Abstract Title: Partnering with Patient Advocates to Enhance Research

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Increasingly, funders of cancer grants now require the research team to include a patient/survivor or patient advocate on the research team. The intent is for this person to be involved in all aspects of the research project, from concept development through post-study communications. Incorporating the patient voice in cancer research has the potential to help research progress faster and further. After a project is concluded, patients and advocates can also help smooth the transition of basic scientific discoveries into clinical practice.

Thanks to newer lung cancer treatments such as targeted therapies, an increasing number of people who have or had lung cancer are living long enough to become active advocates and take an interest in the research process. Some of them have become patient research advocates (PRAs) who partner with investigators to help define research questions, provide perspective on the impact of the study topic on patients, and offer suggestions for refining trial design and protocols to facilitate enrollment. These patients, some of whom are experts in their own disease, offer valuable insights into the patient experience.

This presentation will focus on ways to encourage patients to learn about the research process, incorporate patient research advocates into research teams, and gather patient perspectives as part of the research process.