

We are pleased to announce this year's speaker at AICUR 2020 is.... Dr Vicky Phelan

In 2011, Vicky Phelan participated in the national cervical screening programme. Her test results were wrongly reported as normal, a fact that was withheld from her, and two years later, she developed cervical cancer. Faced with a diagnosis of this magnitude, Vicky did not withdraw to focus on her own needs. Instead, when she realised that what had happened to her was likely to have happened to others, she took the decision to make her experience public and expose the screening programme and the healthcare system to much-needed examination. Her experience, so articulately communicated, has already been the catalyst for the establishment of a redress scheme to financially compensate women with cervical cancer. Alongside this substantial undertaking, Vicky has concurrently investigated available treatments for her cancer and has participated in clinical trials.

Vicky graduated from UL in 1997 with a Bachelor of Arts in European Studies, she was a research student at the Centre for Applied Language Studies. Vicky taught at UL and worked as a translator for the European Commission. In 2001, Vicky was appointed to the University of Limerick's International Education Division, and in 2004, took up a new position with Waterford Institute of Technology.

As a researcher, Vicky Phelan developed skills that today are most evident: critical thinking and the ability to question, challenge, persuade and lead. These are the skills that, combined with her natural fortitude, have proven to be of utmost value in challenging the healthcare system in Ireland.

