



# IA UPDATE



April 2025

## Welcome

Thank you for joining us at Information Day – we hope you found the event useful and enjoyable. We're still collecting attendee feedback, so if you haven't already, please drop National Office a line with your thoughts.

Our April round-up covers events from around the network, volunteering news and more. Don't forget, we love hearing from you too so please get in touch, whether it's to share your story, give us feedback or let us know about your events: [marketing@iasupport.org](mailto:marketing@iasupport.org)

## IA Information Day 2025

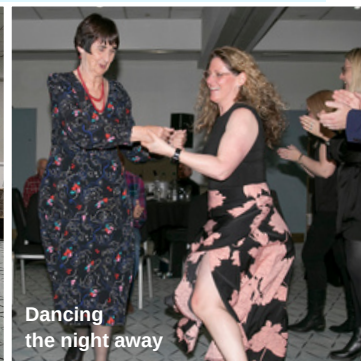
Thank you to everyone who joined us in April for our annual Information Day. If we do say so ourselves, it was a fantastic event, which saw attendees come together to learn from subject matter experts, meet old friends, discover the latest innovations from a host of ostomy suppliers and have a rip-roaring time at the after-party hoedown!

Of four scheduled workshops dedicated to: solutions to internal pouch problems; stress management; work-related support; and sex, attendees could choose to attend two. They were facilitated by a mix of expert presenters, researchers and IA volunteers addressing common and not-so-common health and wellbeing matters with empathy, insight and a little humour.

The Bryan Brooke Lecture was delivered by Mr Dominic Slade FRCS, Consultant Colorectal, Intestinal Failure and General Surgeon, on the topic of parastomal hernia. IA's President, Professor Gordon Carlson presented him with the Bryan Brooke Medal after the talk.

Presentations were made to West Yorkshire IA, winner of IA's 11th annual Inspire Award for innovation and to long-serving volunteer Anne Cross of Greater Manchester IA, who is stepping down after 50 years of service.

Anne (pictured right with Prof. Carlson) later shared her IA story: "Aged 27 and newly married I was devastated by my surgery.



"I was visited in hospital by Joyce Fitzpatrick, secretary of IA, and consequently joined the association. Going forward, I was asked to become Visiting Officer and as I really wanted to help fellow patients, served in this capacity for 35 years. I visited patients in virtually every hospital in Greater Manchester and in their homes. I spoke regularly about life with an ileostomy to nurses training to be SCNs at the then Hope Hospital (Salford Royal Hospital) and to Professor Irving's medical students at Manchester University.

"I give grateful thanks to IA for all its support and friendships formed over the years."

Rounding off the evening, 'The Last Chance Saloon Band' took to the stage with their barnstorming beats.

Thanks to our brilliant line-up of speakers and to Greater Manchester IA for the warm welcome to their city, and the small army of volunteers who ensured the event ran smoothly.

**Do let us know your thoughts on this year's Information Day via our evaluation form, and return by email to [info@iasupport.org](mailto:info@iasupport.org) or post to the National Office address.**

## Spring Covid-19 vaccine booster available now

The NHS national booking system has opened for thousands of people to book their spring Covid-19 vaccination. Those eligible for this year's vaccine include people with severe heart, kidney, liver, respiratory, neurological or lung conditions, diabetes – and those with a weakened immune system due to disease or treatment.

Please refer to your GP or healthcare team for advice if you have any questions about the vaccination or its suitability. You can also find more information about this season's Covid-19 vaccine on [the government website](https://www.gov.uk).



### Northamptonshire's new chair attends Coloplast meeting



Northamptonshire group's new Chair Gillian Crowe (*pictured above*) ran the IA stand at a local Coloplast event in April, and while attendance numbers were disappointing after an initial 40 people showed interest, Gillian said it was heartening to speak with ostomates and encourage them to join the charity.

### Convatec and WOCN to launch educational initiatives

In March, Convatec, a leading medical products and technologies company, announced its global collaboration with the Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society™ (WOCN®), the largest professional nursing community dedicated to advancing the practice and delivery of expert healthcare to those with specialist care needs.

Together, Convatec and WOCN are launching two best-in-class, free, educational initiatives to enhance general ostomy care knowledge for healthcare professionals. The two initiatives: the online 'Advanced Ostomy Care Program' and 'Ostomy Care Associates (OCA®) Program', will be available in the US, UK, Ireland, Brazil, Poland and China later this year.

You can find more information on the [UK and Ireland webpages here](#).

## Save the date: Pouch Information Day, 20 September 2025

This year's Pouch Information Day will be held on Saturday 20 September at the Novotel, Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2HT. It will run from 10am (coffee and registration from 9am) until 4pm and cover 'all things pouch'.

Come and join us to ask any burning questions you have in an informal setting, and to discuss observations and experiences with fellow 'pouchies' and would-be pouchies, surgeons and nurses. We'll also be assisted on the day by a dietitian, a psychologist, and pharmacist.

Visit [pouch.iasupport.org/pouchday25](https://pouch.iasupport.org/pouchday25) to book your place.





## IA Group News from Roy Bustin, Group Relationship Lead

Looking back over the past few weeks, the AGM and Information Day were certainly highlights for me. There was such a buzz around these events, and it was great to see so many of you there. April also saw the launch of our 'Volunteering in Action' project, aimed at taking collective actions across our volunteer network.

Do let us know if you have taken part in either of our suggested actions for either Ileostomy Awareness Month and/or Bowel Cancer Awareness Month. If you missed out on these, we have plenty more for May, so check out the actions below for details.

May will also see several online meetings as we look to relaunch some of our dormant groups. If you are in any of these areas, it would be great to see you:

**7 May** – Greater London West

**12 May** – East London & South Essex

**13 May** – South East London & West Kent

**19 May** – Avon

**20 May** – Cornwall

**22 May** – South Yorkshire

All meetings will be on Zoom at 7pm. Please email [info@iasupport.org](mailto:info@iasupport.org) or call 0800 0184 724 to register.

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### Volunteer meetings on Zoom

Our next online volunteer network meeting will take place on Monday 2 June at 12.30pm, as part of Volunteers' Week. This meeting is open to all volunteers, and is a chance to connect with others across the network. If you are new to volunteering and would like to find out more, you can join us on Thursday 5 June at 7pm for our next 'Introduction to Volunteering with IA' session. Please email [volunteering@iasupport.org](mailto:volunteering@iasupport.org) to register.

### Volunteering in Action: plans for May/June

In recent communication with IA groups, we set out plans to work more closely with our group network and encourage volunteers to take specific actions throughout the year in order to help us better connect with members and communities across the UK. These actions are designed to be flexible, with a variable time commitment to suit your personal circumstances. You may choose to get involved with all the actions, or select one(s) that you have a particular interest in.

#### International Nurses Day – 12 May 2025

This is celebrated around the world every 12 May, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth. The theme for 2025 is "Caring for nurses strengthens economies".

**The action:** To send a thank you card to your group's local Stoma Care Nurses in recognition of the care that members receive. Branded IA thank you cards are available to order.

#### Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Week 26 May-1 June

This is a joint campaign between NHS England and Diabetes UK to raise awareness of the prevention of type 2 diabetes.

**The action:** To contact your group's local Diabetes UK group and offer to give a talk at one of their meetings to raise the profile of IA and your group. Details of local groups can be found on [Diabetes UK's website](https://www.diabetes.org.uk).

#### National Patient Participation Week 31 May-6 June 2025

This is an annual event that aims to raise awareness about the value of patient participation and engagement in healthcare.

**The action:** To contact a Patient Participation Group in your group's area and send literature about IA's One2One Support offer.

#### Volunteers' Week – 2-8 June 2025

This takes place during the first week of June. It is a great opportunity to promote the value of volunteering and raise awareness of IA locally. There is also the potential to recruit new volunteers to your group.

**The action:** To reach out to your local Volunteer Centre/ CVS to see what events are happening during the week. Aim to attend at least one event. You can find details of your local organisation using this [map](#).