



MAKING CHANGE TOGETHER:

Our Impact in 2025

**CROHN'S &
COLITIS UK**



“ FINDING A CHARITY THAT FEELS LIKE YOUR FRIENDSHIP GROUP, YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK AND BIGGEST CHEERLEADER IS WHAT I’VE FOUND IN CROHN’S & COLITIS UK.

The work that goes into supporting people like me, connecting and amplifying patient voices, providing trusted information and fighting the good fight is such a comfort.

Living with Inflammatory Bowel Disease isn't easy, but I know you are always there, whenever I need you.

”

Billie



Across the UK, more than half a million people are living with Crohn’s or Colitis. That’s around one in every 120 of us. Our children, friends, colleagues and loved ones, navigating life

with an incurable, unpredictable condition that can flare without warning. And these numbers are rising, particularly among young people.

Yet despite the scale and severity of these conditions, Crohn’s and Colitis remain too often overlooked. Because symptoms are frequently invisible, the daily reality can be misunderstood. The pain, the crushing fatigue, the constant fear of needing urgent access to a toilet, and the toll on mental wellbeing are all very real. In our recent research, nearly 90 per cent of people told us that living with unpredictable symptoms and flares affects their quality of life. Plans cancelled, lives disrupted, dreams put on hold.

In 2025, as every year, around 25,000 people received a diagnosis of Crohn’s or Colitis - many after months or even years of waiting. Too often, delays mean more severe disease, emergency hospital admissions and avoidable surgery. Even after diagnosis, access to specialist care remains

inconsistent and under-resourced, placing further strain on patients and the NHS alike. A diagnosis of Crohn’s or Colitis turns your life upside down. Along with the relief at finally having answers about what is causing your symptoms comes a flood of questions. Not to mention the feelings of confusion and isolation. **That’s where we come in.**

Last year, our trusted, medically-evidenced website, resources and Helpline were there to offer support, expert information and guidance to anyone who needed it. Our Crohn’s & Colitis UK nurse specialists in hospitals up and down the country worked tirelessly to support people. We worked closely with the UK’s top gastroenterologists and those at the cutting edge of IBD research. In 2026, we will be doing all those things and more.

Whilst there is still no cure for Crohn’s or Colitis, there is progress, dedication and growing scientific promise. With sustained investment, collaboration and ambition, we can transform understanding, accelerate diagnosis and improve care for everyone.

Mananne

Marianne Radcliffe
Chief Executive Officer

OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS:

How we made a difference in 2025



We offered support and reassurance as over **800,000 PEOPLE** used our evidence-based information and guidance, which was viewed **2.5 MILLION TIMES**



We continued to grow our IBD Nursing Programme, with **34 NURSES** participating this year



We influenced decision makers at the highest level, as **99 MPS AND 60 MSPS** publicly backed action on Crohn’s and Colitis



WE INVESTED £481,000 in four new medical research projects



We reached record audiences online as our social media content was seen **56 MILLION TIMES** in 2025, including **9 MILLION VIEWS** for posts about our How It Feels campaign during Awareness Week

CHANGING EVERYDAY LIFE WITH CROHN'S & COLITIS

Living with Crohn's or Colitis means managing symptoms, routines and uncertainty day in, day out. We support our community with practical help, connection and reassurance so people can live their lives with greater confidence and control. We are addressing inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.

TURNING QUESTIONS INTO CLARITY

In 2025:

OVER 800,000 PEOPLE found help and clarity from our written information

Our resources were viewed almost **2.5 MILLION TIMES**

96% OF PEOPLE who completed feedback, said our information was helpful

We reviewed and updated **35 existing resources** based on user feedback and produced **six new resources**. This included 'Your health, your voice', a new booklet created in partnership with the Caribbean & African Health Network to better support Black people affected by Crohn's and Colitis.

More than **20,000 information booklets** were sent to healthcare professionals across the UK helping improve understanding and support in clinical settings.

We also launched a tailored email series to help people make sense of what comes after diagnosis. Over eight short emails, subscribers received clear, practical guidance on treatment, work, relationships, money and where to find further support. **2,260 people signed up in the first year!**

Our digital tools, including the Symptom Checker, Medicines Tool and Taking Toolkit, were completed over 60,000 times, helping people prepare for appointments, understand symptoms and make informed decisions about their care.

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I'M ACTUALLY CRYING WITH RELIEF AFTER I WATCHED THIS.

I wish I'd come to your site earlier for reliable information. This has really helped me feel more positive and calm.



BEING THERE WHEN PEOPLE NEED US MOST

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WHAT YOU ARE DOING REALLY WELL IS LISTENING AND SHOWING UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY.

This is so important, especially as I feel I am not being listened to by the NHS departments. It changes my mood and uplifts me to be treated so kindly and with real understanding.

Patient who called our Helpline

Our helpline channels offer safe, confidential spaces for people affected by Crohn's or Colitis, to talk things through and ask questions. In 2025, our team responded to **7,740 queries**.

In 2025, **98% of those who gave us feedback, would recommend the service to others affected by the conditions.**



SUPPORTING THE NURSES WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We're often told that specialist nurses are a lifeline. With the support of our community, we're investing in training for IBD nurses to build the expertise and confidence needed to improve care for thousands of people.

Through our IBD Nurse Programme, nurses build specialist knowledge, leadership skills and strong peer networks while completing a Master's-level qualification. In 2025, 34 IBD Nurse Specialists took part, with many leading teams and extending their influence across services throughout the UK.

Nurses reported greater confidence and the value of shared learning and peer support, all contributing to better experiences and outcomes for the people they care for.

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BEING PART OF THIS PROGRAMME MEANS BEING PART OF A NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF NURSES STRIVING TO ENHANCE IBD CARE.

Through shared learning and collaboration, we can strengthen services locally and across the country, and raise awareness of IBD conditions both within healthcare and the wider public.

Ewelina Roczniak
Crohn's & Colitis UK Clinical Nurse Specialist, Walsall Manor Hospital



JOIN A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO GET IT BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT IT

Our thriving community of almost 56,000 members is at the heart of everything we do. In 2025, nearly **10,000 new members joined** and we supported over 4,000 parents and families of children living with Crohn's or Colitis.

For many people, connection goes beyond membership. Some want the chance to talk, listen and share experiences with others who understand life with Crohn's or Colitis firsthand. Our **Virtual Social Events** create safe, confidential spaces for these conversations. Led by trained volunteers with lived experience, these small-group sessions help people feel less isolated and more understood.

In 2025, **63 virtual events** were held, with **640 people attending**.

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WHEN I CAN SEE SOMEONE SMILE

for the first time in, probably, a long time, or when someone says something that only a patient would understand, and everyone on the call starts nodding, it's so great!



Because, for a lot of us, no one really knows what you're going through and it's really difficult to explain it in such a way that it makes sense to other people and it's not embarrassing to you.

Casey

Volunteer and Virtual Social Event host



SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE FROM CASEY

BRINGING THE EXPERTS TO YOU

New in 2025 thanks to your support!

In 2025, we hosted online education webinars focused on the real issues that matter most to people living with Crohn's and Colitis. Our aim was to make it easier to learn about the conditions, ask questions and build understanding without leaving the comfort of your home.

We held two webinars with panels of healthcare specialists and patients. Almost 900 people joined live, with a further 1,600 watching the recordings.

Food and diet are among the most common concerns for people living with Crohn's and Colitis, so our **Live Well, Eat Well** webinar was particularly popular. After attending the session, **93% of participants said they felt more confident about food and diet, compared with 32% beforehand.**

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EVERYTHING FEELS WORSE WHEN YOU'RE SCARED TO EAT.

This webinar was incredibly helpful, informative and reassuring. I now feel I have the tools and understanding to rebuild a positive relationship with food.

Patient who attended our webinar



TURNING HOPE INTO PROGRESS

In 2025, we invested almost **half a million pounds** into **four new research projects** made possible by the generosity of our donors. These included wide ranging under-researched areas from investigating IBD-associated Lymphoma to establishing risk factors, to understanding if we can inhibit rectal sensation to treat bowel urgency.



SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE

This work will help clinicians better understand, diagnose and treat Crohn's and Colitis, improving outcomes and reducing avoidable complications.

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INVESTMENT IN QUALITY IBD RESEARCH IS VITAL

to move us closer to a world in which Crohn's and Colitis no longer exist and also to ensure that people living with IBD can thrive, despite their disease, both today and in the future.

Crohn's & Colitis UK has a special role in ensuring that those living with Crohn's or Colitis are both central in shaping research and are also at the heart of implementation of research outcomes, to positively progress treatment and care for all of us living with IBD.

BACKING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESEARCHERS

Alongside funding new projects, we invest in early-career researchers to help build the future of IBD research. Our grants offering up to **£150,000** give researchers something often in short supply: time. Time to gather data, develop ideas and secure larger, long-term funding that accelerates progress.

Researchers told us our support was crucial in helping them move their work forward and unlocking further funding, including major awards from organisations such as the **Wellcome Trust**.

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CROHN'S & COLITIS UK'S RESEARCH FUNDING HAS BEEN CRUCIAL

to my success with gaining (further) funding from the Wellcome Trust (over £1 million this year)... If Crohn's & Colitis UK had not been able to support my laboratory work and salary, I would not have been able to apply for the Wellcome ECA funding.

Laween Meran

Early Career Clinician Scientist & Gastroenterologist, UCL and The Francis Crick Institute.



IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE OF DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT & CARE

Diagnosis, treatment and care should support people to live well with Crohn's or Colitis, but too often that isn't the reality. We're focused on improving systems, strengthening services and driving change so people receive better, more consistent care wherever they live.

CHANGING THE SYSTEM

In 2025, we continued to take the voices of people living with Crohn's and Colitis to where decisions are made. Together, we influenced health policy across the UK to help drive more accountable care built around people's lives in all four nations.

In England, following our calls for better use of digital tools, Inflammatory Bowel Disease will be included in the launch of **NHS Online Hospitals**. We're engaging with NHS England to ensure the views of people living with Crohn's and Colitis help shape how this service develops.

We were also part of an **Early Day Motion** tabled by Andrew Snowden MP which was signed by **99 MPs**, placing it among the **ten most supported motions of the year** keeping Crohn's and Colitis on the political agenda.

In Wales, insights from our Top 10 research shaped the draft Quality Statement for IBD care, strengthening the case for improved access to psychological support.

In Scotland, a parliamentary motion **secured 60 MSP** signatures, nearly half of all MSPs. We also helped shape the forthcoming Long Term Conditions Framework and saw key recommendations adopted in the Independent Review of Medicines Homecare, including clearer accountability and communication.

In Northern Ireland, we're working in partnership with the Department of Health to tackle delays in diagnosis, workforce shortages and access to psychological support.

RAISING THE BAR FOR CARE

Everyone deserves high-quality IBD care. Through our leadership of **IBD UK**, a partnership of 16 professional and patient organisations, we work together to improve care for everyone affected by Crohn's and Colitis.

Over the past year, we updated the **IBD Standards**, which set out what good IBD care should look like today. The Standards aim to reduce variation in services and help ensure people receive safe, consistent care wherever they live in the UK.

By giving healthcare services clear, evidence-based expectations, the Standards help identify where care is working well and where it needs to improve, supporting better experiences and outcomes for people living with Crohn's and Colitis.

We're forming plans for how we can further bring the Standards into care to help improve care across the board and look forward to sharing these with you soon.



SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE

GETTING PEOPLE DIAGNOSED SOONER

Too many people with gut symptoms wait far too long to be taken seriously. Delays in diagnosis can lead to worsening symptoms, avoidable complications and - for some - unnecessary surgery.

That's why our new clinically endorsed diagnostic pathway is vital ensuring people are on the right path to the treatment they need.

In 2025, our focus was on embedding the National Diagnostic Pathway for Lower GI Symptoms into everyday practice. The Pathway received formal approval from major medical organisations giving clinicians the confidence to use it.

We worked with health leaders across the UK to encourage uptake of the Pathway and carried out research with GPs to understand what supports real world use. We also developed practical education tools and began integrating the Pathway into clinical IT systems making it easier to use during consultations.

In two pilot regions, we worked directly with GPs, nurses and pharmacists to put the Pathway into action with patients. Learning from these pilots will support wider rollout across the UK and faster diagnosis.

This has the potential to transform how IBD is diagnosed across the UK.



SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE PATHWAY

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PERSISTENT BOWEL SYMPTOMS ARE COMMON BUT OFTEN DIFFICULT TO DIAGNOSE.

The Pathway gives GPs a practical decision-support tool to "think IBD before IBS", ensuring patients have access to the right tests at the right time.

Using the pathway not only provides a path to an early diagnosis, but also helps patients understand what step they are at with investigations, and what might come next.

Dr Craig Wylie

Clinical Champion for the Lower GI Diagnostic Pathway



CHANGING HOW CROHN'S & COLITIS ARE UNDERSTOOD

Living with an invisible condition can be isolating. Symptoms are often misunderstood or dismissed, leaving people feeling unheard or unsure where to turn.

We're here to change that, working with our community to help more people understand what living with Crohn's and Colitis is really like.

SEEN, SHARED, SPOKEN ABOUT

In 2025, the passion, courage and generosity of our community drove extraordinary impact for Crohn's & Colitis UK, helping to change perceptions, influence policy and put lived experience at the heart of national conversations. A standout moment was seeing our Ambassador Amy Dowden awarded an MBE by The King at Buckingham Palace. We nominated Amy for the honour in recognition of her tireless advocacy. The Strictly Come Dancing star's MBE moment made headlines around the world with over 250 media mentions and 457 million impressions.

She later designed a T-shirt embodying our World IBD Day theme of "Courage", raising more awareness and funds for the charity.

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I WILL FOREVER DO ALL I CAN TO RAISE AWARENESS, HELP BREAK THE STIGMA AND BE A PROUD AMBASSADOR FOR CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

Amy Dowden MBE

Dancer, Strictly Come Dancing and Crohn's & Colitis UK Ambassador



Meanwhile, the importance of toilet access continued to be a recurring theme in our media coverage, with Crohn's & Colitis UK campaigners appearing on BBC and ITV news programmes.

In Scotland, former professional rugby player Iain Sinclair, who lives with Indeterminate Colitis and underwent life-changing surgery in 2013, made history when he became the first person ever to swim the length of the Caledonian Canal. Iain's Sea2Sea swim, a remarkable 60-mile endurance challenge from Fort William to Inverness, raised funds for us and two other charities. His journey, driven by personal resilience and community support, exemplifies how bold individual efforts can make a real difference for people living with chronic conditions.

Our content on social media was seen 56 million times in 2025, roughly the equivalent of reaching the entire UK adult population! Furthermore, **an additional 23,000 people joined our online community**, making our following almost half a million strong across all of our channels. Together, this growing community is helping make Crohn's and Colitis more visible and better understood.



THE GIRLS ARE GOING OUT FOR DINNER

& THE BLOOD IN THE TOILET BOWL KEEPS ME AT HOME.

Priscilla

THIS IS HOW IT FEELS TO LIVE WITH CROHN'S OR COLITIS.

HOW IT FEELS: AWARENESS WEEK 2025

During Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week (1-7 December), we launched How it Feels, a nationwide campaign shaped by our community's lived experience.

People living with Crohn's or Colitis, and those who support them, shared what it really feels like to live with these invisible conditions. Not just the hospital visits and medication, but the emotional toll. The anxiety. The exhaustion. The impact on work, relationships and confidence.

Social media posts about the campaign were seen **around 9 million times**, with **1.6 million people** liking, sharing and commenting on our channels. How it Feels also appeared across the UK in a big way: in newspapers, on bus shelters and in shopping centres, making our messages impossible to ignore thanks, in large part, to a generous corporate sponsor.

We also continued to share honest conversations through **Crohn's & Colitis UK: The Podcast**, where Ambassadors Jordon Cox and Natalie-Amber Freegard spoke openly about life with Inflammatory Bowel Disease. Clips of the episodes reached over 250,000 people on social media and TV money expert Jordon's story featured in all the major UK newspapers. He was invited to speak about his Crohn's on ITV's This Morning, reaching a huge, new audience.

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OUR PODCAST FEELS LIKE WE'VE ADDED SOMETHING WORTHWHILE TO THE COMMUNITY - BOTH NOW AND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Luke Bligh

Presenter & Producer, Crohn's & Colitis UK: The Podcast



THANK YOU

A huge thank you to all our supporters for making all of the above possible. We're proud of the impact we've achieved together for people with Crohn's and Colitis. This would not have been possible without each and every person and organisation who supports us.

Think for a moment about:

The student who called our helpline needing guidance and support as they had nowhere else to turn.

The mother who was frightened after receiving their diagnosis, but read our information and felt reassured.

The man who felt isolated and alone, but found support, friendship and a sense of community through one of our Virtual Social Events.

The researcher who made progress which could one day lead to a breakthrough.

This all happened thanks to **your support**.

2026 is a big year for the charity as we embark on our new strategic direction, aiming to deliver even more for those affected by Crohn's and Colitis.

Thank you again, and we sincerely hope you continue supporting our journey.

**CROHN'S?
COLITIS?
WE'LL FACE IT
TOGETHER.**

Visit our website

crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Contact us

☎ 0300 222 5700

✉ helpline@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

💬 crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/livechat

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