

# CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

2023

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to provide staff working at attractions and venues with information on Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis and Microscopic Colitis, also known as Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).

Crohn's and Colitis are invisible conditions, this means you may not be able to tell by looking at someone that they need extra support and assistance. These long-term, incurable conditions cause swollen, inflamed and ulcerated intestines. Symptoms include unpredictable, urgent and frequent diarrhoea – with an urgent need for access to a toilet. People with Crohn's or Colitis commonly experience abdominal pain, extreme fatigue and joint pain. The combination of these symptoms can impact a person's mobility – making activities such as walking any distance, waiting in queues and taking part in social activities very difficult.

As many as three in four people with Crohn's or Colitis have experienced bowel incontinence (being unable to control your bowel). The experience or fear of bowel incontinence is extremely undermining to a person's confidence and self-esteem. Additionally, some people living with Crohn's or Colitis may have had bowel surgery and use a stoma bag. They may need extra space to change and dispose of equipment comfortably, hygienically and in privacy. This requires a fully enclosed cubicle with access to a sink and disposal facilities.

The sudden and uncontrollable need to use a toilet is a genuine and recognised symptom of Crohn's and Colitis. Having an 'accident' in public is many people's worst fear and can have a devastating impact on their mental health and lead to social isolation. This concern has led Crohn's & Colitis UK to develop a 'Can't Wait' card that members can show in retail outlets when they suddenly need a toilet but are not near a public toilet. We have also developed Not Every Disability is Visible accessible toilet signs to show that people with invisible disabilities have a genuine need to use accessible toilets too. This signage has been adopted in thousands of venues across the UK including supermarkets, pubs and restaurants and entertainment venues. Crohn's & Colitis UK is happy to supply you with these signs free of charge, just email [campaigns@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk)

Reasonable adjustments are indispensable in reducing the social isolation of people with Crohn's and Colitis. They will enable people with Crohn's or Colitis to enjoy your attraction, providing reassurance that they can access a toilet when they urgently need to. Adjustments could include the use of accessible entry points and reducing the time waiting in queues. These measures would help to minimise the disabling impact of chronic pain and fatigue that very often accompanies Crohn's or Colitis. Find out more about Crohn's and Colitis at: [crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/information](https://crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/information)

Yours faithfully,



Sarah Sleet  
Chief Executive, Crohn's & Colitis UK