



Employment and IBD

Patient Information Sheet

Most people with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) have a good, satisfying working life, with all the usual benefits that having a job brings.

You are not obliged to tell your employer about your IBD, but if you choose not to declare you have IBD, your employer will not know how (if necessary) to support and accommodate you and your condition.

Simple and inexpensive adjustments can be made within schools, university's or the workplace to make life easier for people with IBD, such as allowing you to sit nearer to a bathroom, having unlimited toilet breaks, providing flexible working hours so that you may visit your doctor, clinician or IBD nurse specialist for treatment. Extra time in the morning can be provided to help cope with 'morning urgency' (a known feature of the disease) and to deal with your symptoms whilst still enabling an appropriate start time.

By making reasonable adjustments, employers can help people with IBD achieve their potential and be productive at work.

You may want to tell your work colleagues about your condition. There can be advantages to informing your work colleagues about a chronic condition such as getting extra support. Helping others to understand your IBD can make a more relaxed working atmosphere, explaining why your employer is making adjustment for you and not just giving you special treatment. Not having to hide your IBD symptoms or taking medication or leave from work.

If you are absent from work because of a disability-related sickness such as IBD, it is important that this is recorded separately from other sickness absences, to make sure that you are not discriminated against in the future.

It is important not to feel pressured into returning to work too soon before you are well. You might want to discuss with your manager a phased return to work, as you may not be able to work a full day at first.

It is important that you are aware of your rights regarding sick leave, pay, pension rights and job security. If you feel you are being discriminated by your employer because of your IBD speak to your human resources / personnel manager or the person in charge of employment for your company. If not resolved then make a written formal complaint, within three months of the discrimination occurring. Your employer should then arrange to meet with you. You can take a friend or colleague to the meeting with you to give you extra support. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome then the next step would

be to contact an employment tribunal or the equality and human rights commission.

For further advice and support you can contact your

1) Local citizen's advice bureau or

2) The Crohn's and Colitis UK

a) Information Line: 0845 130 2233 (Monday - Friday, 10am-1pm)

b) Email: info@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk