

Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC)

Patient Partner Reimbursement Policy for FAC Research Grants

1. Purpose

Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC) values the lived experience, time, and expertise that patient partners contribute to FAC-led and FAC-supported projects. This policy outlines FAC's approach to reimbursing and compensating patient partners involved in FAC Research grants in a fair, transparent, and flexible manner, while recognizing diverse needs and preferences.

FAC is committed to reducing barriers to participation and ensuring that patient partners are not out-of-pocket for costs incurred or disadvantaged financially by contributing to FAC activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all FAC projects, committees, research initiatives, consultations, working groups, and time-limited activities that include patient partners.

This policy applies to:

- Individuals engaged as patient partners (including people living with fibromyalgia and/or caregivers) in FAC research projects
- FAC contractors responsible for managing projects that include patient partners

3. Guiding Principles

FAC's approach to reimbursing patient partners is guided by the following principles:

- **Respect:** Patient partners' time, knowledge, and lived experience are valuable and deserving of recognition.
- **Equity:** Reimbursement options should be flexible and accessible.
- **Transparency:** Expectations regarding reimbursement should be communicated clearly and in advance.
- **Choice:** Patient partners may select from approved reimbursement methods that best meet their needs.
- **Simplicity:** Administrative processes should be straightforward and not burdensome.

4. Types of Reimbursement and Compensation

Patient partners may be eligible for one or more of the following, depending on the project:

4.1 Honoraria / Compensation for Time

Patient partners may receive compensation in recognition of their time, preparation, participation, and lived expertise in fibromyalgia research with or for FAC.

Compensation amounts will be determined by CIHR compensation guidelines.

<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/53261.html>

4.2 Expense Reimbursement

Patient partners may be reimbursed for reasonable, pre-approved expenses related to their participation, such as:

- Transportation
- Parking
- Internet or phone costs directly related to participation
- Accessibility or accommodation needs

Original receipts may be required unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.

5. Payment Methods

FAC recognizes that patient partners have different preferences and access needs. Patient partners may choose one of the following payment methods, subject to availability and applicable regulations:

5.1 Electronic Transfer (e-Transfer)

FAC may provide reimbursement or honoraria via electronic funds transfer (e-transfer). Patient partners choosing this option must provide the necessary information securely and in accordance with FAC's privacy practices.

5.2 Gift Cards

FAC may provide reimbursement or honoraria in the form of gift cards. Gift cards may be digital or physical and will be selected based on availability and suitability. The type and value of the gift card will be communicated in advance.

Patient partners will be informed that gift cards may have limitations (e.g., availability of retail gift cards).

6. Tax Considerations

Patient partners are responsible for understanding any personal tax implications related to honoraria or compensation received from FAC. FAC does not provide tax advice.

Where required by law or funder policy, FAC may request additional information to support reporting or compliance obligations.

7. Communication and Agreement

Before participation begins, FAC will:

- Clearly communicate whether reimbursement or compensation is available
- Outline the type, amount, and method of payment
- Confirm the patient partner's preferred payment method and if it is gift cards determine the type of gift card the participant prefers.

This information will be documented in writing (e.g., email, project agreement, or terms of reference).

8. Privacy and Confidentiality

All personal and financial information collected for reimbursement purposes will be handled in accordance with FAC's privacy policies and applicable legislation.

9. Exceptions

In some cases, reimbursement or compensation may be limited by funding agreements, grant conditions, or project-specific constraints. Any exceptions to this policy must be communicated clearly to patient partners in advance.

10. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains aligned with best practices, patient partner feedback, and FAC's organizational values.

Approved by: Fibromyalgia Association Canada Board of Directors

Effective Date: ____ February 03, 2026__