



# WECAN ACADEMY 2025

*There is no shortcut  
to knowledge*



# WECAN

Workgroup of European  
Cancer Patient Advocacy Networks

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## ABOUT THE EVENT

The WECAN Academy 2025 brought together more than 70 passionate cancer patient advocates from across Europe and beyond for a transformative in-person experience in Rome. Participants engaged in one of two tailored tracks:

- **WECAN SmartStart** – for emerging patient advocates
- **WECAN MasterClass** – for experienced leaders in patient advocacy

Aligned with our mission, the Academy equips advocates with **the knowledge, advocacy skills, community network** and empowerment to influence healthcare systems and policy at national and European levels.

With continued support, we can grow this powerful platform, amplifying patient voices, accelerating impact and shaping a more equitable future for cancer care.



25-29th June 2025



Rome



70 Participants



# PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

## Day 1 – Building the Foundations

The Academy opened with a warm welcome from WECAN Chair **Alex Filicevas**, followed by a moving personal story shared by a patient advocate and WECAN Academy alumni in 2023, **Lidia Dyndor** from Poland.

SmartStart participants explored foundational topics, including:

- **Health Economics**
- **Drug Development & Inequities**
- **Healthcare Ecosystems and Stakeholder Management**
- **Ethics in Advocacy**

These sessions laid the groundwork for more in-depth discussions in the following days.

## Day 2 – Evidence-Based Advocacy and Sustainability

Participants delved into reading and interpreting scientific data, understanding evidence-based advocacy, and exploring financial sustainability for patient organisations as well as discussing HTA 4 for patient organisations - equipping them with both strategic and practical tools for their work.

## Day 3 – Research, Governance, and Policy

The day focused on advanced research-related topics:

- **Patient-Centricity in Clinical Trials**
- **NGO Governance**
- **EU Cancer Policy in Action**
- **HTA 4 Patients, part two**
- **Conversation with Industry on Pharmaceutical Policy**
- **AI for Patient Advocacy**

This content deepened participants' understanding of the systemic and regulatory landscape shaping cancer advocacy.



## Day 4 – MasterClass Spotlight

MasterClass participants engaged in advanced discussions on:

- **Patient-Reported Outcomes (PROs)**
- **Advanced Evidence-Based Advocacy**
- **Health Inequities and Systemic Barriers**

The day fostered high-level dialogue and peer learning among seasoned advocates.

### Session Ratings by Attendees

Out of 23 total sessions:

**11 sessions** were rated 4.5 - 4.9 / 5

**7 sessions** received 4.0+ / 5

**4 sessions** received 3.6 - 3.9 / 5

These scores reflect a high level of satisfaction and engagement from participants.



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# SHARING KNOWLEDGE BEYOND THE EVENT

WECAN is committed to expanding access to high quality advocacy training for both emerging and experienced patient advocate leaders.

The WECAN Academy is not just a one-time event; it's a flagship initiative that fuels long-term capacity building across Europe and beyond. By sharing knowledge and resources beyond the Academy, we ensure that the impact reaches far beyond the event strengthening patient advocacy networks, informing policy and improving outcomes for people affected by cancer.

With continued sponsorship, we can scale momentum, empowering more advocates, amplify more voices, and drive systemic change in healthcare.



# ADVOCATES AT THE HEART OF THE EVENT

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This year's Academy featured:

**23** training sessions

**18** expert speakers

These experts shared insights not only as trainers but many of them also as peers, enriching the collaborative spirit of the event.

WECAN Academy 2025 was not just a training opportunity - it was a celebration of community, knowledge, and the shared mission to improve cancer care across borders.





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## QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS

**“There is no shortcut to knowledge”**

Here are just a few reflections from our attendees:



*“It was truly inspiring hearing all the presentations and meeting so many brilliant and passionate people. The experience was incredibly rewarding - both professionally and personally. I’m already looking forward to next year!”*

*“Thank you for the knowledge and for introducing me to such powerful, passionate people. You’re all a gift!”*

*“I learned so much about advocacy and met wonderful people. Thank you for this fantastic experience!”*

*“The quality of the Academy keeps improving every year. I’m thankful for the chance to share my story and learn from others.”*

*“Thank you, WECAN, for the excellent organisation and enriching discussions. I feel privileged to be part of this vibrant community.”*



# FEEDBACK SUMMARY

What participants valued most (based on the results of the feedback forms):

## Content & Agenda:

- Expert speakers who were authentic and professional
- Thoughtfully structured sessions with a well-balanced agenda
- Practical case studies and real-world examples
- Breadth of topics, including EU policy, cross-cancer learnings, and industry perspective
- Opportunities to apply learning to local and global contexts

## Networking & Atmosphere:

- Positive, welcoming, and collaborative environment
- Opportunities for deep connection and exchange of ideas
- Accessible faculty and open discussions after sessions
- Supportive energy and community spirit

## In Summary:

The WECAN Academy delivered more than just **high-quality training**, it fostered **invaluable connections**, empowered advocates, and strengthened a vibrant, cross-border community of changemakers. Its success reinforces WECAN's role as a **leading force in cancer patient advocacy**.

# THANK YOU

We thank our sponsors for making this event possible. Your support is essential as we drive forward in building a more inclusive, informed, and empowered advocacy landscape in cancer care. We look forward to continuing this journey with you.

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