

PUTTING ON EDUCATIONAL TALKS

AVON & NORTH SOMERSET

The Avon & North Somerset have had great success with educational talks, providing education and awareness to 75-90 people per event.

Our volunteer, Tony, shares with us his advice on organising a successful educational talk.



PLANNING

Consultants and IBD teams are busy people. Stating the obvious you need to plan well ahead as communications take time to establish. Often people take time to answer e-mails or need gentle chasing and securing several speakers for a specific date requires advanced notice. You also need time to involve the local organising team members and have a co-ordinated approach to promotion. We plan

12 months ahead which also helps with organisation. At each event we do a survey which gives us valuable feedback and also forms the basis for speaker topics for subsequent events.

LOCATION

Holding events in the local hospitals works for us and means we can get a free venue with excellent facilities and adds clinical credibility to the event. The only downside is you normally have to use the expensive in-house caterers for refreshments.

PROMOTION

We use the following to promote our educational talks:

- Emails to Crohn's and Colitis UK members through the Volunteering Team 4 weeks ahead of the event (if numbers are short then a reminder a week ahead)
- Our biannual newsletter emailed / posted to members carries event promotion
- Network social media exposure for the event
- Event details put on the host hospital website and hospital e-mailing list (this will depend on the hospital and establishing contacts with the hospital communication team)
- Posters in local hospital IBD clinic literature racks
- We have not used this mechanism yet as we have had sufficient numbers to our events but a press story sent to all the local press media including daily, weekly and monthly papers / magazines

Surveys at the last events have shown that the most effective tool has been the member mailings so if you are short of resource, focus on a well written (why should I attend) e-mail with clear details of how to attend.

BUILDING LINKS

We have also further developed our links with the IBD clinical teams at our local hospitals and have put dedicated Crohn's and Colitis UK literature racks into each of the hospital IBD clinics. This provides direct information to IBD patients, raises awareness of Crohn's and Colitis UK and should increase charity membership.