



## Aishling Deegan (Irish Cancer Society)

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The involvement of empowered and knowledgeable patients and patient advocates in health research and health policy is increasingly vital. The value of having and including the patient voice when designing research or policy is being recognised more widely. By asking patients for their input and opinion, we can help ensure that researchers and policy makers are asking the right questions and addressing the correct needs. The recent Cervical Check crisis is an example of the power of the patient voice and its role in highlighting major problems in the system and influencing and effecting major change.

### **Experience/Areas of Interest:**

- Communications Manager at the Irish Cancer Society
- Graduate of IPPOSI's pilot patient engagement programme in health innovation
- Communications professional with 15 years' experience in health, not-for-profit and patient advocacy areas

### **Patient Involvement and Experience:**

- The Irish Cancer Society is the voice of the cancer patient in Ireland. Communicating the work of the Society is important so cancer patients and their families know we are there when they need us most. But we have another role also – to drive discussion about cancer in Ireland as well as wider health policy, ultimately to help save lives and improve the lives of people with cancer. Having worked for the Irish Cancer Society and from my own personal experience, I have developed a genuine belief that we, as a collective society, have an obligation to enhance the outcomes and experiences of people using our health services and associated treatments. Patient involvement is key to this happening.