

**A study week taking patient advocates from bedside to bench
1st – 5th September 2015
Barts Cancer Institute, Charterhouse Square, London**

[Independent Cancer Patients' Voice](#) (ICPV) is a patient advocate group led by patients for patients. We bring the views and experience of cancer patients, their families and carers to the cancer research community. Our mission statement is that clinical research is improved by patients being partners with clinicians and healthcare professionals, rather than passive recipients of healthcare.

Members of ICPV are actively involved in many areas of research. To facilitate and enhance our role in these activities, members aim to understand the fundamentals of cancer, study design and current areas of controversy and research.

Much of this is gained through experience. However, there also is a tailor-made course, hosted by the National Breast Cancer Coalition in the United States, called Project LEAD. This course provides a week-long intensive training in basic cancer biology, introduction to research terminology and study design, and critical evaluation of research proposals and science papers. Some ICPV members have attended Project LEAD and found it extremely valuable.

ICPV, working with [Barts Cancer Institute](#) has developed a similar course in London for cancer patient advocates from anywhere in the UK, called **VOICE** (Vision Of Information, Confidence and Engagement) Science for patient advocates. This course is unique, the only course of this type in the UK.

About VOICE

This course aims to give participants:

- ***An introduction to basic cancer biology***
This will include sessions on what cancer is, how it is caused, how it develops and how it is detected and treated. Course participants will spend time in the research laboratories to help them to build their understanding.
- ***An understanding of different types of cancers***
This will include sessions on current understanding, new research technologies and the biology of genetic testing and screening. Students will also learn how to read and interpret scientific papers.

We hope that this course will give participants increased confidence to become more effectively involved in cancer research as patient advocates.

The course will be led by researchers [Professor Louise Jones](#), [Dr John Marshall](#), [Dr Richard Grose](#), their colleagues at Barts Cancer Institute.. Each participant will also be offered a personal tutor/mentor who will offer tailored support and answer any queries about the course content.

The course is open to:

- Patient Advocates with a current, active role in cancer research and/or experience for example, as member of local group, CLG, CSG, Trial Management Group – having already attended some courses and wish a further understanding of the science and scientists involved in cancer research.
- People working in cancer research in NHS or Charities, whose interest and skill would be enhanced by learning about the work done by their scientific colleagues.

Anyone who wishes to take part would need to attend all five days of the course.

Costs

Thanks to the generosity of research staff at Barts Cancer Institute, colleagues elsewhere and ICPV fundraising, the course is heavily subsidised. Please enquire for more information

Timetable

Students will need to arrive on **Monday 31st August 2015**. There will be a welcome dinner and introductory lecture. It is expected that students will all stay in the same accommodation close to Barts in London. Each day the course will start at 9am with lectures. Each afternoon will be spent doing experiments in the lab except Saturday when we will finish early afternoon. Each evening will have organised activities including a welcome reception, guided tour of the historic Charterhouse Square area and course dinner.

How will this course be evaluated?

We will hold an informal review at the end of each day. At the end of the final day we will carry out a more detailed review, where participants will be asked to complete an evaluation form giving their views about the course. We will also ask course participants to tell us about any impact the course has had after six months. And we will seek the views of the researchers who shared their experience as part of the course.

More information: For more information please email voice@icpv.org.uk



VOICE 2014 staff and students