

UPLEARN UPDATE

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HIGHLIGHTS

- **Enhancing Patient Engagement in Research**

This past June, nine UPLEARN patient partners shared their experience with the UPLEARN Council, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement in engagement. Their feedback, with the instrumental support of Dana Arafeh (DFCM's Patient and Family Engagement Specialist), led to the creation of a patient engagement improvement plan. In September, UPLEARN hosted its first Patient Partner Debrief Meeting, providing a great opportunity to further explore patients' perspectives on several key areas, including the improvement plan and the UPLEARN Council's Terms of Reference, amplifying patient voices and integrating their insights into strengthening our engagement strategies.

Key enhancements now underway include:

- Onboarding and orientation: clearer communication of roles and expectations.
- Feedback channels: multiple channels to share input and ideas.
- Accessible documentation: creation of shared online folder and acronym list.
- Meeting best practices: dedicated time for patient input, using anchor questions and/or polls to guide discussions, and requesting researchers who are presenting projects to address patient engagement-related questions and share plain-language project summaries in advance.

These enhancements aim to foster more meaningful, inclusive, and impactful patient involvement in research.

Special thanks to Dana Arafeh for her indispensable support and guidance throughout this process.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Launch of Ideas to Proposal (I2P) 2026 Course**

We are pleased to share that the *Ideas to Proposal (I2P)* Course will be launching again from **January 19 to March 23, 2026**. Designed for early-stage investigators, this hybrid course equips participants with the knowledge and tools to transform a primary care research idea into a focused research question and develop it into a competitive proposal. In addition to skill-building, participants will benefit from mentorship, and networking opportunities. Preparation is currently underway, and registration will open soon. Stay tuned for more updates!

- **New Academic Positions at Oak Valley Health (OVH)**

We are sharing the exciting news about the recruitment for three new academic positions at OVH: two Research Chairs and one Research Scientist. These roles are designed to strengthen OVH's research capacity, foster mentorship, and advance practice-based research that addresses the health needs of our communities.

The Research Chairs will be held by experienced investigators with a strong track record in healthcare research, mentorship, and leadership. The Research Scientist will be an experienced methodologist with expertise in implementation science, knowledge translation, or quality improvement, and will play a key role in promoting a culture of inquiry and building strength in practice-based research. All positions are three-year terms.

Applications will be accepted until the roles are filled. For full job postings, please visit: [Research Chairs](#) and [Research Scientist](#). Interested and qualified candidates are encouraged to submit an expression of interest and current CV to Trevor Whyte, Manager, Medical Administration, at trwhyte@oakvalleyhealth.ca.

- **Call for Applications: 2026 TUTOR-PHC Training Program**

Transdisciplinary Understanding and Training on Research – Primary Health Care (TUTOR-PHC) is a pan-Canadian interdisciplinary research capacity-building program that provides mentorship, networking and interdisciplinary team experience to help primary care clinicians, researchers, decision-makers, and learners strengthen their research knowledge and enhance interdisciplinary collaboration, evidence-based decision-making, and leadership skills. This one-year certificate program includes a 4-day in-person symposium and online workshops and forum discussions, with a fee of C\$3,000 (plus applicable taxes). Applications for the 2026 cohort are now open, with a deadline of **December 12, 2025**.

For full details and how to apply, visit https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/tutorphc/application_information.html.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Have a project or proposal you would like to submit for UPLEARN support and partnership? Please complete the [UPLEARN intake form](#) to get started.

- Questions about UPLEARN or how to get involved? Please contact Jamie Wang, Research Project Coordinator at jamie.wang@utoronto.ca.

UPLEARN Team

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Learn more about UPLEARN, visit our [website](#).

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