

Acknowledgment & Authorship Requirements for Researchers

A guide for researchers, trainees, and collaborators engaging with Diabetes Action Canada (DAC)

Why We Ask for Acknowledgment

Much of what Patient Partners bring to research never appears in the published paper. They sharpen a research question, catch an assumption a clinical team would miss, and help turn results into something communities can use. This is knowledge mobilization, and it is easy to overlook: it happens in meetings, co-design sessions, and manuscript reviews, and rarely leaves a trace in the final study.

Diabetes Action Canada is a CIHR-funded Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) Network. We ask for acknowledgment so this work gets counted instead of lost. Crediting DAC and our Patient Partners lets us:

- evaluate the impact of patient-oriented research and the difference Patient Partners make to research
- report to CIHR and our partners on how patient engagement shapes research into better outcomes that are more relevant to the community
- learn what works, so we can strengthen and evolve our approach to patient-oriented research and build capacity in this area of research
- demonstrate the difference patient-oriented research makes to research quality and uptake

When it goes uncredited, Patient Partners' contribution disappears from the record, and so does the evidence that patient-oriented research delivers.

What Requires Acknowledgment

If DAC supported your research in any of the ways below, an acknowledgment of this work is requested. The type of acknowledgement depends on the role played by the DAC team and the type of resources provided.

1. Patient Partners Recruited Through DAC

If you recruited Patient Partners through DAC:

- Each Patient Partner recruited through DAC must list DAC as their affiliation on all credited materials
- You must acknowledge DAC in any research materials that include DAC Patient Partners, including abstracts, posters, presentations, and publications
- You must tag DAC in any related social media posts (LinkedIn, Instagram, X, and other platforms)

2. Substantive support

When our involvement goes past recruitment and into study design, methods, knowledge mobilization & patient engagement plans, or interpreting findings, we require additional acknowledgment or co-authorship. We determine the level with you based on the actual contribution and any additional authorship requirements set by the journal.

3. DAC-facilitated engagement

When DAC facilitates or leads a research activity, such as a patient advisory committee meeting, a focus group, or a co-design session, we ask that DAC be listed as a co-author, along with the Patient Partners who took part.

Acknowledgment vs. Co-Authorship

Acknowledgment credits DAC for support that helped the work happen, such as funding or recruiting Patient Partners. It usually goes in an acknowledgments section, a methods section, or an affiliation line.

Co-authorship applies when DAC staff or Patient Partners helped shape the intellectual content of the work. That includes leading or facilitating a session that generates the research, such as a co-design session or focus group, as well as shaping the research question or guiding the methods. It carries the usual expectations of authorship, including a say in the manuscript and a chance to review it before submission.

This will be decided at the start of a collaboration, before there is a draft. Raising authorship at submission puts everyone in a hard spot. If you plan to work with DAC or DAC Patient Partners, we will agree on acknowledgment and authorship in writing before the work begins.

Acknowledgement Example: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12913-023-09329-3>

Co-authorship Example: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40755960/>

Naming Individual Patient Partners vs. DAC

Some Patient Partners make an identifiable, sustained contribution, such as co-designing a session or reviewing and reworking a manuscript. Name those partners individually, with their consent, either as co-authors or in a named acknowledgment.

Other contributions come from the collective input of a Circle or advisory group rather than any one person. In those cases, credit DAC or the Circle instead of listing everyone by name.

If you are not sure which applies, ask us before you finalize the author list.

Example: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37104030/>

Formalizing the Agreement

For projects where DAC does more than fill a single recruitment request, such as ongoing collaborations, facilitated sessions, or multi-phase studies, we ask for a short written agreement at the outset, signed by the lead investigator. That way, the commitments made early still hold once the paper is ready. Contact us before your project begins, and we will send a template.