

Oct. 31, 2016

Newsletter Survey – We want to hear from you!

We would like to hear what you think about our newsletter and how we can make it better. Please take this [two minute](#) survey and be entered into a draw to win a prize. The survey closes on November 30, 2016.

Bringing a patient voice to AbSPORU

[Gail McKean](#), a parent who has spent many years interacting with Alberta's health system as an advocate for her child's health is now lending her voice, experience and knowledge as the Patient Lead for the Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit Patient Engagement Platform.



Gail MacKean

Gail, who has a PhD from the University of Calgary in health research focusing on family-centered care, has worked with patient groups and on patient advisory committees, is now helping the Patient Engagement Platform develop programs and services to increase engagement between researchers and patients. "I'm working closely with platform lead Dr. Virginia Vandall-Walker, and the rest of our team to support researchers and patients working together on a variety of research projects. We are also reaching out to embed patients within our platform's advisory council and working groups so they can be a part of the development of our programs and services," says McKean.

The [Patient Engagement Platform](#) offers a variety of services to researchers who are interested in engaging with patients including education, project support and mentorship. The platform also recently launched a [patient/public registry](#) to facilitate links between researchers and patients. Researchers wishing to access Gail's expertise can [apply for services](#) through the Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit.

AbSPORU takes part in National SPOR SUMMIT



The Alberta team for SPOR National Summit

From October 25-27 the Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit was pleased to attend the National SPOR SUMMIT in Ottawa and showcase AbPORU activities through a poster presentation.

Representatives from the AbSPORU secretariat, management committee and patient groups attended as part of the Alberta delegation.

The Summit brings together SPOR stakeholders, including patients, federal/provincial/territorial ministries, partners, researchers and clinicians to explore and share their experience and knowledge promoting patient-oriented research, create synergy and facilitate greater collaboration/co-learning among SPOR stakeholders, showcase the successes and explore challenges and opportunities faced during the implementation of SPOR and provide an opportunity to learn from experts on subjects such as patient engagement, capacity development, and knowledge translation.

Midterm evaluation of AbSPORU now online

The Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit engaged Goss Gilroy Inc. to undertake a midterm evaluation of AbSPORU from December 2015 – April 2016 as required by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions.

The evaluation showed that AbSPORU is increasing the quantity and quality of patient-oriented research in Alberta by making it easier for researchers to access health-related data, methods support, and training opportunities in patient-oriented research and giving patients a voice in research.

The Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit is using information and recommendations from the mid-term evaluation to enhance operations, services and programs for researchers. You can read the report's [executive summary](#) and the [Management Action Response to the mid-term evaluation](#) to learn more.

CIHR releases final report of 2016 evaluation of SPOR

On September 21, 2016, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research released the Final Report of the 2016 Evaluation of the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR). KPMG independently assessed CIHR's contributions to SPOR from 2010 to 2016 with regard to program relevance, design and delivery, and performance.

The report strongly endorses the SPOR model and praises its remarkable progress. It infers that through SPOR, CIHR and its partners have united provinces and territories in a shared commitment of accelerating research evidence into care; consolidating and expanding use of data for decision-making; and, sharing best practices to allow their scale-up across Canada.