




# ***In My Shoes: 24 Hours with Crohn's or Colitis***

## **A Guide for Healthcare Professionals**



**“**  
**It's an amazing app.**  
**”**

It really made me think about how much I have under-estimated the impact of IBD on the patient's life and all aspects of it. Having had a day of using it, I started to think “I'm not sure I can do it tomorrow because I'm at work,” the irony being that patients never have a choice and can't turn off their disease like we can switch off the app!

**Prof Matt Brookes**, Consultant Gastroenterologist,  
 Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

***In My Shoes: 24 Hours with Crohn's or Colitis*** has been developed through a partnership between Crohn's & Colitis UK and Takeda UK, one of Crohn's & Colitis UK's corporate partners.



[Download the app](#)

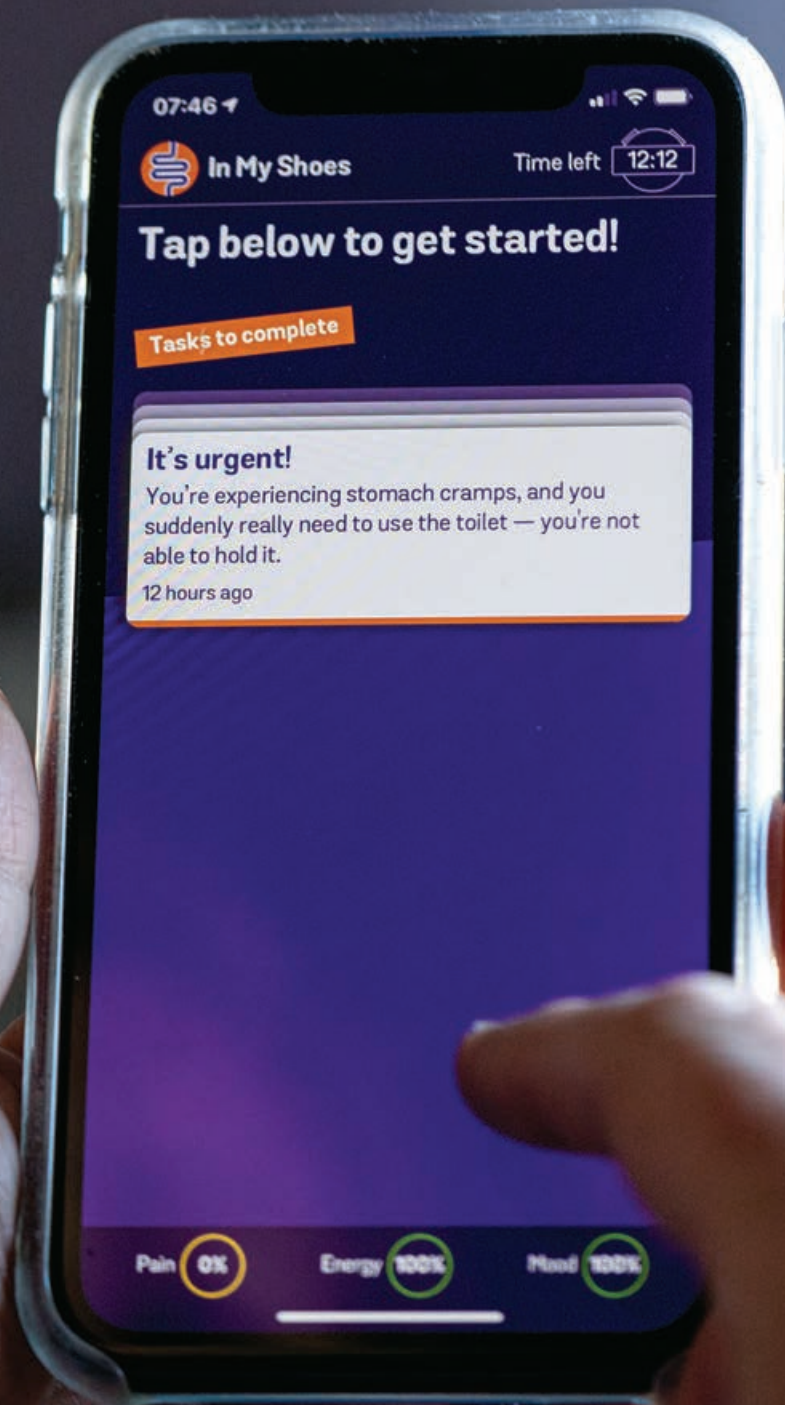
## *In My Shoes*

***In My Shoes: 24 Hours with Crohn's or Colitis*** is a free, immersive app which enables people to 'step into the shoes' of someone living with Crohn's or Colitis. The app experience is designed to be completed by the friends, family and colleagues of people living with Crohn's and Colitis, rather than by the people living with the conditions themselves. It was created to help people living with these conditions build up a support network who are understanding, empathetic and keen to have conversations about what it is like to live with Crohn's or Colitis.

*In My Shoes* has already made a difference to the lives of people living with Crohn's or Colitis, but we believe, with your help, the benefits could be felt by many more.

**This Guide has been developed to give you more information about *In My Shoes*. We have two asks:**

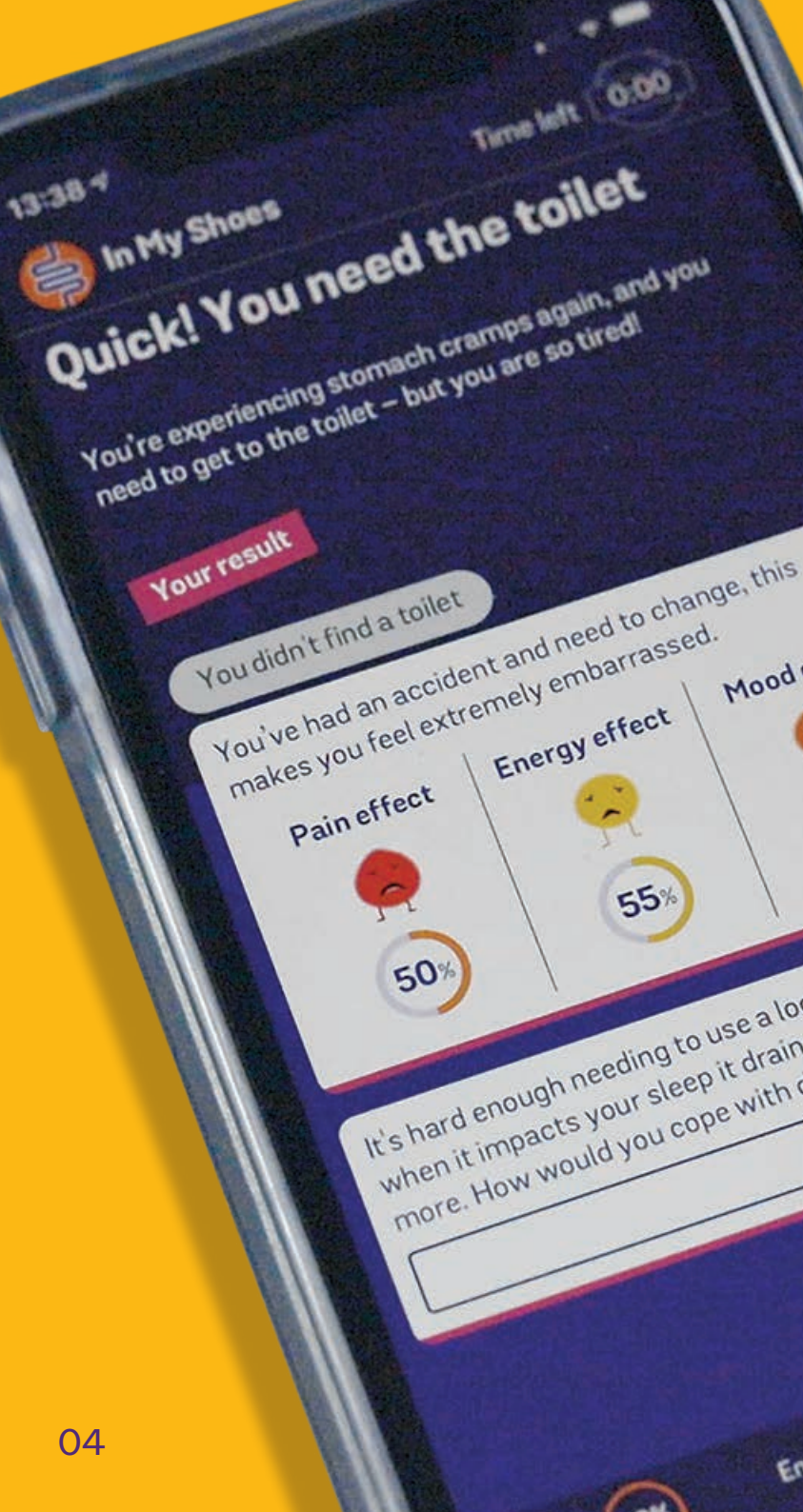
- 1) Many healthcare professionals involved in the care of people with Crohn's or Colitis have tried the app themselves and as you will read later on, are keen to recommend it! Will you and your IBD service colleagues do the app experience together?
- 2) Will you recommend the app to your patients?



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# All about *In My Shoes*



## The insight

Many people with Crohn's or Colitis feel that their condition is poorly understood by the wider public – and even by their own friends and families. 76% of people with Crohn's and Colitis don't think the general public understand their needs.<sup>1</sup> People also face discrimination in the workplace and 1 in 2 people have faced discrimination for trying to use an accessible toilet.<sup>2</sup>



## The Big Idea

In 2019, Takeda and Crohn's & Colitis UK worked together to create *In My Shoes: 24 Hours with Crohn's or Colitis*. The app allows anyone to step into the life of someone living with Crohn's or Colitis for a day, experiencing a series of tasks and choices which prompt the user to think about how the conditions can impact daily life. From depleting energy levels to managing pain, from rushing to the toilet to juggling work and a social life, the app helps the user to experience first-hand how these conditions can affect every part of the body, and every aspect of life.

1. Crohn's & Colitis UK's Life in Lockdown survey, July 2020.

2. Immunology\_DoF\_25Jan2019\_MI\_PC\_001 (unpublished data from Toilet Consortium UK's 2017 Survey, July 2017).

## The Impact of the coronavirus pandemic

In Crohn's & Colitis UK's Life in Lockdown survey of 7,666 supporters, we found that nearly half (46%) of people living with Crohn's or Colitis felt isolated, with 48% reporting that their mental health had been negatively affected.<sup>3</sup> Amid the uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic, it becomes increasingly important that people living with Crohn's or Colitis feel connected, understood, and empowered to have open conversations with people in their lives. The *In My Shoes* app experience helps to initiate these conversations.



3. Crohn's & Colitis UK – Life in Lockdown survey, published September 2020. Isolation statistic (46%) – data on file, Crohn's & Colitis UK. Remaining data accessed at: <https://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/news/how-coronavirus-has-affected-people-with-crohns-and-colitis-you-told-us>. Last accessed May 2021.

## Results so far



### Over 30,000 downloads

In the week after launch, the app was the second most downloaded Health & Fitness app on Google Play



Survey data from people who completed the app experience show an **increase in people being able to explain** how Crohn's and Colitis can affect people day to day and **increases in understanding and empathy**<sup>4</sup>



**Download the app**

4. Takeda Data on File EXA/UK/GI/0014

# App testimonials



Click this icon to see and hear more on YouTube

“

*In My Shoes* is a really useful tool for people with Crohn's or Colitis to build better support networks – it enables their loved ones to 'step into their shoes' for a brief time and understand how this diagnosis can impact so many aspects of someone's daily life. In my experience, this has led to people with these conditions feeling more empowered to have open and honest conversations with their loved ones without feeling like 'they just won't get it.' The app is so easy to use, and it's free. Why wouldn't someone who knows a person affected by Crohn's or Colitis give it a try? ”

**Dr Mark Samaan**, IBD Consultant,  
Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust



“

As clinicians I think we're often very focussed on our patients' symptoms – on pain, diarrhoea, bleeding – but this app reminds us that actually, having IBD really affects every facet of our patients' lives – from their social life to exercise, their diet, their work. I see it as being particularly useful in newly diagnosed patients, to help their friends and family really understand what IBD means. ”

**Dr JP Seenan**, Consultant Gastroenterologist,  
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde



“

This is a great way as a healthcare professional to gain some understanding of what patients go through on a daily basis. It is not only the symptoms of a flare up that can affect someone's quality of life but also the emotional effects of missing out on social occasions. Some days may be better than others and with an insight into these days we can gain a better understanding of how this invisible illness can change on a daily basis. Not everyone will understand why someone feels well in the morning but need to go to bed in the afternoon and by using the app patients may feel reassured that their loved one or healthcare professional gets it. ”

**Jenna Robinson**, Lead IBD CNS, Royal Surrey  
NHS Foundation Trust



“

As dietitians, we think we have a pretty good insight into the symptoms that IBD patients live with, but the *In My Shoes* app experience really brings that to life. So, I wanted some of my colleagues to try the app – particularly those who were new to IBD – to give them an even greater insight into what people with IBD can experience on a daily basis. It’s a way of us understanding more holistically what the challenges are – something much more than reading the textbooks or information on a website. ”

**Anna Julian**, Advanced Specialist Dietitian,  
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde



“

When Anna asked me to try the *In My Shoes* app out I was happy to do so – anything that gives us more empathy and understanding of what people with IBD have to go through on a daily basis has got to be a good thing. I set the experience to start at 8am and think it’s fair to say I hadn’t anticipated how challenging it would be! It really made me think about the scale of pre-planning that a person with IBD has to do – knowing where the toilets are, remembering to take medication and planning food so as not to exacerbate symptoms. This app has definitely made me more aware of a patient’s lifestyle and environmental factors and to adjust my advice on the basis of this. ”

**Johnathan Barry**, Dietitian, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde



“

I used the app and found it useful to show my family the range of symptoms that I might get and this opened conversations about the impact of IBD on my life. I have also recommended it to colleagues so they can gain an insight into the effect that IBD can have on their patients. ”

**Dr Kevin Barrett**, GP, Chair of the Primary Care Society for Gastroenterology and person living with Crohn’s Disease



“

As part of my activism work to raise awareness of Crohn’s and Colitis, I see so many horror stories online about people who have lost their jobs or who have been shown zero empathy and understanding by their employers. The fact that my company wanted to support me further, by living a day in my shoes thanks to the *In My Shoes* app, is overwhelming. ”

**Jacob Hodgson**, living with Crohn’s Disease, whose company did the *In My Shoes* app experience



**Download the app**



“

Lisa is quite a new friend– I met her when I was helping people during the lockdown who were shielding. I’d been open about my Ulcerative Colitis related challenges but I think it’s hard for anyone to understand how completely it can take over your life sometimes. In the period before the 2nd lockdown in late 2020 I suggested she try the *In My Shoes* app. Hats off to her for going through the 24 hour process, it’s not easy, but it has made a difference to the way we’re openly able to talk about my Ulcerative Colitis. I’d recommend it to anyone. ”

**Stuart**, living with Ulcerative Colitis



“

I’m so pleased that Stuart asked me to try *In My Shoes*. I hope he didn’t feel anxious about asking, because he shouldn’t have – it really transformed the way we’re able to talk about his Colitis but also understand Crohn’s Disease too and I hope that as a result, I’m probably a better friend to him. The app is a great way for the friends and family of someone with Crohn’s or Colitis to build their own understanding of these conditions without having to ask that person a whole load of questions. I’m really pleased I did it. ”

**Lisa**, Stuart’s friend



“

For so many, living with Crohn’s and Colitis is a day to day battle. It’s isolating. It’s all consuming and at the heart of it, it can be truly heartbreaking. *In My Shoes* gives people the opportunity to partake in a day in the life of someone living with these conditions. The app is truly unique in its ability to promote empathy and understanding when once it seemed near impossible to do so. We simply ask that you consider walking with us – step in our shoes, even for a short while. ”

**Anna**, living with Ulcerative Colitis

“

Having watched Anna battle for years with her condition, the opportunity to use an app that would give me even the smallest insight into the depth of what she faces each day was completely invaluable. Anna is, and always has been, the most incredible and resilient person I know – this app just allowed me to as truly as I can “walk with her” in her condition, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to have done so. ”

**Beth**, Anna’s twin sister



## Tell us about you

What connection to Crohn's or Colitis do you

Please select

Friend with Crohn's

Friend with Colitis

Family member with Crohn's



## How you can get involved

At the time of writing, the coronavirus pandemic is still affecting how IBD Services are able to deliver care to people with Crohn's or Colitis.

People living with Crohn's or Colitis can find it very hard to articulate the burden that their condition places on them, and this may have worsened due to shielding and heightened isolation from national lockdowns.

### Can you

- Try the app experience out for yourself?
- Recommend that a person with Crohn's or Colitis asks a loved one or work colleague to download *In My Shoes* to help that person address some of the feelings of loneliness and isolation they are experiencing?

There is no one 'right time' or 'best time' to talk to patients about *In My Shoes*, as everyone's individual circumstances will be different. These might be some useful cues/ touchpoints to look for:

- A patient is newly diagnosed
- Your patient mentions in a consultation that they have been feeling isolated, lonely, or feels that nobody understands what they are going through
- Your patient is struggling at work and wants to talk to their employer about their Crohn's or Colitis but doesn't know where to start



**Download the app**

**A patient guide to *In My Shoes* has been developed, and this available to view/download [here](#)**

# How you can spread the word



The app has already made a difference to the lives of people living with Crohn's or Colitis, but with your help, the benefits could be felt by many more. This app makes a difference to patients by giving them a tool they can use with friends and family to build understanding, empathy and support.

We have developed a number of resources designed to help you spread the word about the app and the valuable work your IBD Service is already doing to share it with patients.



**Download the app**

## Sharing your own stories

If you recommend the app to a patient and they benefit as a result, consider sharing their story (with their permission of course!). Speak with your communications team about ways you can work together to do this, and to talk about the app in general. Some ideas include:

- A story in a local newspaper about how your IBD Service is championing an app that has been proven to improve empathy and understanding for people with Crohn's and Colitis – a local patient shares their Crohn's story and how their friend/relative doing the app experience has improved things for them
- A story on your local evening news show about how you and all your colleagues within the IBD Service took the 24-hour app experience to put yourselves in the shoes of the patients you care for every day – and in doing so raised money for your hospital/Crohns & Colitis UK
- An article on your hospital website/intranet about your IBD Service's commitment to recommend the app to your patients
- A talk given at your local/regional professional meetings about your app experiences

## Social media

- If your Service is already on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, consider posting about *In My Shoes*. You can also follow, like and share IMS posts from Crohn's & Colitis UK

You can find resources for your communications team [here](#)

# Your resources



- A poster to display in consultation and clinic waiting rooms
- A flyer/PDF to share with patients
- A graphic to be added to your email signature and/or included in your patient letters
- Video content
- Guide for the communications team

**Thank you for your support!**

