

i2b2 at UMN: Frequently Asked Questions

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What are the benefits of using i2b2?

- i2b2 can assist you in developing research hypotheses.
- i2b2 aids in identifying potential cohorts that may be recruited for clinical trials.
- i2b2 provides you with the ability to formulate queries using a simple user interface and a set of well-defined patient characteristics.
- i2b2 can reduce the time you spend in the discovery of research cohorts, study feasibility, and recruitment of subjects.

What are the limitations of i2b2?

- i2b2 cannot provide you with any data beyond the number of patients matching your search criteria.
- i2b2 is not capable of running time-based queries (e.g., number of admissions in a month)
- i2b2 is not capable of tasks such as clinical trials, sample tracking, study administration or providing real-time alerts.

Who is allowed access to i2b2?

All members of the UMN research community with a valid X.500 can use i2b2.

How much does it cost to use i2b2?

There is no cost to the investigator to use i2b2.

Do I need to install this software? Who can help me?

You do not need to install this software. This is a web-based client, which means that it does not have to be installed on the end users' computer. The University of Minnesota, via the CTSI, supports i2b2 for use by any research project.

How do I access and use i2b2?

For information on accessing and using i2b2, please see our [User Guide](#).

Where can I get i2b2 training?

The [User Guide](#) provided on our website is very helpful for both new and advanced users of i2b2. Advanced users may want to look for the light bulb icons within the guide, which are used to highlight especially helpful hints.

Where can I find a description of the data that is searched when I use i2b2 to find the number of patient meeting my criteria?

Please see our i2b2 [Data Description page](#).

What level of data access do I have in i2b2?

- You will be able to see aggregated results, but no information on individual patients.
- You are limited on the number of times you can run the same query within a specified time period. If you exceed the maximum, your account will be locked and you will need to contact ics@umn.edu to unlock it.

Do I need IRB approval prior to using i2b2?

No. The tool is designed to be used without IRB approval. i2b2 helps determine if enough patients exist for a study, but does not include any individually identifiable information.

What is the process for obtaining a full data set for the cohort I discovered using i2b2?

You must request the data via the Data Access Service of the CTSI. See <http://www.ctsi.umn.edu/research/tools-software/umn-data-access/index.htm> for more information.

Where can I get more background on i2b2?

Please see our i2b2 [Background page](#).

How do I describe i2b2 in my grant or IRB application?

It is a great idea to reference i2b2 in your grant application! Showing the reviewers that you have done “homework” to find out the size of the patient population with your parameters of interest at your local clinical sites is likely to be seen as an important strength of your application. The next paragraph provides some language you may want to include in your grant application.

“i2b2 is a cohort discovery tool that provides an easy to use and self-service way for researchers to query the University of Minnesota CTSI’s clinical data repository (CDR). Search criteria include patient demographics, ICD9 diagnoses, CPT procedure codes, and visit information. In response to a query, i2b2 returns the approximate number of patients matching the search criteria. No patient identifiers or clinical data is revealed.”

How do I acknowledge i2b2 in my papers and presentations?

i2b2 software was used in conducting this study. i2b2 is the flagship tool developed by the i2b2 (Informatics for Integrating Biology and the Bedside) center, an NIH-funded National Center for Biomedical Computing based at Partners HealthCare System. The i2b2 instance at University of Minnesota is funded by a CTSA grant from the NIH, UL1TR000114.

What if I need more help or have more questions?

Please contact the Informatics Consulting Service at ics@umn.edu. The ICS coordinator is currently Zohara Cohen, PhD. She welcomes questions and feedback on your experience with i2b2.