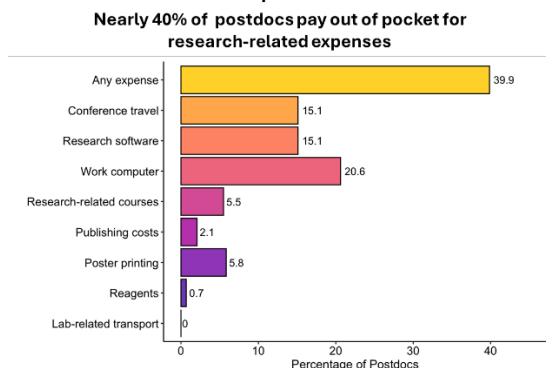


A call for immediate action prior to the establishment of a BWH Postdoc Office

July 26, 2024: PLC Advocacy Meeting with Allison Moriarty

1. Poor resource availability for postdocs at BWH:

- >40% postdocs are stressed about financial situation – nearly 40% pay out of pocket for research-related expenses
- Results from Q28: Have you had to pay out-of-pocket (e.g., from your bank account) for research-related expenses at BWH and not receive reimbursement? Select all that apply.



- **Personal stories:**

Story 1: postdocs pay for Adobe Illustrator to prepare figures for publication (or quickly try to work on figures at the last minute so they could use the one-month free trial) – common practice from Lab X (a big lab).

Story 2: MGB Research Computing cost for **Biorender** is higher than online license. High Partner's IDC (\$81.40) and Licenses renew every year on May 1.

(invoice from BWH, 2023)

(invoice from Biorender, 2023)

MGB Research Computing Core ATTN: Research Cores Specialist Email: rcc@partners.org Mass General Brigham 399 Revolution Drive, Suite 750 Somerville, MA 02145 Invoice #: 51170523 Invoice Date: 2023/05/31							
Service	Date	User	Description	Fund Number	Units	Rate/Unit	Total
Biorender 25947	2023/05/09		Biorender		1.00	\$185	\$185
					Subtotal	1.00	\$185.00
					Direct Cost:		\$185.00
					Partner's IDC:		\$81.40
					Total:		\$266.40

Description	Qty	Unit price	Amount
Postdoc Plan Annual (Charged in USD) May 23, 2024 – May 23, 2025	1	\$225.00	\$225.00
Sales Tax (6.25%)	1	\$14.06	\$14.06
Subtotal			\$239.06
Total			\$239.06
Amount due			\$239.06 USD

Story 3: A grant budget justification (all software's were free from my previous institute...)

The budget will be requested for a **total of 3 years**, with **\$102,500/year**.
 The budget will cover my **salary at \$60,000/year**.
 I would request **\$15,000/year** dedicated to **fringe benefits** crucial for maintaining a supporting and sustainable work environment, promoting my health and welfare as a candidate at BWH, and enhancing the overall success and impact of this research.

A **total of \$27,500/year** will be requested for non-salary/non-fringe costs. This will include:
1. Materials (\$12,000/year)

(these costs advertised on the MGB computing page did not include Partner's IDC?)

b. **Annual research software** subscriptions through BWH (**\$836**) for essential data analysis software's: **MATLAB** (\$44/year), **Endnote** (\$115/year), **Prism** (\$37/year), **Adobe Illustrator** (\$240), **Biorender** (\$180/year), **FlowJO** (\$220/year).

- Common basic research software identified of urgent need and highlighted: Prism, Endnote, Biorender, Matlab
- **Proposed Solutions:**

Solution 1: BWH-wide email for PI to be responsible for ordering research resources to avoid out-of-pocket costs – this includes clear responsibilities for PIs to cover costs, especially for research-related software, conference travel, publishing costs, and lab materials.

Solution 2: MGB provides more reasonable rates for license purchases, lower IDC costs, and flexible timelines for annual software subscriptions.

Solution 3: Basic infrastructure required for work (computers, monitors)

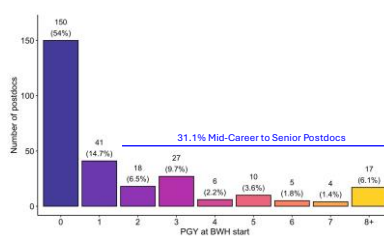
Solution 4: Shared access with MGH resources (e.g. Zoom is not free for BWH)

2. Salary changes mandates

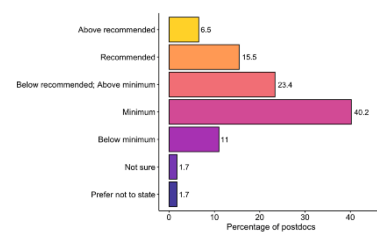
- Updated salary table; 31.1% of postdocs are recruited with 2 to 8+ years of postdoc experience; 78% below recommended salaries

Postgraduate Years of Experience (PGY)	HMS FY '24 7/1/2023 – 6/30/2024	HMS FY '25 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025	BWH FY '25 10/1/2024 -
0	65,000	72,000	70,000
1	66,000	74,000	71,750
2	67,000	76,000	73,544
3	68,000	76,000	75,382
4	70,000	76,000	77,267
5	72,000	76,000	77,267
6	74,000	76,000	77,267
7+	76,000	76,000	77,267

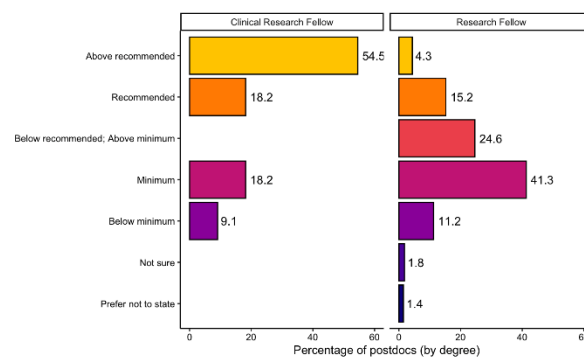
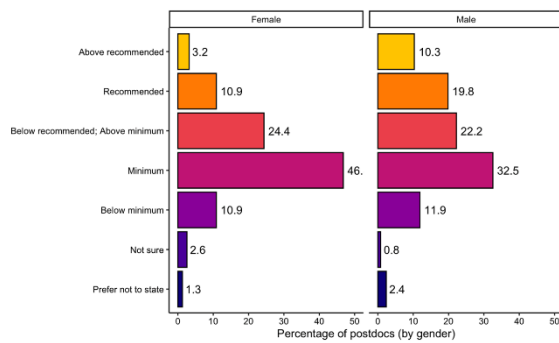
Postdoc-Graduate Year (PGY) at the time of Recruitment / Start at BWH
31.1% postdocs have at least 2 to 8+ years of experience prior to BWH Hire



78% of postdocs are below recommended salary levels



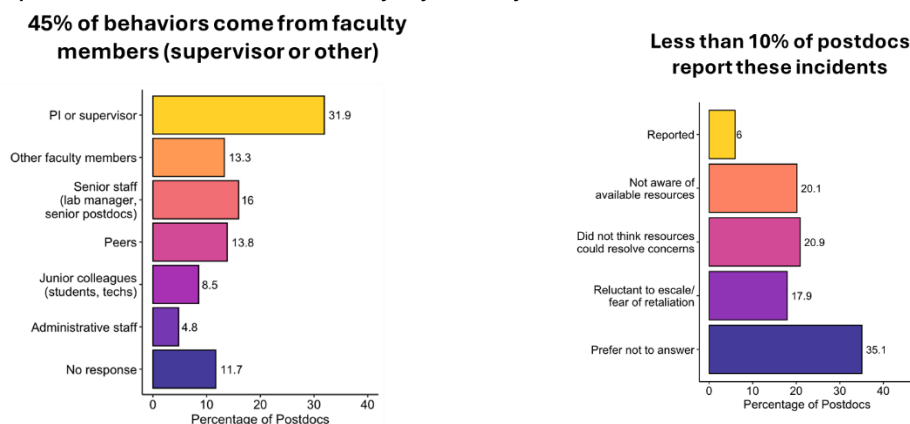
- How is BWH ensuring that this is mandated by October 2024 and that everyone is paid at the RIGHT scale at the time of hire?
- Salary inequality: Gender discrepancies in salary (unique to BWH, not at MGH) and discrepancies between Clinical Fellows vs. Research Fellows (similar to MGH)



- Multiple postdocs have research out with concerns on the October salary mandate:
 - Story 1:** How to make sure this will happen or still questioning if this will be mandated
 - Story 2:** Concerns those with fellowships (and sponsored staff) that cover less than BWH mandated salary. Who will supplement? How can we make sure that these salaries are supplemented by PI? What if PI is unable to supplement?
- Request a copy of salary audits in November 2024 (to ensure ALL salaries are adjusted by October 2024)
- PLC Advocacy will follow up on these questions in the next annual survey

3. To address unprofessional behaviors

- Unprofessional exhibited mostly by faculty but also across BWH



- Proposed Solutions:**

Solution 1: Mentorship programs for PI, postdocs, staff, etc. (e.g. UCSF: <https://learning.ucsf.edu/content/mentorship-programs>)

Solution 2: Secondary Mentorship Program for Postdocs, (e.g. UCSF PROPEL: <https://propel.ucsf.edu/secondary-mentorship-program>).

Solution 3: Mentoring course for PIs and with postdocs but also to all employee at BWH on the consequences of unprofessional work behaviors to employment: e.g. HealthStream courses that should be become **mandated** and provide solutions / resources to Safely report these issues.

4. Poor onboarding services and resources

- Better postdoc-specific onboarding resources: Have the ORC (Office of Research Careers) work on a package that postdocs can access a few months after their onboarding when things are less overwhelming.
- create an onboarding-specific instruction: onboarding booklet / internal jobs for dependents – but a specific onboarding packet may not be feasible – the current method of onboarding is overwhelming – perhaps a quarterly session for postdoc onboarding? - open office concept (but no resources to do so by HR / ORC). Where are resources/solutions? Department basis?

5. Other requests:

- The PLC and Advocacy Committee generally receive overwhelming emails from postdocs about these matters routinely. While we are available to perform these roles voluntarily, it appears that there is no clear “go-to-person”, centralized websites/resources to address these recurring issues and is largely attributed to the lack of a designated BWH Postdoc Office. Hence, we continue to advocate for the establishment of a BWH Postdoc Office in the near future.
- For an immediate solution, we propose that the current program coordinator, Susanah, who is currently providing 40% of the time for postdoc-related matters, allocate 60% of the time for postdoc-related matters.

This report was prepared by the 2023-2024 BWH Advocacy Committee: Kisha N Sivanathan, Lien Nguyen, Samer Salem, Bidisha Mitra, and Kanupriya Kusumakar. Special thanks to Stecia-Marie Fletcher (PLC President) and other PLC members for their contributions and input and Alexandre Lussier (MGH) for the extended survey data analysis.