



HEALTH QUALITY BC

Patient Partner Recognition and Appreciation

Recognizing patient partners' contributions and the impact they make in improving the health care system is an important part of patient engagement. This resource identifies ways you can show appreciation for the time and commitment they have given to your project or work.

How Patient Partners Want to be Recognized and Appreciated



Instill a culture of gratitude – you don't have to wait until the end of an engagement to say thank you! Celebrate milestones and create an environment where you "live this culture every day."



The best thank you is personal, sincere, genuine and comes from someone the patient partner has a relationship with. Tell the patient partner how they are making an impact and influencing the outcome of the project.



There's no one-size-fits-all approach. Tailor your recognition and appreciation to the person and situation. Get to know the patient partners and how they wish to be recognized. Consider the situation: for example, a thank you email may be perfect for patient partners completing a survey or being part of a focus group but a longer-term commitment, such as serving a 12-month term on a committee, will need a more personalized approach.



This material has been co-produced with patient partners.

These considerations and ideas were developed by a working group, consisting of patient partners and Health Quality BC staff. The working group reviewed 200 Patient Voices Network (PVN) sign-up forms to better understand how people would like to be recognized for their work.

Ideas for Patient Partner Recognition and Appreciation

During the engagement:

- Build relationships: connection before content! For example, use ice breakers at the start of meetings (making sure they are sensitive and thoughtful to different people's circumstances) and include time for everyone to get to know each other as human beings.
- Provide regular feedback and communication to patient partners throughout the life cycle of an engagement opportunity.
- Celebrate successes (project milestones).
- Show care and compassion by recognizing significant patient partner events. If you have a relationship with the patient partner and are aware of an event, reach out to them.

After the engagement:

- Say thank you with a phone call, card or email.
- Host a celebration event when an engagement ends (virtually if that is most appropriate) and publicize it through your organization's communication channels.
- **"Close the Loop"** with patient partners by sharing outcomes of the work so far and the impact they made. This is a necessary step for patient partners to feel recognized and appreciated.
- Consider nominating patient partners for a **Quality Award** and/or submit an abstract to events like the Quality Forum to showcase your work together.

Other ideas:

- Support skill-building by sponsoring patient partners to attend workshops, conferences and other educational opportunities within your organization and beyond!
- Recognize **National Volunteer Week** in April and/or **International Volunteer Day** in December of each year, for example, by hosting events or a media release/video message thanking patient partners.
- Practices vary across organizations regarding honoraria or compensation for patient partners' time. The BC Centre for Disease Control has a **guidance tool** you can refer to in discussing this as a team. Some organizations provide gift cards as small gestures of thanks. Providing an honorarium can help reduce financial barriers associated with participation and allow for more diverse patient partner representation.
- Provide reference/recommendations letters if requested.