

# DATA SHARING CASE STUDY

*How does a complex, multi-study research initiative share data at scale?*

Access the [datasets](#) on Vivli (sign-in required)



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## BACKGROUND

**REACH** — UCSF's Core Center for Patient-Centric, Mechanistic Phenotyping in Chronic Low Back Pain — is funded through [NIH HEAL](#) and embedded within the [Back Pain Consortium](#) (BACPAC). Established in 2019 with nearly \$30 million in NIH funding, the center runs two large observational cohorts with overlapping participant populations: comeBACK, an in-person study of 450 adults phenotyped across four University of California sites, and BACKHOME, a fully remote nationwide e-cohort of roughly 3,000 adults, the largest prospective remote registry of chronic low back pain to date. Between the two cohorts, there are nearly 3,450 participants.

When NIH HEAL designated Vivli as its recommended data repository, REACH Research Coordinator Kaitlin Yee led the submission process, working closely with Vivli's support team alongside her biostatistician and principal investigator.

## THE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Each study required four data package elements: protocol, individual participant data (IPD), data dictionary, and statistical analysis plan. Upon submission, each study's DOI is automatically indexed to the NIH HEAL Data Platform, making datasets discoverable through Vivli, the HEAL Platform, or both.

## DATA SHARING AT ANY SCALE

Modern trial portfolios are rarely simple. Multi-asset programs, umbrella grants, and longitudinal cohorts involve layered hierarchies, overlapping participants, and publication cycles that unfold over years.

For programs managing multiple publications per study, the REACH team found it useful to establish a file naming convention that ties each data package to its corresponding publication, keeping submissions organized across multiple upload cycles. Vivli's submission framework ensures every data package is complete before it goes live so researchers who access the data find everything they need, immediately.

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*There's a submission checklist and a tutorial video that was incredibly helpful, especially in understanding how Vivli links data to the HEAL Data Platform.*

—Kaitlyn Yee

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## HOW VIVLI SUPPORTED THE PROCESS

- **Structured onboarding:** Vivli's submission checklist and a HEAL-specific tutorial video provided step-by-step guidance through each stage of submission, including how DOI linking to the HEAL Data Platform functions. Kaitlin rated overall platform difficulty a 2–3 out of 5.
- **Familiar tooling:** DocuSign integration for data sharing agreements reduced friction for those already accustomed to the tool.
- **Organized dashboard:** The platform's dashboard gave the team clear visibility across all three studies simultaneously, supporting a submission process that ran in parallel rather than sequentially.
- **Responsive support:** When a technical issue arose mid-submission, Vivli's support team resolved it quickly, restoring the session without data loss and allowing the team to continue without starting over.

## THE OUTCOME

Data packages for all three studies — REACH, COMEBACK, and Back Home — are now live on Vivli, with each DOI indexed to the NIH HEAL Data Platform. That dual discoverability means the data is findable by other researchers whether they enter through Vivli or through the HEAL Platform directly, expanding the reach of the program's findings without any additional effort from the team.

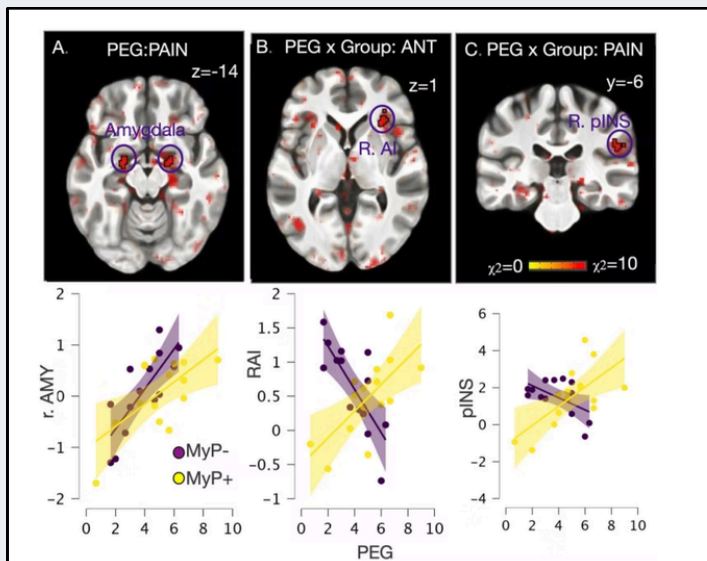
As the REACH program continues to publish, new data packages are added to Vivli, keeping the repository current and ensuring that each publication is paired with accessible, reusable data from the moment it goes live.

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**"Sarah Sweet (Vivli's Senior Clinical Research Manager) has been amazing. We've been talking back and forth ever since we started. She's been so responsive. I really don't think we'd be where we are without her."**

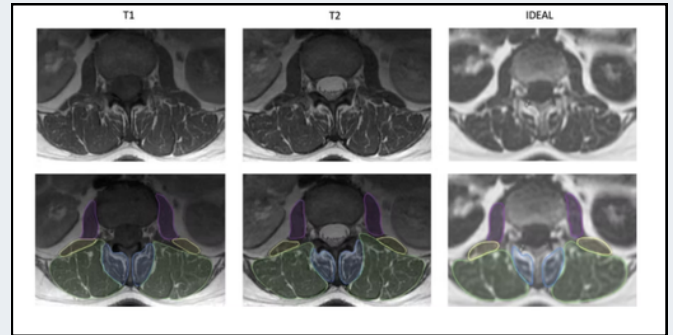
—Kaitlyn Yee

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Whole brain exploration of the interaction between endogenous (as measured by PEG) and experimental pain at baseline.

Sourced from a REACH publication in [Frontiers in Pain Research](#)



Representative MRI images (upper) and muscle segmentations (lower) for an axial slice centered at the L2-L3 level from T1-, T2-, and IDEAL water-fat images. MF, ES, QL, and PS are highlighted as blue, green, yellow, and purple, respectively.

Sourced from a REACH publication in [JOR Spine](#).

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR MULTI-STUDY PROGRAMS

- Establish a file naming convention tied to publications before beginning submission
- Use Vivli's onboarding resources early. Our submission checklist and support team are designed to guide you through every step
- Every completed submission is fully discoverable through Vivli and any linked funder platform
- New publications can be paired with their data packages on an ongoing basis, so you can submit as your research publishes rather than all at once

## Ready to share your research data?

Vivli works with researchers and institutions to make clinical research data accessible, discoverable, and connected to the global research community.

[Share your data with Vivli](#)