

Policy for Membership in Diabetes Action Canada 2.0

Network Membership

Members of the Diabetes Action Canada (DAC) consist of those who are actively contributing to the projects and activities of the Network. Network membership has four categories: Researcher (including Co-Scientific Leads) Knowledge User, Patient Partner, and Trainees.

The following policy defines the terms and conditions that constitute the requirement for commitment of expertise, resource and service with respect to governance and operational management to deliver the outcomes articulated in our DAC proposal as we evolve from a POR Network in Chronic Disease to a Network in Knowledge Mobilization and Implementations Science. Membership requires a commitment to the principles of conflict of interest and adherence to declaration of real or perceived conflict.

The Steering Council of DAC reviews and approves the Membership and Conflict of Interest Policies and relies on approval of members to the Network by the POR Program Committee. These policies will be directly communicated and made transparent to all DAC members in terms of agreement documents.

Membership Categories

Membership in DAC of Researchers, Knowledge users, Trainees and Patient Partners is essential for the fulfillment of the mission and vision of DAC. The following describes the general criteria for eligibility and the process for appointment of each member category. Below also details all the rights and privileges of membership.

Researcher

Who is eligible?

This category of membership includes the following:

- **Scientific Co-Leads:** DAC has two Scientific Co-Leads – Gary Lewis and André Carpentier. Gary Lewis is the Nominated Principal Applicant for the CIHR SPOR Network Grant. The Co-Leads report to the Steering Council and are responsible for all the activities of the SPOR Network including oversight of research, knowledge translation, training and mentoring, patient-engagement and the management of the administrative operations of the Network including support of the CIHR-approved governance function.
- **Principal Applicants:** Those researchers who signed the SPOR Network application and have committed to the mission and vision of DAC for the next 4-year term and are leading specific Programs and Themes within the Network. This investigative team is responsible for the implementation of all the programs and projects within DAC and are members of the Patient-Oriented Research (POR) Program Committee.
- **Co-investigators:** A broader team of researchers and educators engaged in the activities of DAC. These individuals may lead projects or provide significant collaboration. They become members by either signing: 1) an inter-institutional or transfer agreement as the Institutional Investigator on a SPOR Network project; or, 2) a letter of agreement with DAC.

DAC membership is only available to researchers appointed to a university, academic hospital or research institute who are engaged in diabetes-related research (basic, clinical, knowledge translation) and interested in contributing to the mission and vision of DAC. For individuals outside of Canada, academic appointment must be at an internationally recognized research-intensive university and/or academic hospital or research institute.

How is membership acquired?

Through inquiry to Diabetes Action Canada (DAC), prospective researchers can reach out to DAC directly or connect with one of our existing Researcher members. Upon recommendation, interested individuals will be asked to complete our online sign-up form available at <https://diabetesaction.ca/signup/>.

As part of the application process, applicants are required to submit a concise statement (up to 200 words) detailing their current academic affiliations, qualifications, and their specific expertise in the field of diabetes. Additionally, an updated summary Curriculum Vitae (CV) highlighting research interests and academic status must be provided.

Applications undergo review and approval by the POR Program Committee, considering both the collaborative potential and the applicant's ability to contribute to DAC's mission and vision. The final decision on membership is then communicated to the Steering Council.

Duration of Membership?

Researcher members are appointed until the funding term for DAC ends on March 31st, 2026 as indicated in their signed agreement. If a Researcher member resigns from their position at the current academic institution, their membership with DAC is terminated. If a Researcher member changes academic institutions their membership at DAC remains and is updated with a new letter of agreement with DAC.

What is the value of Researcher membership?

- Networking with researchers, knowledge users, patient partners and trainees with a common interest in patient-oriented research in diabetes
- Opportunity to collaborate on DAC projects
- Review of their grant proposals and potential endorsement for research that contributes to the mission and vision of DAC
- Listing on the DAC Website
- Network member communications and newsletters
- Use of the title Researcher *in Diabetes Action Canada* for the term of their appointment
- Use of the DAC Logo and Word Mark on their email and other signatures.

Knowledge User

Who is eligible?

This category of membership includes the following:

- **Principal Knowledge User:** Those clinicians who signed the SPOR Network application and have committed to the mission and vision of DAC for the next 4-year term and are leading specific

Programs and Themes within the Network. Principal Knowledge Users co-lead a DAC POR Program and are members of the Patient-Oriented Research (POR) Program Committee.

- **Knowledge Users:** Health care practitioners and/or leaders in health care improvement who are deeply engaged in quality improvement, governance and/or research activities within DAC, but do not run an independent research program at an academic institution.
- **Community health centres and services:** Not-for-profit community governed organizations with a primary focus on improving the health and well-being of populations who have traditionally faced barriers accessing health services
- **Charitable organizations:** An organization funded primarily through philanthropy and are trusted providers of diabetes education, research, resources, and services
- **Policy and decision-makers:** Municipal, provincial and federal level members of governments who are involved in DAC governance, activities and/or research planning.

How is membership acquired?

Prospective Knowledge Users seeking membership in Diabetes Action Canada (DAC) can initiate the process through direct inquiry to DAC or by contacting one of our Researchers or Knowledge User members. Those interested in membership will be directed to our online sign-up form available at <https://diabetesaction.ca/signup/>.

During the sign-up process, a statement (limited to 200 words) is required. This statement should outline the Knowledge User's role and its relevance to diabetes research. Additionally, the statement should articulate how the Knowledge User envisions utilizing their role to contribute to DAC.

For Knowledge Users representing organizations, DAC may request a signed Letter of Understanding, delineating the collaboration opportunity and highlighting the organization's potential contributions to DAC's mission and vision. If the Knowledge User is an individual, a summary CV detailing the member's professional expertise is required.

All applications undergo thorough review and approval by the POR Program Committee. The final decision for membership is then communicated to the Steering Council." *Duration of Membership?*

Knowledge User members are appointed until the funding term for DAC ends March 31st, 2026 as indicated in their signed agreement. If a Knowledge User member resigns from their employment position, their membership with DAC is terminated.

What is the value of Knowledge User membership?

- Networking with researchers, knowledge users, patient partners and trainees with a common interest in patient-oriented research in diabetes
- Review of their quality improvement proposals and potential endorsement for initiatives that contributes to the mission and vision of DAC
- Opportunity to collaborate on DAC projects
- Listing on the DAC Website
- Network member communications and newsletters
- Use of the title *Knowledge User in Diabetes Action Canada* for the term of their appointment.
- Use the DAC Logo and Word Mark on their email and other signatures.

Patient Partners

Who is eligible?

A Patient Partner is someone with a personal connection to diabetes, either through their own experience or that of a loved one. These individuals play a crucial role in providing valuable insights and perspectives to guide research and decision-making in the diabetes field.

Patient Partners are integral members of Diabetes Action Canada's (DAC) Patient-Oriented Research Programs and Themes, contributing their lived experiences to strengthen and inform research. They may also take on leadership roles through the Steering Council or its Standing Committees. By sharing their unique perspectives, Patient Partners help shape initiatives that improve outcomes for people living with diabetes.

DAC provides compensation to Patient Partners who reside in Canada and hold an account at a Canadian banking institution. To process this compensation, we are required to collect certain information, including a Social Insurance Number (SIN) and home address. For full details, please refer to the Patient Partner Compensation Policy.

How is membership acquired?

Prospective Patient Partners can express their interest in joining DAC directly or through a Researcher or Knowledge User member. Those interested in becoming Patient Partners will be directed to our online sign-up form at <https://diabetesaction.ca/signup/>.

During the sign-up process, a concise statement (up to 200 words) is required. This statement should highlight the Patient Partner's connection to diabetes, express their interest in joining DAC, and outline what they hope to contribute to and gain from the network. Additionally, prospective Patient Partners can indicate the types of activities with DAC that interest them the most. This will aid in later recruitment of Patient Partners for research activities.

Applicants will be contacted by our Lead, Patient Engagement for an initial discussion. If expectations and interests align, additional information will be collected for onboarding new Patient Partner members. These new members will be added to the DAC distribution list for research opportunities and may be directly contacted to participate in various activities.

Duration of Membership?

Patient Partner members are appointed until the funding term for DAC ends March 31st, 2026 as indicated in their signed agreement. Patient Partner members can resign at any time.

What is the value of Patient Partner membership?

- Networking with researchers, knowledge users, patient partners and trainees with common interest in patient-oriented research in diabetes
- Listing on the DAC Website
- Network member communications and newsletters
- Use of the title *Patient Partner Leader in Diabetes Action Canada* for the term of their appointment.

Trainee

Who is eligible?

Graduate or health professional students or postdoctoral trainees engaged in research training at a Canadian, Tri-Council eligible university, academic hospital or research institute in diabetes-related research (basic, clinical, knowledge translation) and interested in contributing to the mission and vision of DAC. For students or postdoctoral trainees outside of Canada, research must be conducted at an internationally recognized research-intensive university and/or academic hospital or research institute. DAC Researcher members must supervise trainee members.

How is membership acquired?

Prospective Trainee members can reach out to DAC directly or through their supervising Researcher members. Those interested in membership will be directed to our online sign-up form available at <https://diabetesaction.ca/signup/>.

As part of the application process, applicants are required to submit a concise statement (up to 200 words) detailing their current academic program, degree of study, and specific expertise in the field of diabetes. Additionally, an updated summary Curriculum Vitae (CV) highlighting research interests and academic status must be provided.

Applications undergo review and approval by the POR Program Committee, considering both the collaborative potential and the applicant's ability to contribute to DAC's mission and vision. The final decision on membership is then communicated to the Steering Council.

Duration of Membership?

Trainee members are appointed until their research projects with DAC are completed, or the funding term for DAC ends March 31st, 2026 as indicated in their signed agreement. If a Trainee member graduates from their position at their current academic institution and does not remain in academia, their membership with DAC is terminated. If the Trainee member secures an independent research position at an academic institution, their membership can be reclassified to Researcher member, with a letter of attestation about continued interest. Reclassifications are approved by the POR Program Committee and decisions are communication to the Steering Council.

What is the value of Trainee membership?

- Networking with researchers, patient partners and trainees with common interest in patient-oriented research in diabetes
- Invitations for trainee events, funding opportunities and research opportunities
- Listing on the DAC Website
- Network member communications and newsletters
- Use of the title *Trainee in Diabetes Action Canada* for the term of their appointment.

Patient Partner Engagement

DAC aspires to engage Patient Partners meaningfully in all of its activities. At the outset of identifying research questions, planning projects and as ongoing projects evolve, it is expected that our research teams will include Patient Partners throughout these activities, with the assistance of our Patient

Engagement Theme leaders and staff, as necessary. Since our research projects and Network activities must all address health or health-related challenges articulated by Patient Partners, the first phase of every project should begin with Patient Partner articulation of the health challenges they experience and the research questions that arise based on these needs. Patient Partners should be part of the ongoing advisory and monitoring process as well as the reporting of outcomes. The DAC Steering Council Standing Committees on Patient Engagement and EDI will assume the role of monitoring and evaluating the success of Patient Engagement in all DAC activities and will report quarterly to the Steering Council. Guided by the Collective Patient and Indigenous Circles, the Steering Council will provide oversight and guidance about how to continually improve Patient Engagement.

Patient-Oriented Research Training Required

To assure knowledge and understanding of meaningful patient engagement, all members of DAC are required to complete a patient-oriented research workshop training program that is provided either by DAC or another element of the SPOR program. The DAC Administrative Team will assist in the arrangements for the training and track the completion.