

PETF SERF Grant Request – Response to initial feedback

The Patient Engagement Task Force (PETF) was organized to support the framework for SAGES to successfully partner with patients and align with patient priorities in order to improve patient-centered care. The PETF is developing the SAGES standard operating procedure (SOP) as a guideline to build relationships with patients, patient allies, and patient advocacy groups to enhance and expand the work of SAGES.

The PETF will support patient engagement with SAGES committee and projects such as the development of educational resources, sessions at the SAGES annual meeting, surgical guidelines, patient brochures, research grants, and other SAGES initiatives that will include patient input and perspectives.

The PETF will facilitate the organization's patient engagement through the creation of a SAGES Patient Partners Network (PPN). Patients and patient advocates will be able to join the PPN where they will be eligible to support the SAGES projects as listed above. The PETF SOP will provide guidance on how to recruit patients to the SAGES PPN, and how SAGES committees will access the PPN to recruit patient and patient advocate consultants. The PETF will oversee patient recruitment and ensure that goals and expectations for both the patient and SAGES committee perspective, are met.

In developing the SOP, the PETF understands that while participation by "patient partners" will often be episodic and limited in scope, time and effort, some projects might require more sustained and effort-intensive contributions (Guideline development, review and editing of patient brochures, research grant reviews, participation in focus groups, consensus meetings on prioritization of PROMS etc). Patient partners are considered consultants to the SAGES organization and, as such, should be appropriately compensated when their level of involvement meets a given threshold. The PETF will build a financial incentive plan using a sliding scale based on time effort commitment by individual patient partners. This will be modeled based on what other organizations have proposed re compensation of PPI (patient and public involvement).

[Payment guidance for researchers and professionals | NIHR](#)

[NIHR public contributor payment policy | NIHR](#)

Regarding the SERF concern about SAGES being a volunteer-based organization, we would like to clarify that patient partners' volunteer participation differs significantly from that of surgeons who contribute their time to SAGES committees. Our committee members gain professional benefits from their involvement in SAGES (promotion, reputation, academic output, publications, and career advancement). In contrast, patients do not directly benefit from volunteering with our organization. We anticipate that most patient partners will volunteer their time completing tasks requiring limited involvement, such as occasional email response, surveys, brief discussions with committee leads, or reviewing a

document. However, for projects demanding more substantial time and effort, we plan to offer patients the option of compensation for their contributions. In such cases, we will apply the FIP to determine appropriate payment based on level of input as consultants.

For the upcoming 2024-2025 year, the PTEF requests that \$7,500 be allocated to support financial incentives for PPN participation and consultative support. This initial seed funding will allow initial steps to be taken to integrate patient engagement into the fabric of SAGES and gain early expertise on the subject. The PETF intends to foray this early experience into requests for PCORI grants that strongly align with the mission and goals of the taskforce (Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute grant awards [Funding Opportunities | PCORI](#)).