

CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

Date as Postmark

To whom it may concern

This letter is to advise you that the person applying for a Blue Badge has been diagnosed with a form of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) such as Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis or Microscopic Colitis.

These long-term incurable conditions cause swollen, inflamed and ulcerated intestines, and often cause significant abdominal pain, extreme fatigue and nausea. The applicant also has to live with the problem of an unpredictable, frequent and urgent need for access to a toilet because of multiple bouts of diarrhoea. In addition, many people experience chronic joint pain. The combination of symptoms can make walking any distance and undertaking journeys safely very difficult. In a recent survey of 4,000 people with Crohn's and Colitis, 70% of respondents stated that their condition means they can't undertake any journey without the threat of considerable harm to their health and safety.

The experience or fear of faecal incontinence is, as you can imagine, extremely undermining to a person's confidence and self-esteem, and many people have to limit their use of public transport and rely on travel by car. However, due to the nature of their condition, patients still have to overcome the problem of parking very quickly and getting to a toilet as a matter of urgency. Moreover, 75% of patients have reported that they have experienced an accident in public because they couldn't find parking in time to reach a toilet.

The sudden and uncontrollable need to use a toilet is a genuine and recognised symptom of IBD and not just 'over-anxiety'. Having an 'accident' in public is many people's worst fear and can have a devastating effect on their ability to undertake everyday activities away from the home, such as going to work, shopping or socialising. This concern has led the charity to develop a 'Can't Wait' card that members can show in retail outlets when they suddenly need a toilet and are not near a public facility.

Having a Blue Badge is an indispensable tool in reducing social isolation by giving people with Crohn's and Colitis the confidence to leave their home, providing reassurance that they can park more easily when they urgently need to access a toilet. The badge also reduces the disabling impact of pain and fatigue that very often accompanies IBD.



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Chief Executive, Crohn's & Colitis UK