

# Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Your Career

Sr. Karin Davidson



# Introduction

- IBD and my education
- IBD and choosing a career
- IBD and my job interview
- IBD and the workplace
- Life insurance, Sick leave and Disability

- IBD affects people during their most productive years
- Education and Career affected by:
- Physical symptoms
  - Abdominal cramps
  - Fatigue
  - Diarrhoea
  - Poor sleep
- Emotional “symptoms”
  - Embarrassment
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
- Treatment
  - Drug side effects
  - Doctors appointments
  - Surgery

A patient's experience.....

# Survey 2000 people with IBD in the UK

- No support from employers
- Employer unaware employee has IBD
- Fear of losing job
- Employers not flexible
- Worried about managing symptoms at work
- 80% of IBD patients soldier on despite feeling ill

# IBD and Education

- IBD can affect concentration and performance
- School absenteeism
- IBD, school and the toilet
- Sport
- School outings and trips
- Socialising

# Managing School and IBD

- Educate teachers – involve your IBD team
- Additional time to complete tasks
- Desk near the door
- Hand signal to go to the bathroom
- Bathroom close to an adult in case assistance needed
- Clothes and underwear change at school
- Self monitoring of energy levels for Phys Ed and sports
- Water and crackers on desk helps with nausea
- Disclosure to friends

# IBD and my career

- Priority number 1
  - Make sure your IBD is well managed and under control
  - Make sure vitamin levels, iron levels and nutrition are addressed
  - Depression and illness often occur together – ensure this has been addressed
- With well managed IBD you can achieve your full potential





Anastacia – singer / songwriter  
Crohn's disease diagnosed age 13



Steve Redgrave - rower  
5 Olympic Gold medals  
Ulcerative Colitis



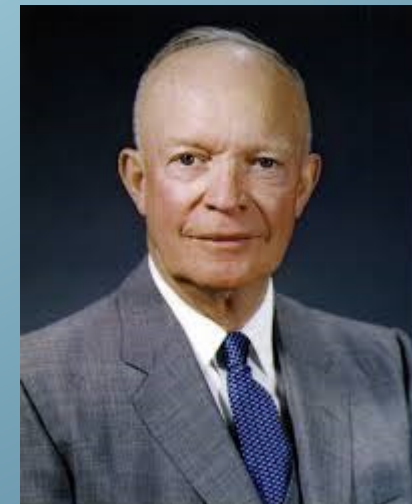
Shannen Doherty - actress  
Crohn's disease



John F Kennedy  
Ulcerative colitis diagnosed age 13



Jeremy Mansfield – radio presenter  
Crohn's disease



Dwight D Eisenhower  
Crohn's Disease

# IBD and Choosing a Career

- IBD well controlled – no limitations
- IBD control not perfect certain careers will be difficult
  - Travelling
  - Irregular or inflexible hours

# Job Interviews

- Should I disclose my IBD?
- Do I have to answer questions about my health?
- How much to reveal?
- Will this affect my chances of getting a job

# Managing IBD at Work

- Disclosure, disclosure, disclosure – rewards may be greater than expected
- Proximity to a toilet
- Private toilet without open spaces below and above partitions
- Flexible working hours
  - later start
  - working from home
  - fewer hours during a flare
- Time off for Drs appointments without being penalised
  - Sick leave for appointments

But don't over do it !





# Insurance

- Life insurance and Income protection
  - Often loaded or turned down due to IBD
  - General lack of understanding of IBD by insurer
  - Can be challenged

# IBD and your Career: Key Points

- Number 1 priority- IBD well managed
- Choose a career compatible with the severity of your IBD
- Job interview....
- Educate your employer
- Disclosure to employer and colleagues often helps
- Insist on work adjustments to make life easier
- Flexible working hours if possible

Thank You