

Communicating your IBD

The importance of trust

Trust is critical, and is the most important element which overrides all other considerations of your IBD communications. The greater the level of intimacy required, the greater that trust has to be. It will be difficult to communicate with someone unless you trust them, and your disclosure levels will be dependent on your level of trust in them.

- For some people (your partner, your consultant or physician for example) your trust level has to be high in order for the communication to be honest and meaningful.
- For other groups, depending on your relationship with them, and your need to discuss your IBD with them, trust levels (and so disclosure levels) will be different.

Looking for help

Sometimes, you will not be able to manage the communications yourself – you will need help whether this comes from, for example, your employer, or your close friend.

- It is important therefore that you know when to ‘walk away’ from an immediate communication issue and ask for support.
- It is important that you are able to communicate with your different support group members so that they can help you.

Planning ahead

Sometimes conversations just happen! But, when you can, before you communicate about your IBD in any particular situation, work out (plan ahead, visualise) what you want the outcome of any particular conversation to be. That outcome will be different for different people.

On the other hand, over-planning could cause you to be tense, or to feel awkward if the conversation doesn't go to plan. Try to find the balance that works for you, and be relaxed where possible.

- For example, you may want a work colleague to understand and accept why you may be leaving your desk quite often on a particular day.
- On the other hand, you may want your spouse/partner to understand why you do not feel like participating in a particular (usual) activity today.
- Alternatively, you may just want a friend to be your friend, and give you a sympathetic shoulder.
- For more information on exercises click [here](#)