



CanVECTOR Patient Partner Expense Reimbursement Policy

Introduction and objectives

The Patient Partners Expense Reimbursement Policy aims to minimize the financial hardship and barriers experienced by patient partners through out-of-pocket payments. Expense claims must follow the policies of Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) which are summarized in this document.

Note: This policy distinguishes compensation from reimbursement. *Reimbursement* is defined as expenses incurred by patient partners related to their engagement in CanVECTOR and can include travel, parking, accommodations, and meals. *Compensation* is defined as fair recognition to a patient partner for their engagement in a CanVECTOR activity that is commensurate with and reflective of the value of their time and effort. Please also refer to the CanVECTOR patient partner compensation policy.

The CanVECTOR reimbursement policy was written in consultation with CanVECTOR patient partners and following the 'Recommendations on Patient Engagement Compensation' prepared by the SPOR Networks in Chronic Disease and the PICHI Network:

https://diabetesaction.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TASK-FORCE-IN-PATIENT-ENGAGEMENT-COMPENSATION-REPORT_FINAL-1.pdf

Eligible expenses for reimbursement by CanVECTOR may include, but not limited to: transportation (mileage, parking, public transit, taxi), airline seat selection, luggage fees, meals, caregiver support to travel with patient partner, and child care/elder care/ respite care.

When possible, CanVECTOR will attempt to minimize out-of-pocket payments by patient partners by:

- Paying for travel, accommodations and meals up front and directly by CanVECTOR.
- Ensuring that patient partners are not asked for a credit card to cover incidentals at check-in to hotels.
- Offering per diem for meals not included at CanVECTOR events, without requirement of receipts and paid in advance of the event.
- Reimbursement may include costs that may be required for people living with health conditions to fully participate but are non-standard at the research institutions administering of funds and can be considered on an individual basis.

When out-of-pocket expenses do occur, reimbursement should occur within 30 days of submission and if this cannot occur then patient partners should be notified ahead of time so that they may make an informed decision about whether or not to participate in the activity.

Transportation (OHRI policy)

Travelers are expected to use the most economical method of transportation available.

a) **Use of personal automobile:** A traveler using his/her personal automobile for OHRI business will be reimbursed for mileage at the OHRI's current rate of \$0.45/kilometer (km) to a maximum of 500km, unless exception requested. In such cases, the traveler will be reimbursed at the lesser of \$0.45/km or the Economy Class air travel rate by the most direct route or rail fare. Car rentals are acceptable. However a rented car normally should be used only for a round trip that is less than 1000 km. If a trip of greater distance is made, the maximum claimable expense is equivalent to Economy Class air travel rate by the most direct route or rail fare, whichever is less. Supplementary collision insurance and liability insurance must be purchased since this is not covered under the OHRI's insurance policy.

b) **Air/ Rail transportation:** Travelers are required to book as early as possible to take advantage of seat sales. Travelers should make only Economy Class reservations.

d) **Taxis/buses:** Original receipts are required and specific details (i.e. trip from address to address) must be recorded on the travel claim.

Meal Allowance, Incidental Expenses:

The OHRI will reimburse for reasonable and actual meal expenses up to a daily maximum of \$75.00 CAD per day. Where one or more meals are provided by a conference the daily maximum will be prorated accordingly (\$20.00 breakfast; \$20.00 lunch; \$40.00 dinner).

When traveling outside of Canada, OHRI will reimburse the equivalent of up to \$75.00 CAD per day.

Original, itemized receipts (credit/debit card slips are not sufficient), must be provided with claim, including itemized receipts for any room service charges.

In instances where an itemized receipt lists meals for more than one individual, the names of all individuals must be submitted with the receipt.

Alcoholic Beverages:

Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable and staff are encouraged to ask the restaurant for a separate invoice when having alcohol with their meals

Hotel Accommodations:

The OHRI will reimburse reasonable costs for hotel accommodation. An allowance of \$25 per day may be requested when accommodation is obtained at no cost from a relative or friend.

Child care/elder care/ respite care or other out of pocket costs:

Reimbursement for the care of dependent family members is available at a rate of up to \$20 per hour. Additional considerations for advanced care of family members not covered by this can be made on an individual case base and should be discussed and agreed upon in advance.

Other out of pocket expenses not covered in this policy may also be considered. Patient partner should notify the project lead and patient partner platform lead in advance and details of additional reimbursement included on the project Terms of Reference documents.

Reimbursement Procedure

You may either book travel and accommodations yourself, following the above policies, and submit for reimbursement (2-6 week turn around time for cheques to be issued) OR request that it be booked using our travel agency (Uniglobe, Sophia Pradal) and billed directly to the CanVECTOR program. Booking requests using the travel agency service can be coordinated by contacting the program.

When submitting receipts for reimbursement, please send original receipts and include date, location and reason for travel on reimbursement request and send to the mailing address listed below. Flight and hotel receipts may be submitted prior to date of travel to expedite reimbursement if desired. Boarding passes and additional expenses such as hotel cost adjustments, meals, taxi etc. can be submitted after travel. Original receipts are required.

Mail to:

Attn: Dr. Lisa Duffett

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