



Position Available: Research Assistant in Patient-engaged Research

Dr. Brett Thombs of McGill University and the Scleroderma Patient-Centred Intervention Network (SPIN; www.spinsclero.com) are seeking a full-time in-person or remote Research Assistant with our team at the Lady Davis Institute of the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal.

Scleroderma is a rare chronic autoimmune connective tissue disease characterized by abnormal fibrotic processes and excessive collagen production, which leads to substantial damage to the skin, blood vessels, muscles, and internal organs. Common problems faced by people with scleroderma include limitations in hand function and mobility, pain, fatigue, itch, mental health challenges, and body image distress from disfiguring aspects of the disease.

SPIN is a true patient-researcher partnership. People with scleroderma are involved in SPIN as leaders, collaborators, and consultants. Ten SPIN Steering Committee members who are people with scleroderma have oversight and decision-making roles, over 30 people with scleroderma contribute to project-specific Advisory Teams, and others help identify needs and priorities via focus groups and surveys.

SPIN that we are doing to learn more about problems faced by people with scleroderma and to test interventions centers around the SPIN Cohort, which includes over 1,400 active participants from 7 countries. SPIN has numerous ongoing studies. Examples of ongoing projects include (1) a CIHR-funded series of randomised controlled trials to determine the best way to communicate research results to study participants and others with lived experience; (2) CIHR-funded epidemiological research on the trajectory of patient-reported outcomes across the scleroderma disease course. We are also developing projects that will (1) conduct comparative trial research to evaluate the best ways to engage people with lived experience as research partners; (2) evaluate the association between emotional stress and disease symptom flares; and (3) finalise development and test a program to help people with scleroderma cope with body image distress due to disfiguring aspects of the disease.

SPIN is an active organization with a large collaborative network. There are many other studies that are ongoing and use methods that include qualitative research, epidemiological research, and clinical trials.

The tasks of the Research Assistant include:

- Support diverse SPIN projects, including randomized controlled trials on research dissemination tools
- Contribute to the preparation and review of ethics applications and grant submissions

- Assist in developing manuscripts focused on research dissemination, mental health, and other patient-centered outcomes
- Collaborate with patient partners to ensure research activities and materials reflect patient priorities and perspectives
- Support the co-development of patient-facing resources (e.g., plain-language summaries, tools, and communications)
- Participate in meetings with patient advisors and contribute to discussions on study design and dissemination
- Support dissemination activities, including newsletters, social media content, and other outreach efforts
- Maintain and update website content including adding new pages, editing existing content, and ensuring accuracy of information
- Connect with research participants through phone outreach
- Respond to participant inquiries (voicemail and email) and provide timely, solution-oriented support
- Monitor and document participant progress using an online tracking system

The candidate must meet the following qualifications:

- Degree in epidemiology, public health, health sciences, psychology or related field with strong academic record
- Good interpersonal skills and strong capacity for teamwork
- Excellent organizational, communication, and time-management skills
- Initiative and flexibility
- Able to work in English and French would be ideal

*A **two-year commitment** is strongly preferred as it supports continuity for the team and allows the successful candidate the opportunity to gain meaningful experience to support career development.

Salary: To be determined based on institutional guidelines and candidate experience.

Start date: September 2026

To apply: Applicants should send (1) a cover letter explaining their interest in the position, (2) a curriculum vitae, (3) an unofficial transcript, and (4) an English writing sample and, if possible, an additional writing sample in French, to Marie-Eve Carrier at carrier.marie.eve@gmail.com. Applications will be reviewed until the position is filled.