

Better Research Through Patient Collaboration

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Purpose

To understand how patient partners have contributed to BioCanRx-funded research in preclinical and early phase clinical trials (translational research). We want to understand what patient partnerships in translational research looks like.

Methods

BioCanRx reviewed all funded projects (applications, interim reports and final reports) since 2015. We looked for all information related to patients as partners in research including: number of projects that included patients, how patients were designed into the project, and how patients contributed to projects based on descriptions provided in the reports.

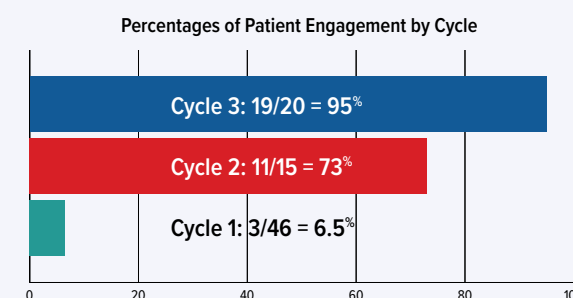
BioCanRx is a network of scientists, clinicians, non-governmental organizations, and industrial partners working together to accelerate the development of innovative cancer biotherapeutics to the clinic. We focus on cancer immunotherapies including oncolytic viruses and vaccines (i.e., mRNA vaccines), cell therapies (CAR T, TILs), and therapeutic antibodies.

VISION: to cure and enhance the quality of life of those living with cancer.

MISSION: to accelerate to the clinic the most promising cancer biotherapeutics designed to save lives and enable a better quality of life.

Results

Patient partners in research increased from 7% of projects in Cycle 1 (2015-2019) to 73% in Cycle 2 (2020-2024), and currently 95% of research funded by BioCanRx includes patients as partners in research. The Learning Institute started in 2017 and has supported patient partnership in research ever since.



Ways Patients Have Partnered in Research

Learning from and with research teams:

- Attending & participating in research team meetings
- Learning about research, biomanufacturing, and cell therapies
- Providing expert advice and insights to research teams:
 - Sharing about living with cancer, including treatments
 - Reviewing research materials, i.e., informed consent, patient-facing materials
 - Writing letters of support (i.e. Research Ethics Board)
 - Recommending ways to reduce or remove barriers to patient participation
 - Explaining patient preferences and needs to inform methods and resources
 - Identifying & explaining patient-driven clinically-relevant endpoints

Co-developing with research teams:

- Research questions, including trial inclusion/exclusion criteria
- Research information materials for trial participants, including informed consent
- Knowledge mobilization strategies and materials
- (Co-)Presenting of research findings
- Leading as members of research teams:
 - Evaluating ongoing research and providing continuous advice
 - Creating lay summaries
 - Advising as a member of the research oversight committee
 - Recruiting patients for studies, as partners in research and trial participants
 - Providing peer support to clinical trial participants

We Learned That

- Patient partners improve researchers, research teams, and research
- Patients are most valuable for research focused on:
 - Short-term, early-stage, proof-of-concept studies for biotherapeutic development, assessment and validation
 - Bridging laboratory and clinical testing, such as toxicology
 - Phase I/II clinical trials for new immunotherapies
 - Solutioning to address social, legal, ethical, economic, and health systems barriers for cancer immunotherapies
- Projects focused on refining biomanufacturing processes do not yet have a clear role for patient partners.
- The Learning Institute provides bidirectional learning opportunities to support meaningful patient partnerships in research that has improved BioCanRx-funded research over time.

411 Patients treated through our funded research

Future Directions:

BioCanRx is open to learning from people with lived experience about how they would like to participate in translational research.



Contact Anu Shukla-Jones for more information
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Patients and researchers need more opportunities to connect

