

SAGES Patient Partner Financial Incentive Plan (FIP)

Purpose

To ensure patients, patient allies, and advocates contributing to the SAGES Patient Partner Network (PPN) are recognized and compensated fairly when their contributions exceed the scope of casual, volunteer participation.

Principles

- **Equity** – Patients do not derive the same career benefits as surgeons from participation in professional societies; therefore, compensation acknowledges the value of their lived experiences.
- **Transparency** – Clear thresholds and rates are provided so patients and committees know expectations upfront.
- **Flexibility** – Recognizes different levels of engagement (episodic vs. sustained, individual vs. group).
- **Alignment** – Benchmarked against other organizations' patient/public involvement policies (e.g., NIHR).

Compensation Framework

Patient Partners will be engaged as consultants for activities requiring significant time or expertise. Compensation is determined by the type and intensity of work, using a sliding scale:

Level of Engagement	Examples	Estimated Time	Compensation
Level 1: Light / Episodic (Volunteer)	Surveys, brief email feedback, single phone call, ≤30 min review of document	<1 hr	Volunteer (no payment)
Level 2: Limited Involvement	One-time document review (1–2 hrs), short virtual focus group, brief consult on guideline section	1–2 hrs	\$50–\$100 per activity
Level 3: Moderate Involvement	Participation in half-day focus group, multiple document reviews with	2–5 hrs	\$150–\$250

	feedback, virtual consensus panel		
Level 4: Sustained Involvement	Serving as standing member of a guideline panel, recurring research grant reviews, multi-session advisory role	5–10 hrs over weeks	\$300–\$500
Level 5: High / Strategic Role	Keynote or educational speaker at Annual Meeting, co-design leader on patient materials, major co-author on grant/guideline	10+ hrs / travel commitment	\$500–\$1,000 (plus travel reimbursement)

Operational Notes

- **Payment Method:** Honoraria processed through SAGES as consultant fees.
- **Threshold:** Compensation triggered when expected involvement exceeds 2 hours of active contribution.
- **Group Activities:** Focus groups compensated per patient at Level 2–3, depending on duration.
- **Travel & Lodging:** Covered separately for in-person invited speakers at the Annual Meeting.
- **Diversity Commitment:** PETF will ensure fair distribution of compensated opportunities to avoid overburdening a small number of patient partners.

Annual Budget (Initial)

Seed Funding: \$7,500 (2024–2025, as outlined in SERF proposal).

Allocation:

- ~20 Level 2 activities (\$2,000)
- ~10 Level 3 activities (\$2,500)
- ~5 Level 4 activities (\$2,000)
- ~1–2 Level 5 activities (\$1,000)

This distribution allows flexibility while piloting the program.

Review & Adjustments

Pilot Year (2024–25): Collect feedback from patients and SAGES committees.

Annual Review: PETF will reassess rates, thresholds, and budget annually based on usage

and patient feedback.

Future Funding: Seek expansion through PCORI and other patient-centered grant mechanisms.