

 <p>Patient/Public Partner Appreciation Policy</p>	Author: MSSU Patient Engagement Coordinator	Review Date: July 26, 2026
	Approved by and date: Executive Committee July 26, 2023	Effective Date: July 26, 2023
	Version Number: V 2.0	Page 1 of 7

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The intent of this policy is to define the circumstances and set out the procedures to recognize and appreciate the time and effort of Patient/Public Partners engaged in activities with the Maritime SPOR SUPPORT Unit (MSSU).
- 1.2 Patient/Public Partners involved with the MSSU are valued members of the organization. As patient-oriented research is reliant on including the patient's voice, some offer of appreciation, such as an honourarium, is both fair and appropriate. The MSSU offers Patient/Public Partners in-kind opportunities as another way of showing appreciation, such as attendance at various select MSSU hosted workshops/conferences, Patient-Oriented Research Training and MSSU orientation.
- 1.3 Furthermore, the MSSU aims to strive for greater equity, inclusivity, and diversity among its Patient/Public Partners in order to more fully reflect the wider society that accesses healthcare. Recognizing Patient/Public Partners for their involvement is an intentional step in supporting equitable inclusion and participation by easing financial constraints.
- 1.4 An offer of appreciation, such as compensation, is not intended to reflect the market value of a Patient/Public Partner's contributions; it should, however, be seen as an expression of appreciation.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 A MSSU Patient Engagement Coordinator should be consulted to determine compensation before engaging Patient/Public Partners in any MSSU activity. Patient/Public Partners will receive a copy of this document when they join the MSSU and will have the opportunity to review it with a MSSU Patient Engagement Coordinator so they are well informed.
- 2.2 This policy applies to consideration of reimbursement and compensation to Patient/Public Partners at each of the MSSU locations in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.
- 2.3 This policy applies in a limited manner to the consideration for compensation for involvement of Patient/Public Partners with MSSU activities, including MSSU committees and MSSU led research projects. However, the MSSU strongly encourages other researchers to provide a honourarium to Patient/Public Partners from independent sources.
- 2.4 This policy does not apply to compensation for Indigenous-specific involvement (Elder/Knowledge-language-culture holders) due to the distinct nature of engagement. For

Indigenous engagement, the Patient Engagement Coordinator(s) will work with the MSSU Indigenous Engagement and Allyship Science Lead to determine the appropriate offer of appreciation.

3. DEFINITIONS

Compensation: The act of providing something to someone in exchange for a service. Financial appreciation, such as compensation, for Patient/Public Partners is not to be considered equal payment of equal value as compensation is not work pay. Compensation may take the form of Honouraria or in-kind gifts.

Eligible Expense: Out-of-pocket expenses directly related to engagement in an approved activity of the MSSU. Eligible expenses may include:

- Transportation costs, including mileage, airfare, taxi, parking, etc.;
- Meals (per diem rates determined by the host institution);
- Accommodation (if required).
- Child/elder care (on a case by case basis)

Honouraria/Honourarium: A voluntary cash or “near cash” payment made to someone for services to which fees are not legally or traditionally required. An honourarium should not be considered payment as it is not reflective of the true value of the work done.

MSSU Led Research: Research that is supported in kind by the MSSU with a general topic prioritization indicated by provincial government(s).

Patient: An overarching term inclusive of individuals with personal experience of a health issue as well as primary caregivers, including family and friends.

Patient-Oriented Research: A continuum of research that engages patients as partners, focusses on patient-identified priorities and improves patient outcomes. This research, conducted by multidisciplinary teams in partnership with relevant stakeholders, aims to apply the knowledge generated to improve healthcare systems and practices.

Patient/Public Partner: An individual with direct (i.e. patient) or indirect (i.e. caregiver, family member, or community member) experience with the healthcare system who has joined the MSSU on a research team, an advisory/leadership committee or working group, or are engaged in training, public engagement and/or educational events.

Reimbursement: Repayment for eligible expenses.

MSSU Committee: Governance committee or advisory body for the MSSU to which Patient/Public Partners are directly involved and have representation.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 4.1 MSSU staff may offer compensation to Patient/Public Partners in accordance with the guidelines and amounts set out in Schedule A – MSSU Compensation Framework for Patient/Public Partners.
- 4.2 Eligible expenses incurred by a Patient/Public Partner will be reimbursed following the host institution’s rates and processes.
- 4.3 Each operating area of the MSSU (including the New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince

Edward Island locations) will outline a process for approving offers of appreciation and assign an individual with approval authority.

- 4.4 Offers of appreciation and reimbursement to Patient/Public_Partners must be assessed by the Patient Engagement Coordinator of the MSSU
- 4.5 In some cases, Patient/Public Partners may simultaneously participate on more than one committee or project. To ensure clarity, Patient/Public Partners will receive a letter for each activity (Schedule B – Template Letter on Acceptance/Decline of Compensation for Patient/Public Partners).
- 4.6 Financial compensation does not apply to representatives of community organizations where an MSSU activity is related to their role within the organization and for which they are already paid.
- 4.7 T4As will be issued by the institution providing compensation when required by the Canada Revenue Agency.

5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Once a Patient/Public Partner has agreed to join a governance committee, working group, or a MSSU led research project or activity for which compensation is offered, a letter (see Schedule B) will be issued to the Patient/Public Partner indicating the compensation amount for which they are eligible. The Patient/Public Partner can choose to accept or decline the compensation offer.
- 5.2 For one-time events, compensation will be issued following completion of the event. Compensation related to a MSSU committee or MSSU led research project will be issued quarterly or upon completion of the project or governance body, whichever occurs first.
- 5.3 Eligible expenses associated with travel will be reimbursed based on the host institution rates and require receipts. To the fullest extent possible, the MSSU will endeavor to pre-pay expenses for Patient/Public Partners to ensure out-of-pocket expenses do not pose a barrier to participation. Indirect expenses related to the activities of a Patient/Public Partner such as childcare/eldercare will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 Accountability
 - 6.1.1 The individual with approval authority at each MSSU location is responsible for the review, approval, and documentation of compensation under this policy.
- 6.2 Monitoring, Auditing and Reporting
 - 6.2.1 All offers of compensation, along with their acceptance or rejection, will be documented.
 - 6.2.2 This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Document Development and Approval Policy.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Schedule A – MSSU Compensation Framework for Patient/Public Partners

Schedule B – Template Letter on Acceptance/Decline of Compensation for Patient/
Public Partners

8. REFERENCES

British Columbia Academic Health Sciences Network, BC SUPPORT Unit. *Policy: Patient Partner Appreciation*. Current version: June 3, 2019.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Patient Engagement Framework. <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48413.html>

Newfoundland and Labrador SUPPORT Unit. *Patient Partner Appreciation – NL SUPPORT Guidelines*. Current version: June 14, 2019.

Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research (SCPOR). *Policy: SCPOR Policy for Patient and Family Advisor Honoraria*. Current version: March 31, 2016.

9. DOCUMENT VERSION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL HISTORY

Version	Author	Nature of Change		Date
V 0.1	Patient Engagement Coordinator	Document developed with Patient/Public Partners		October 2019 to February 2020
Approved by Executive Committee		Approval Date	Effective Date	Review Date
		February 13, 2020	May 15, 2020	May 15, 2023

Version	Author	Nature of Change		Date
V 1.0	Patient Engagement Coordinator	Implementation of Policy		May 15, 2020
Approved by Executive Committee		Approval Date	Effective Date	Review Date
		February 13, 2020	May 15, 2020	May 15, 2023

Version	Author	Nature of Change		Date
V 2.0	P/PP Appreciation Working Group	Updates to Schedule A		April 17, 2023
Approved by Executive Committee		Approval Date	Effective Date	Review Date
		July 26, 2023	July 26, 2023	July 26, 2026

Schedule A
MSSU Compensation Framework for Patient/Public Partners

Engagement Scenario	Offer	Considerations
Special Events		
1. One-time engagement of 1-2 hours	\$25 Honourarium paid within 30 days after the engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration fees for events are not included in the Honourarium • Includes off-line preparation time
2. One-time engagement of 3-4 hours	\$75 Honourarium paid within 30 days after the engagement	
3. Full day engagement (approximately 8 hours)	\$150 Honourarium paid within 30 days after the engagement	
Governance Committee, Working Group or MSSU Led Research Projects		
4. Meets 8-12 times per year	\$400 Honourarium per annum, paid quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 8 - 12 meetings per year. • Pro-rated should a Patient/Public Partner join (or leave) a group at some point within the year. • Includes off-line preparation time
5. Meets 5-7 times per year	\$300 Honourarium per annum, paid quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 5-7 meetings per year. • Pro-rated should a Patient/Public Partner join (or leave) a group at some point within the year. • Includes off-line preparation time
6. Meets 2-4 times per year	\$150 Honourarium per annum, paid quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 2-4 meetings per year. • Pro-rated should a Patient/Public Partner join (or leave) a group at some point within the year. • Includes off-line preparation time
Other compensation considerations		
7. Patient/Public Partners from the same household	Based on discussion with Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couple on same project

Schedule B: Template Letter on Acceptance/Decline of Compensation for Patient/Public Partners



Date _____

Dear _____,

Thank you for agreeing to be a Patient/Public Partner with the Maritime SPOR SUPPORT Unit (MSSU). In an effort to demonstrate our appreciation for your contribution, you are eligible receive an offer of appreciation for your participation with the _____ with an honourarium of \$XX.

The honourarium for your participation with the _____ will be paid *insert frequency*.

Honorariums issued in appreciation of your contribution to health research are considered taxable income under the Income Tax Act. If you wish to receive payments from MSSU, we will need to collect your Social Insurance Number and issue a T4A as per the Canada Revenue Agency requirement. We encourage you to contact your financial advisor, accountant, or CRA to answer any tax related questions. We understand that this process may create barriers for some Patient/Public Partners and we sincerely apologize.

Only include in the letter as applicable:

For reimbursement of expenses, submit your expense claim form (with receipts if required) within 15 days of the event to shelley.strickland@nshealth.ca. Some provision for travel and accommodation may be made in advance – please consult your local MSSU Patient Engagement contact.

Please return a signed and dated copy of this letter thus signifying your acceptance of or your decision to decline this compensation offer. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss, please contact Shelley Strickland at (902) 473-7640 or vial email at shelley.strickland@nshealth.ca.

I accept the offer of compensation _____
Signature Date

I decline the offer of compensation _____
Signature Date

Sincerely,