



Patient Panel Volunteer Program

Information Document for Patients and Families

We are inviting you to be on a patient panel for a medical student who is training at our hospital.

What is a patient panel?

A patient panel is a volunteer program that matches students with patients just like you. If you agree to participate, you will be matched with a 3rd year medical student from the University of Toronto for up to 1 year. You will share your experiences and help the student learn what it is like to be a patient.

What will I be asked to do?

If you volunteer to be on a patient panel, your medical student may ask you to:

- Share information about your health and your medical journey
- Share any questions you may have about your health
- Discuss any challenges you might be facing with your health or the healthcare system
- Talk about how your health has affected your day to day life

The student may also ask to join you at some of your medical appointments, and the student will ask to book phone calls or virtual visits to check in on how you are doing.

How will I be helping a medical student?

By sharing your experiences, questions, and concerns with your medical student, you will help them:

- Treat patients as people, not just their health conditions
- Listen carefully to their patients and ask good questions
- Understand how important patients' personal experiences and perspectives are to their health care
- Find out what community resources can be helpful for patients like you

What are the benefits of being on a patient panel?

Your medical student may be helpful to you in a number of ways. They may be able to:

- Help explain your test results and medical procedures
- Talk to you about upcoming medical appointments, important questions and challenges you may be facing
- Help you find information and resources that may be useful to you
- Help you explore your options and choices
- Help you understand and find your way through the healthcare system

Is there anything the medical student cannot do?

Your medical student is a doctor-in-training. They are not a doctor. This means they **cannot** do these things for patients on their panel:

- Write a prescription for medicines or other health devices
- Order any tests
- Diagnose or treat any of your health challenges
- Give you any medical advice without first talking to their supervisor, who is a doctor teaching at the University of Toronto

Your regular doctor and health care team will continue to help you manage your health while you are on the patient panel. If you have an emergency, call your doctor, call 911 or go to your nearest Emergency Department.

How will you protect me if I participate?

The medical student on your panel will follow strict policies and procedures to protect your personal health information. When they take notes, they will not include your name or any other personal information that could be used to identify you.

Your medical student are can only share general information and resources. They will not give you any direct medical advice. If they say something that is confusing or does not feel right, talk with your doctor.

Will any information I share be used for research?

In the future, we may collect some information for research, to evaluate the success of the patient panel program. Your identity will be protected. We will not reveal any information related to you or your medical care.

Will it affect my health care if I choose not to participate?

No. Your medical care will not be affected in any way.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can decide to leave the program at any time. If you wish to leave, just tell your medical student or their supervising doctor. You do not have to give any reason for leaving.

What happens after the patient panel program ends?

The program will end on August 31, 2022. After that date, you will no longer see your medical student. You will continue to meet with your doctor and use health care services as you do now.

If you choose to participate in the patient panel program, you will help us teach our medical students how important it is to understand patients' experiences and perspectives. Seeing patients as people first will help them become great doctors.

If you have any questions about the patient panel program, please contact your doctor.

If you need to contact your student to change your phone or virtual visit time, or to let them know about a major change in your health, such as a surgery or hospitalization, please call hospital locating at either 416-586-4800, extension 5133, or 416-340-4800, extension 3155, and ask to have your student paged.

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