

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). This may include Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis or Microscopic Colitis.

What are the conditions?

They are lifelong conditions of the gut, and cause a wide range of painful and exhausting symptoms. These can include blood in poo, severe stomach pain, overwhelming fatigue and frequent, urgent diarrhoea. For many people, these symptoms come and go, making life unpredictable and planning nearly impossible. Almost 9 in 10 people told us that living with this uncertainty affects their quality of life. People who live with IBD may look well but may need extra support or assistance. Find out more at crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/information.

The impact of pain and fatigue

Some people living with these conditions may find walking very difficult due to joint pain, significant tummy pain and extreme fatigue. These symptoms may make walking any distance and undertaking journeys safely very difficult. In a survey of 4,000 people with Crohn's and Colitis, 3 in 10 respondents said that their condition means they cannot undertake any journey without the threat of considerable harm to their health and safety.

The impact of severe diarrhoea

This can be unpredictable, uncontrollable, urgent and frequent. 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. This can affect their ability to undertake everyday activities away from home, such as going to work, shopping or socialising. When an 'accident' happens, it can be devastating and can lead to anxiety and overwhelming psychological distress. Many people have to limit their use of public transport and rely on travelling by car.

Even when using a car, people with IBD may need urgent access to a toilet because of multiple bouts of diarrhoea. 3 in 4 people with IBD said they, or a family member living with IBD, have experienced an 'accident' in public because they couldn't find parking in time to reach a toilet.

The impact of having a Blue Badge

Having a Blue Badge and the means to park more easily could:

- Reduce the distance walked by people experiencing extreme fatigue or severe pain
- Reduce anxiety and distress when walking and urgently needing the toilet
- Reduce concerns over parking options when urgently needing the toilet
- Prevent future public 'accidents'
- Give people living with IBD the confidence to leave their homes and reduce social isolation

Yours faithfully,



Marianne Radcliffe, Chief Executive, Crohn's & Colitis UK