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Moving beyond challenges: Working Together to Navigate and Improve Compensation Practices



Key takeaways from the OSSU World Café Conversation #3

12 March 2026



Barriers to Equitable Compensation

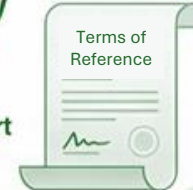
The "Consistency Gap" across institutions

Compensation practices vary wildly between research teams, creating confusion and inequity for partners.

The Path to Improved Practices

Prioritize Early Transparency

Discuss payment schedules and amounts at the start of collaboration to build trust.



Return on Engagement

Shift focus from transactional "Return on investment" to valuing lived experience and partnership.

Standardize Through Policy

Advocate for national guidelines and dedicated grant line items to protect compensation funds.



Invisible Work

The Burden of "Invisible Work"

Preparation, email correspondence, and document reviews are frequently overlooked in standard payment structures.

Current System Barriers

Discuss preferred methods

Digital and Accessibility Hurdles

Electronic gift cards and complex tech platforms create significant barriers for many participants.



Complex account creation



Technology-dependent platforms



Rigid "Contractor" hiring requirements



Direct Deposit & E-transfers



Mailed cheques



Flexible expense reimbursement



Resources

- Fox G, Fergusson DA, Sadeknury A, Nicholls SG, Smith M, Stacey D, et al. What guidance exists to support patient partner compensation practices? A scoping review of available policies and guidelines. *Health Expectations*. 2024;27(1).
- Fox G, Lalu MM, Sabloff T, Nicholls SG, Smith M, Stacey D, et al. Recognizing patient partner contributions to health research: a systematic review of reported practices. *Research Involvement and Engagement*. 2023;9(1):80.
- Dhamanaskar R, Tripp L, Vanstone M, Canfield C, Levasseur MA, Abelson J. Patient partner perspectives on compensation: Insights from the Canadian Patient Partner Survey. *Health Expectations*. 2024;27(1). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hex.13971>
- Richards DP, Jordan I, Strain K, Press Z. Patients as Partners in Research: How to Talk About Compensation With Patient Partners. *Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy*. 2020; 50(8): 413-414. <https://www.jospt.org/doi/10.2519/jospt.2020.0106>
- Richards DP, Cobey KD, Proulx L, Dawson S, de Wit M, Toupin-April K. Identifying potential barriers and solutions to patient partner compensation (payment) in research. *Research Involvement and Engagement*. 2022;8(1):7. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40900-022-00341-1>

Other guidance and resources

- Canadian Institutes of Health Research “Considerations when paying patient partners in research” <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/51466.html>
- Public and Patient Engagement Collaborative. “Compensating Patient Partners in Research. Review of Current Guidance and Policies Across Canada” (September 2023) https://ppe.mcmaster.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Compensating-Patient-Partners-in-Research_Current-Guidance-and-Policy-Review.pdf
- SPOR Evidence Alliance – Updated Patient and Public Partner Financial Compensation and Protocol (2025) https://sporevidencealliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/SPOREA_Patient-and-Public-Appreciation-Policy-FINAL_v3-1.pdf
- Centre for Healthcare Innovation – Manitoba SPOR SUPPORT Unit (2020). CHI Patient and Public Engagement Budget Builder: <https://umanitoba.ca/centre-for-healthcare-innovation/sites/centre-for-healthcare-innovation/files/2023-06/2020-01-29-chi-pe-budget-tool-v2-8-3.xlsx>
- Public & Patient Engagement Collaborative (McMaster University) *Engage with Impact Toolkit*: <https://www.evaluateengagement.ca/>
- Passerelle webinar series “Recognition, Remuneration and Reimbursement of Patient Partners” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uEDklauAzc>