

Patients have been involved in national clinical guideline development. Here's what Linda Dillon has to say about her experience.

I have been involved as a Patient Representative since 2001 when my daughter was diagnosed with cancer, aged 3yrs. Whilst I was initially involved with a parents group, which lobbied the government over several years to build a new children's hospital as a priority, this expanded to representing patients on groups concerned with ethics and quality improvement and providing talks to students and health professionals about patient-centeredness. Most recently I have been the Patient representative on the Sepsis Steering Group that developed the National Clinical Guideline on Sepsis Management.

Being a Patient Representative for almost fifteen years now, I know that being in the room at meetings and giving the Patient a face and a voice *really does* make a difference. I have learnt so much about how our health system works and I know that Patient involvement is most important to ensure the health service is truly Patient centred and the best it can be.

In relation to clinical guideline development, if a Patient Representative were to be apprehensive that they may not be able to follow the medical technical language, I can assure them that it was never an issue for me - I would just ask and it would be explained to me.

A Patients experience, good or bad, offers so much to learn from, and can really alter the way things are done, sometimes very simply. A Patient can ask questions that have not been asked for a very long time, and by doing so bring about changes, which again, put the Patient first. I would encourage more Patient involvement at every level of our health system.