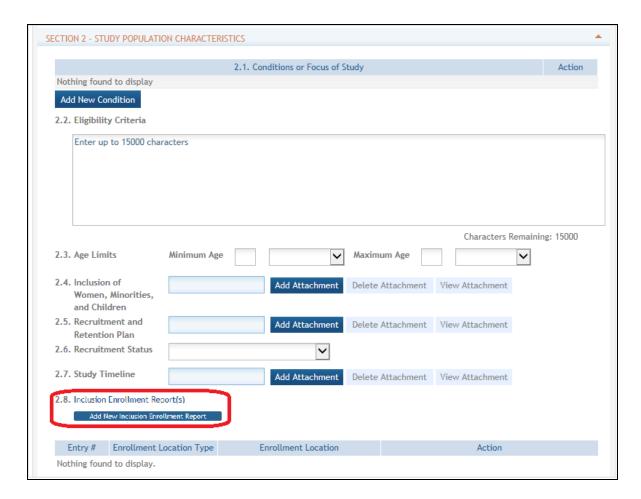


Figure 2: Bottom part of the Inclusion Enrollment Report screen

Editing Inclusion Counts

Inclusion data is found at the end of Section 2.



Planned Enrollment Counts

When creating a new inclusion enrollment report that is not marked as an existing dataset or resource, planned enrollment counts are required. To add Planned counts, edit the cells in the table.

Cumulative Enrollment Counts

There are two ways to edit the existing Inclusion Enrollment Report (IER) data for Cumulative (Actual) counts:

- 1. You can update the cells online in the existing report itself.
- 2. You can provide participant-level data in a spreadsheet that populates the cumulative table after upload.

For research from competing applications with due dates prior to January 25, 2019, either method may be used.

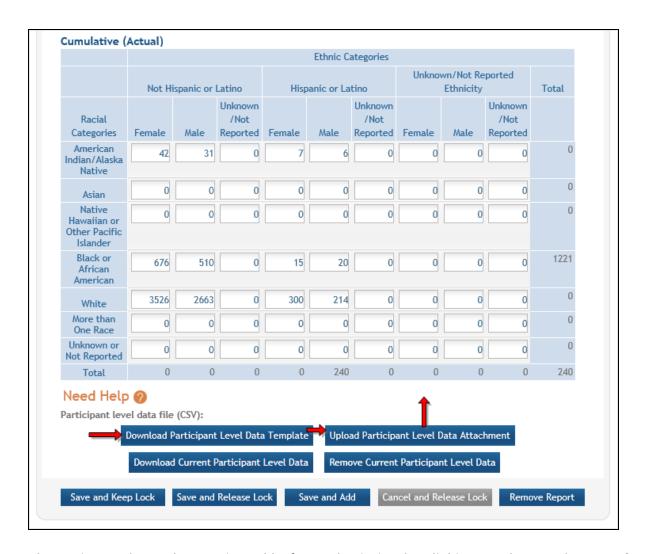
For research from competing applications with due dates January 25, 2019 or later, participant-level data are **required** in progress reports (see NIH Guide Notice NOT-OD-116).

- If you plan to upload the data, you must use the Participant Level Data
 Template. The template is a spreadsheet file in the proper CSV format to be used by the system.
- You can download the template by selecting the Download Participant Level
 Data Template button. This CSV file can then be updated with new totals.

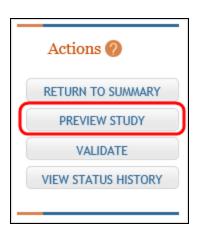
To use the template:

- Download the spreadsheet template for entering participant -level data by clicking on the **Download Participant Level Data Template** button. Fill the template with data for the study.
 - The columns in the template **should not be altered**: altering the format or category titles results in an error during the uploading process.
 - Data can be copied/transferred into the template from another source or entered directly into the template. When copying data be sure to copy values only and ensure your data are free of formulas.
- Once the new totals have been entered into the template and the file has been saved, use the **Upload Participant Level Data Attachment** button to upload the file that will update the Cumulative counts.

If you need to clear the current records, use the **Remove Current Participant Level Data** button.



The entire study can be previewed before submission by clicking on the **Preview Study** button on the left navigational column under Actions.



PI and SO Actions

If the PI is making changes:

- The PI changes the submission status to Work in Progress.
- The PI can click the Save and Release Lock button to save the changes.
- PI changes status to Ready for Submission.
- SO logs into ASSIST, finds the application, and submits it.

NOTE: If the SO has delegated Submit authority to the contact PI, the PI can submit the application.

If the SO is making changes:

- The SO changes the submission status to Work in Progress.
- The SO can click the **Save and Release Lock** button to save the changes.
- SO changes status to Ready for Submission.
- The Submit action becomes active on the *Application Information* page.
- SO clicks on the Submit button.

NOTE: The SO can delegate Submit authority to the contact PI. If this delegation is not done, only the SO can submit the application to NIH. The submission sends all updated study records associated with the application to NIH at one time.

Program officials and grant specialists are notified automatically of study changes and can review those changes. Some changes might require prior approval.

NOTE: If the application has been submitted and needs to be placed back into a work in progress status, refer to these instructions to perform this action; https://er-a.nih.gov/erahelp/ASSIST/default.htm#ASSIST_Help_Topics/5_Preview_Print_Sub-mit/Revise_Application.htm?Highlight=status

Adding Studies

After the initial submission of the application, additional studies can be added once the summary statement is released.

Access HSS via the Human Subjects links in the Action column of Status or the Human Subjects link in section G.4.b in the progress report. To add studies, the HSS record must be in Work in Progress status. See How To Change the Application Status and Resubmit for instructions on changing the submission status.

Access HSS via the *HSCT Post Submission* tab via the *Human Subjects* links in the *Action* column of *Status* or the *Human Subjects* link in section G.4.b in the progress report. To add studies, the HSS record must be in Work in Progress status. See How To Change the Application Status and Resubmit for instructions on changing the submission status.

From the *Application Information* page, click on the **HSCT Post Submission** tab, then click the **Edit** button.



Any study records already submitted are displayed and can be viewed and buttons to **Add New Study** and **Add New Delayed Onset Study** are displayed. Click on the appropriate button to add studies.

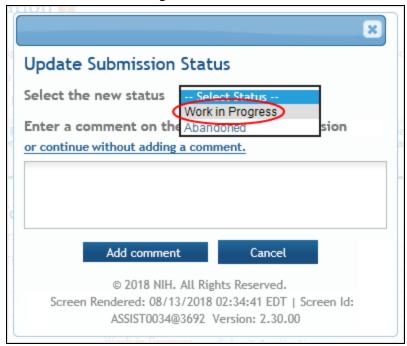


Once the study has been added be sure to use the **Save and Keep Lock** or **Save and Release Lock** buttons to secure your updates.

How To Change the Application Status and Resubmit

To revise and resubmit an application:

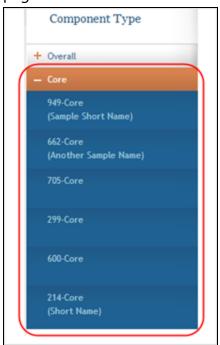
- 1. From the *Application Information* page click the **Update Submission Status** button from the **Action** list on the left side of the screen.
 - The *Update Status* window displays.
- 2. Select the Work in Progress status from the Select Status drop-down list.



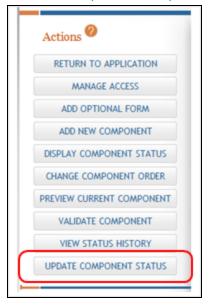
- 3. Complete the status update:
 - a. Enter a comment in the provided text box.
 - b. Select the **Add comment** button.
 - -OR-
 - c. Select the link titled **or continue without adding a comment** to update the status without entering a comment in the provided text box.

For multi-project grants, continue with the following steps:

4. Select the component needing revision from the Component Type section of the page.



5. Select the Update Component Status button from the **Actions** section of the page.



6. Update the status of the component to *Work in Progress* by selecting it from the drop-down box, entering comments, and selecting the **Add Comment** button.

Once the status of the component is *Work in Progress*, the appropriate component form (s) can be updated.

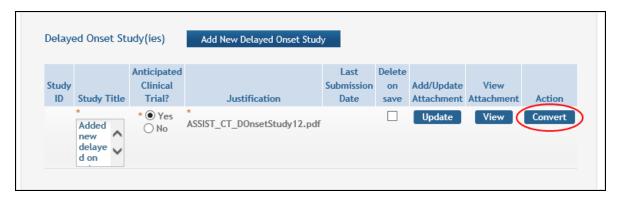
Navigate to the appropriate forms, make the changes, and re-submit the application. Refer to the help topic titled <u>Submit the Application</u> for information on submitting the application.

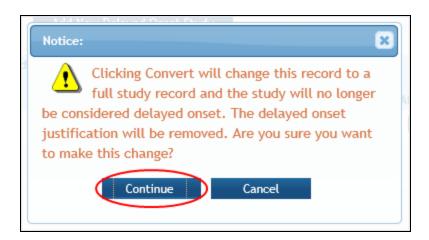
NOTE: Only the signing official (SO) or a delegated contact principal investigator (PI) can submit the application to NIH.

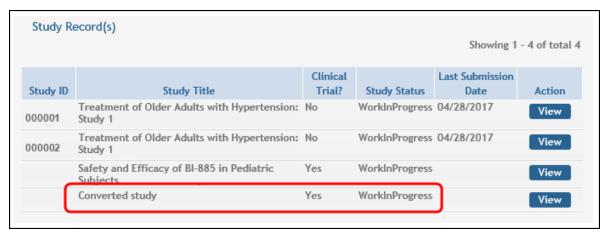
Convert Delayed Onset to Full Study Record

Flow:

- 1. Navigate to the HSCT Post Submission page and click on the **Edit** Button.
- 2. Identify the delayed onset study that you want to convert. Click the **Convert** button under *Action* the system displays following warning:
 - a. Clicking "Convert" will change this record to a full study record and the study will no longer be considered delayed onset. The delayed onset justification will be removed. Are you sure you want to make this change?"
- 3. If you choose the **Cancel** option, you stay on the Post Submission screen and the Delayed Onset remains as Delayed Onset.
- 4. If you choose the **Continue** option you are taken to the Study Page with title populated and rest of the fields empty.
- 5. Select **Save** (and keep or release lock) after completing the fields on the Study Page.
- 6. The action of saving the study removes the study from the Delayed Onset Study table and a new study is saved and added to the Study Record table.







Study Statuses

A status will be maintained for each study version. There will be two primary values used:

Received by Agency: any new study version will have this status. Studies that come in on initial submission will have this status, and any post-submission of the study will have this status when updates are submitted.

Accepted: when an award occurs, any studies for which the awarded project is the primary project will have this status. The latest version will also be labeled with the relevant FY of the award.

NOTE: The Status of a study version on a contract application should always be set to "Accepted".

When Should I Access HSS via the Status Module?

HSS is used to view and maintain human subjects data, including inclusion and clinical trial data, associated with your grant(s). HSS can be accessed in one of two ways, both through the eRA Commons system: via the **Status** module –or– via the RPPR **Section G. Special Reporting Requirements**.

When to Use the Status Module Instead of RPPR

There are several reasons why you might need to access study data through Commons Status rather than through your progress report. For example:

- Before award of a competitive application, changes may be necessary to the human subjects data submitted with the application via Grants.gov.
- Post-award, there may be a requirement to provide more frequent updates to inclusion enrollment in addition to any reporting associated with the RPPR.

Human subjects data cannot always be updated using Status. When application is undergoing peer review, the study information is not accessible in the Human Subjects System. Also, after a grant is awarded, only the **View** links will be available for the studies associated with fiscal year award. The data for a given fiscal year is locked when the award is issued and no further updates can be made. At that point, you can make updates via Status for the record associated with the next fiscal year.

For details on using the Status module for accessing HSS, please refer to <u>Access HSS</u>. You can also access the HSS Online Help by selecting the help icons ('?') on any of the HSS screens.

Roles & Privileges

HSS ROLES & PRIVILEGES:

	Principal Investig- ator	Signing Official
View study records	X	X
Receive notifications		Χ
Edit HSCT and IER fields except the clinical trial items 1.4a - 1.4d**	Х	Х
Initiate study record submission	X	X
Submit study record*	X (if delegated by SO)	Х

^{*}Only the Signing Official (or SO-delegated contact PI) can submit study records

^{**} Once item 6.1 Study Primary Completion Date and item 6.3 Enrollment of First Participant (Study Start) Date have been saved as "actual" dates, they cannot be manually edited. Use the Populate feature to update with data from ClinicalTrials.gov, or contact the NIH Program Officer. See the *Editing Studies* on page 14 topic for more information on using the **Populate** button.

Additional Resources (HSCT form and more)

HSS relies on information from more than one source and not all information provided in the HSS online help and PDF guides is exhaustive. Below are links to additional resources to provide greater detail and explanation on the various topics and systems related to HSS.

- HSCT form in ASSIST
 - Basic Information (Study Record Section 1)
 - o Study Population Characteristics (Study Record Section 2)
 - Protection and Monitoring Plans (Study Record Section 3)
 - Protocol Synopsis (Study Record Section 4)
 - Other Clinical Trial-related Attachments (Study Record Section 5)
 - Inclusion Enrollment Report
 - Participant Level Data Collection
- <u>ASSIST (online help)</u> HSS leverages ASSIST screens and therefore has the same look and feel.
- HSS Training Contains links to user guide, video tutorials, IMS to HSS Crosswalk, and infographic of the HSS process
- How to Apply Application Guide Use application instructions, along with guidance in the funding opportunity announcement, to submit grant applications to NIH, CDC, and FDA.