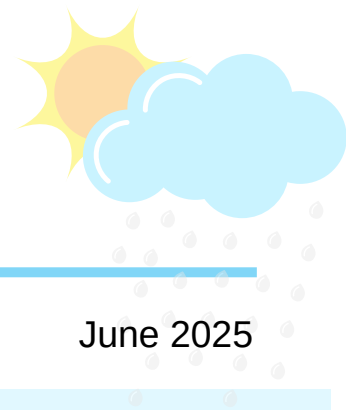




# IA UPDATE



June 2025

## Welcome

Work continues in earnest at home and abroad to raise funds and awareness, and after another successful Volunteers' Week, we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who gives their time to support IA.

Our June 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, 25 April 2026

Preparations are under way for the charity's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone next year, which will be officially celebrated at our Information Day on Saturday 25 April, following the AGM on 24 April (for company law members and board members only).

We're creating yet another packed programme for this special platinum anniversary, so watch this space! You can, of course, expect to be entertained and enlightened by subject matter experts on the topics that matter most.

Once the day's workshops and presentations are complete, we invite you to join us for our celebratory evening entertainment. Don't miss the chance to don your best bib and tucker for our black-tie gala dinner and live music!



**Information Day 2026 will be held at Chesford Grange Hotel, Chesford Bridge, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2LD.**

The historic manor house hotel is close to a host of attractions to help you make the most of your stay, including castles in Kenilworth and Warwick; Shakespearean theatre, history and heritage in Stratford-upon-Avon; museums, shopping and cathedrals in Coventry, not to mention miles of beautiful countryside to explore.

**Date:** AGM (for company law members and board members only): Friday 24 April, time tbc; Information Day: Saturday 25 April, time tbc.

**Booking:** Please spread the word and save the date(s) for now. We will release more details as soon as we can, and keep you informed through our usual channels, online and in print.

## 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. The event will run from 10am (coffee and registration from 9am) until 4pm and cover 'all things pouch'.

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 pays tribute to the late Professor Neil Smart

IA is saddened to share the news of the recent death of Professor Neil Smart, PhD, FRCS, one of our trustees and co-chair of our research subcommittee.



Neil was a prominent national and international figure in colorectal surgery, serving as a consultant surgeon at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital and as Editor-in-Chief of Colorectal Disease, the Journal of the Association of Coloproctology of Great Britain and Ireland. IA was immensely fortunate to have his support.

Neil passed away at the age of 50 after facing cancer with immense bravery, positivity, and dignity. He remained incredibly devoted to his patients throughout his career and brought energy and wisdom to IA's board of trustees.

British colorectal surgery, IA, and the patients who have benefitted so much from Neil's passion and expertise (including many members of IA) are immeasurably poorer for his loss.

*A fuller tribute to Neil Smart will feature in the autumn issue of IA Journal.*



## European Ostomy Association congress in Norway

At the European Ostomy Association's (EOA) House of Delegates, held in Norway on Saturday 10 May, the EOA elected their Executive Council for the next three-year term. Jon Thorkelsson, from Iceland, was re-elected as President; Isabella Grosu, from Romania, and Caroline Bramwell, from the UK, were re-elected; and two new members were welcomed to the Executive Council – Andrea Stupalova from Slovakia and Henrik Karlsson from Finland.

Caroline has served on the Executive Council of EOA for the last three years, representing IA and the UK. This will be her second term in post, having contributed to European discussions around the care for ostomates and amplifying the voice of ostomates.

Many thanks and a fond farewell were given to Maria Hass, of Germany, who has served many years on the EOA EC and has now stepped down but will oversee the final details of the registration of the organisation.

## IA returns to ACPGBI

IA once again exhibited at the annual event of the Association of Coloproctology GB & Ireland (ACPGBI) which took place this year in Harrogate on 30 June to 2 July. ACPGBI is a group of 1000+ surgeons, nurses, and allied health professionals who advance the knowledge and treatment of bowel diseases in Britain and Ireland. (Source: ACPGBI).

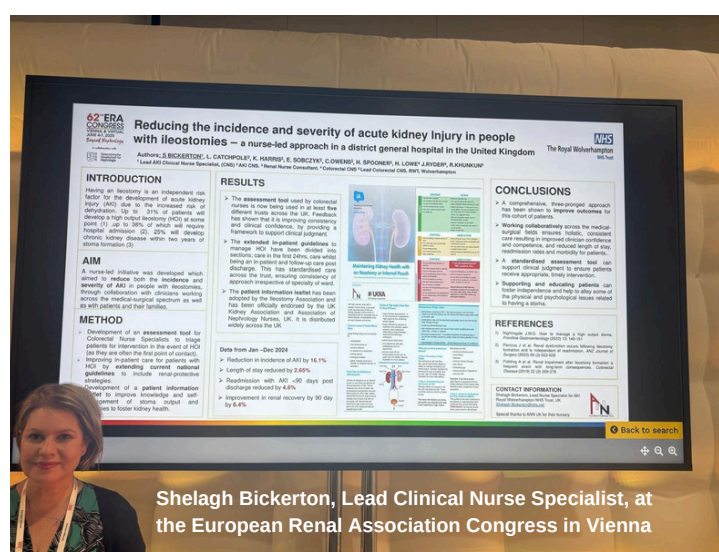
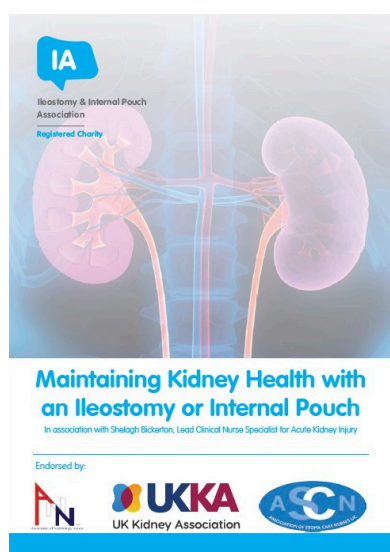
It was a great opportunity for us to chat through the support we can offer to people and build connections with surgeons and nurses attending the event.





# IA publishes new kidney health leaflet

IA is delighted to have gained endorsement from the UK Kidney Association, Association of Nephrology Nurses UK, and ASCN UK on its latest leaflet, 'Maintaining kidney health with an ileostomy or internal pouch', which can be downloaded from IA's website.



The guide outlines the function of the kidneys and how to protect them from Acute Kidney Injury, of which the ostomy and internal pouch community are especially vulnerable, owing to their increased risk of dehydration.

Shelagh Bickerton, Lead Clinical Nurse Specialist for Acute Kidney Injury, project managed the leaflet and also promoted it on IA's behalf at the European Renal Association Congress in Vienna and UK Kidney Association's 'Kidney Week 2025' conference in Bournemouth, both in June.

Shelagh said: "The kidney leaflet is part of a larger piece of work I am doing in trying to improve renal outcomes for people with ileostomies/pouches. A comprehensive, three-pronged approach has been shown to improve outcomes for this cohort of patients:

- Working collaboratively across the medical surgical fields ensures holistic, consistent care resulting in improved clinician confidence and competence, and reduced length of stay, readmission rates and morbidity for patients.
- A standardised assessment tool can support clinical judgement to ensure patients receive appropriate, timely intervention.
- Supporting and educating patients can foster independence and help to allay some of the physical and psychological issues related to having a stoma."

Visit [iasupport.org/information-support/literature](https://iasupport.org/information-support/literature) and search 'Maintaining kidney health with an ileostomy or internal pouch' to view/download the guide.

## IA stand returns to Birmingham's QE Hospital

On 5 June, four volunteers from Birmingham IA attended the city's Queen Elizabeth Hospital to host the return of their information stand to the atrium. Splitting into two shifts, they proudly displayed their IA polo shirts and spoke to many people throughout the four hours the table was up. Enquiries came from potential members, those living already with ileostomies or pouches, someone who'd undergone a reversal, an HCA and theatre worker (dressed in scrubs!), and a lovely gentleman who just wanted to know what an ileostomy was.

Thanks to a nearby Costa café, Birmingham's volunteers were fuelled for the day and left feeling proud of how well it went.





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

June is always a busy period with the annual celebration of Volunteers' Week. I hope that you enjoyed reading about the activities of some of our volunteers that we showcased on social media during the week. We also held our quarterly online volunteer network meeting, along with an 'Introduction to Volunteering with IA' session.

It was a pleasure to meet with members in North London, Kent and Sussex during Volunteers' Week, and I hope that members might consider getting involved so that we can continue to develop the groups in those areas.

I also enjoyed spending a few days in Glasgow this month, meeting members from the West and Central Scotland group. It was great to get their feedback, and I thank them for making me feel most welcome. This was combined with a visit to the British Society of Gastroenterology's annual conference, helping to promote our group network to a large and varied audience.

I've been getting some good feedback from groups who have been involved in our 'Volunteering in Action' project so far this year. We have another couple for July, and would appreciate your support. Please see below for details.

*Do get in touch with me: [roy.bustin@iasupport.org](mailto:roy.bustin@iasupport.org), if you would like to discuss anything related to your group. I look forward to hearing from you.*



Roy met with members of Kent IA (above) and Sussex IA



### Volunteering in Action: plans for July

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 both actions, or select one(s) you have a particular interest in.

#### Thank You Day 6 July 2025

This is a special occasion to express gratitude and appreciation towards the people who have made a difference in our lives. It's a day to celebrate the goodness of humanity and to acknowledge the efforts and contributions of those around us.

**The action:** To say "thank you"! We want to know who your group is thanking, whether it be those on the committee, group members, friends, family, colleagues or healthcare professionals. We will then share your comments on the day through our social media channels.

#### Samaritans Awareness Day 24 July 2025

Samaritans are raising awareness to remind people that they're there for anyone who needs someone to listen. This is an opportunity to signpost your group members to support if they might need it.

**The action:** To visit the [Samaritans website](#) and share one of the suggested messages through your group's social media channels, along with promotion of [IA's new Support Through Therapy](#) offer.