

PiPER Newsletter

June 2026

We're back, and the engagement of people with lived experience (PLEX) in research at UHN continues to be a priority. We're excited to share a collection of updates, announcements, and upcoming opportunities!

2026 so far...

PLEX Network Working Group

 **February-March 2026**

A PLEX Working Group, supported by PiPER, was formed in February and March 2026. The Working Group is driving the development of a **PLEX Network** - a community created for and by PLEX at UHN and beyond. To stay up to date on the PLEX Network activities and ways to become involved, become a [PiPER member](#).

PiPER team presents at Northwest SPOR Collaborative Forum (Edmonton, Alberta)

 **May 12-13, 2026**

The PiPER team presented well-attended talks at this year's forum on the following topics:

- Mat Wiest: How compensating PLEX to work as partners builds better research (watch the recording [here](#))
- Lindsie Blencowe: Lessons learned from building the [UHN Research Explained](#) website and the value of plain language summaries (watch the recording [here](#))

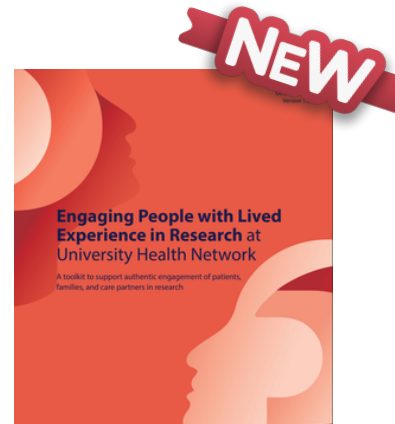
The event was a valuable opportunity to learn from and build relationships with teams engaging PLEX across the country.



PiPER Toolkit Refresh

 **Ongoing**

PiPER has been working with a Steering Committee and Working Group to improve the accessibility of the PiPER Toolkit. Stay informed about Toolkit updates by visiting the [PiPER website](#).



UHN Clinical Research Week

 **May 19-22, 2026**

A special week dedicated to clinical research, which is the testing of new treatments, medications, medical devices, or ways of delivering care in real people (not just in labs).

Throughout the week, PiPER connected with scientists, research staff, and PLEX at booths and events across the research institutes at UHN. Check out the [PiPER SharePoint](#) (internal connection required) for information on involving PLEX as partners in clinical research.



Watch the PiPER team's presentation about PiPER initiatives that support PLEX engagement in clinical research [here](#)!

PiPER Newsletter

June 2026



Events & Opportunities

💰 2026 PiPER Grants: Call for Proposals

PiPER Grants support engagement of PLEX as partners in the planning, doing, and sharing of research at UHN. UHN research teams and their PLEX partners are invited to apply.

Deadlines to apply:

Partnership Grants (\$1,500 CAD): June 26

Innovation Grants (\$10,000 CAD): July 17

Click [here](#) for more information (internal connection required).



Women's College Hospital Panel:

United With Pride: Supporting and Affirming Queer and Trans People in Healthcare

June 22 from 12 - 1 PM (EST).

Register [here](#).



McMaster Family Engagement in Research Course: 2026/2027 Cohorts

Applications are now open and close July 17!

Learn more [here](#), and apply [here](#).



The UHN PiPER Community of Practice

Robby Spring and Mathew Platt from Creative Destruction Lab will be sharing their experiences with PLEX engagement and early stage cancer innovation.

Tune in on **July 29 from 12 - 1 PM (EST).**

Zoom link [here](#).

Summer/Fall 2026 Calendar

June 25

PiPER Workshop: Convert a Scientific Abstract into an Infographic using BioRender™

12 - 1 PM, Register [here](#)

PiPER Workshops are open to all learners within UHN (research staff, trainees, etc.)

June 26

PiPER Partnership Grant applications due

July 17

PiPER Innovation Grant applications due

September 23

OSSU Research Day



MaRS Discovery District, Toronto & Virtual



Free to attend; register [here](#)

Save the date: October 8

PLEX Network Meeting

More details to follow. Reach out to piper@uhn.ca for the meeting invitation.

A Snippet of Wisdom

Robyn Vettese, PLEX Partner from the May PiPER Community of Practice, shared this insight:

“When discussing focus groups with the Patient Advisory Council, it was clear that one of the most impactful aspects was *observing* conversations rather than *participating* in them. We were hearing others openly discuss experiences that deeply resonated with our own, which was validating.”

Watch the recording of the May Community of Practice, “Partnering for Polyendocrine Metabolic Syndrome Research: Insights from the PMOS Patient Advisory Council” by clicking [here](#).



To learn about all of PiPER's socials, opportunities, and events, check out: <https://linktr.ee/uhnpiper>



Find prior newsletters [here](#).