

Overall Comment on Providing Incentives for Participation in Caregivers Research.

The research in this package is user experience research, designed for fast turn-around recruitment to inform critical Agency product development decisions. Providing incentives for participation in social research is common and increasingly used to improve overall response rates and reduce non-response bias (e.g., Massey & Tourangeau, 2013; Singer & Ye, 2013), even in academic and government-sponsored social research. In the user experience research arena, providing participant incentives is a well-established and accepted standard practice across industries, including healthcare.

Appropriate incentives are essential in successfully completing these user experience research studies. In our experience, to achieve a representative sample of required participants in a timely and cost-effective manner, projects must provide incentives at levels that attract, retain, and adequately compensate respondents for their time and effort to achieve a representative sample of required participants in a timely and cost-effective manner. This is especially true of populations that are hard to reach or engage. Using incentives to bolster participation applies to both survey and qualitative research. Incentives improve the quality and efficiency of research in several ways, including reducing non-response bias, improving involvement by those in hard-to-reach groups, and increasing the recruitment efficiency and cost-effectiveness of research (e.g., David & Ware, 2014; Singer & Ye, 2013; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015).

Such practices have been incorporated by other federal government departments that also recognize the importance of incentives to recruit diverse target populations—for example, the [18F human-centered tools collection](#) and the [Technology Transformation Service Handbook](#). [18F](#) also notes that incentives are crucial to getting a representative set of participants. [TTS](#) underscores that compensating participants involves those who would otherwise struggle to volunteer their time.

Many user experience research firms recognize this need and have developed participant panels that can provide a sampling source for thematically and methodologically diverse studies. In contrast to ad hoc recruitment, such panels can significantly reduce the costs of locating appropriate respondents and ensure their immediate availability. Appropriate incentives play a vital role in these efforts.

Market rates typically establish these incentive levels for specific audiences in specific locations and generally are outside the control of the Agency or its primary contract agent. In developing our mini-Supporting Statements, we estimated incentive levels of \$100/session, the amount that was fiscally responsible, given the goals of our proposed study and our understanding of market conditions.

Simply put, since the goal of the recruitment part of this research effort is to ensure we have as close to a representative sample of Caregivers' as possible, this incentive helps

us achieve that goal. It also helps us build trust with Caregivers and Medicare enrollees that CMS and the federal government value their time and input.

References

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