

PATIENT CENTRICITY: WHY IT MATTERS

Findings from diverse respondents across health care

ABOUT

Patient centricity is a cornerstone of modern health care, yet its definition varies across respondents. In 2024, the cancer collaborative and Unum Co. conducted a survey to explore these differences and assess alignment across the health care ecosystem. While most respondents agreed on its importance, many expressed doubts about whether patient-centric principles are truly reflected in current systems.

This report offers a high-level overview of the key findings, summarizing insights from the survey. **A more detailed paper will be published following the next steps of this initiative to further elaborate on these findings and propose actionable strategies for fostering patient centricity across the health care landscape.**

WHO RESPONDED?

Our survey captured diverse perspectives from across the health care ecosystem, including:

- Persons with lived experiences
- Caregivers
- Patient and advocacy groups
- Health care professionals
- Non-government organizations
- Life sciences and pharmaceutical representatives

CANADA AND BEYOND

Our respondents represented voices from across Canada, including Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, and Yukon, along with a few international participants.

PERSPECTIVES ON PATIENT CENTRICITY

Patient centricity is widely valued, but differing definitions often hinder its implementation. Respondents' unique roles, priorities, and experiences shape their perspectives, leading to misaligned expectations.

Here's an overview of key perspectives by group:

Persons with lived experiences and caregivers



- Define patient centricity as being heard, respected, and involved in care decisions
- Value transparent communication and individualized care plans
- Advocate for recognition of lived experiences in shaping health care

Patient and advocacy groups



- Define patient centricity as empowering patients to play active roles in health care decisions
- Stress the importance of transparency, inclusivity, and amplifying patient voices
- Emphasize fostering trust and creating systems responsive to individual and community needs

Health care professionals



- Emphasize shared decision-making and holistic care
- Align care decisions with patients' personal goals and values
- Extend patient care beyond medical needs to include emotional and psychosocial support

Non-government organizations



- Frame patient centricity as ensuring equity and inclusivity in health care systems
- Focus on addressing health care access disparities and representing vulnerable populations
- Advocate for integrating patient voices into programs and policies

Life sciences and pharmaceutical representatives



- Patient centricity involves integrating patient insights throughout the product lifecycle
- Focus on creating treatments that address real-world needs while balancing scalability
- Building trust through meaningful engagement is a priority

KEY DIFFERENCES IN DEFINING PATIENT CENTRICITY

Although respondents across the health care ecosystem recognize the importance of patient centricity, their interpretations are often shaped by their unique roles and priorities.

These differing perspectives can lead to gaps in implementation, particularly in the following areas:

Systemic vs. individual focus:

Industry and NGOs emphasize systemic integration of patient needs, while patients and caregivers focus on personal, emotional, and situational aspects.

Implementation challenges:

Industry respondents stress feasibility within public health systems, whereas patients and caregivers often highlight unmet emotional and practical needs.

HOW PATIENTS WANT TO BE ENGAGED

Engaging persons with lived experiences and caregivers meaningfully is at the heart of patient centricity, yet current practices often fall short of expectations. The survey responses reveal a strong desire among persons with lived experiences and caregivers for engagement methods that go beyond traditional approaches, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and meaningful interactions. Methods that allow for ongoing collaboration and create opportunities for fostering stronger connections between persons with lived experiences, caregivers, and decision makers.



BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing patient centricity is complex, requiring systemic and cultural shifts to address key challenges. Respondents identified several barriers to implementation, including:

- Misunderstanding or confusion about what patient centricity means
- Resistance to change
- Resource constraints
- Belief that patient centricity does not apply to them or their organization
- Lack of training and education
- Policy constraints

WHY IT MATTERS

The survey responses offer valuable actionable insights that can guide efforts to advance patient centricity, providing a foundation for targeted recommendations that can help respondents align their practices, enhance understanding, and overcome obstacles.

Based on the survey responses, the following issues need to be addressed:

- 1 Alignment of definitions and expectations of patient centricity across respondents.
- 2 Understanding of how patient centricity can be applied across different respondents and organizations within health care.
- 3 Creation of training and educational materials and resources to equip respondents with the knowledge and skills to effectively apply patient centricity.

**“IT MAY SEEM LIKE JUST A DEFINITION,
BUT WORDS MATTER. THIS MATTERS.”**

WHAT NOW?

Achieving true patient centricity requires collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to prioritizing patients in health care. DISRUPT will begin with a consensus meeting of key respondents across Canada to align on a clear definition, explore practical applications, and co-create tools for patient-centric practices. The workshop will be held on March 20, 2025, online. Sign-up at patientcentricity.ca/registration.

By engaging respondents and incorporating diverse perspectives, we aim to drive systemic change and ensure that patient needs are prioritized at all levels. To partner in advancing this work, connect with us to help reshape the future of health care in Canada.

**REGISTER FOR THE DISRUPT CONSENSUS MEETING AT
[PATIENTCENTRICITY.CA/REGISTRATION](https://patientcentricity.ca/registration)**

