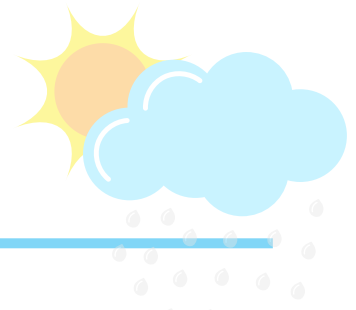




IA UPDATE



September 2026

Welcome

Final call for Scottish Information Day on 10 October, and a reminder to save the date for IA's Information Day next April. Plus charity partnerships for Surrey IA and two fantastic presentations by Birmingham IA.

September's 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

Surrey IA partners with Limbcare and Ukraine Relief

Surrey IA, recently partnered with local charity Limbcare and Ukraine Relief, donating surplus medical and mobility equipment to support people in need in Ukraine.

Ukraine Relief was founded in Bournemouth by Karol Swiacki and has grown from a few van loads of donations into an award-winning charity getting essential supplies to Ukraine quickly and safely.

Limbcare offers hope, advice, and peer support to amputees and limb-impaired individuals and their families.

As part of this partnership, Limbcare passed on mobility equipment, including wheelchairs, prosthetic limbs, walking frames, and crutches.



Surrey IA was also glad to donate their own surplus ostomy supplies, alongside further donations from Berks, Bucks & Oxon IA: this was stock that couldn't be returned to hospitals or stoma care nurses and would otherwise have gone to waste. It will now reach patients with little or no access to stoma supplies.

Surrey IA committee member Andrew Watkin (*pictured above, second from right*) said: "It's a great example of what local groups can achieve by working together with other charities – turning surplus equipment into life-changing support for people who need it most."

Ukraine Relief Founder & CEO, Karol Swiacki, said: "Thank you for your continued support of Ukraine through Surrey IA, Limbcare, and Ukraine Relief."

Limbcare Trustee James Callender commented: "Limbcare was delighted to partner with Surrey IA in donating surplus medical supplies and equipment to those in need in Ukraine through Ukraine Relief. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Andy for his invaluable assistance in loading the supplies alongside my team and contributing to this worthwhile cause."



Scottish Information Day, 10 October 2026

Voco Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow G1 3SF

10.30am-5pm (registration from 9.30am)

Advanced booking required: tickets £10 (non-refundable)

The annual Scottish Information Day returns this autumn in Glasgow and will once again host a mix of speakers, workshops and ostomy company representatives. This informal event provides a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and make many new ones!

There'll be surgical presentations and [Life Coach Rosie Lawson](#) (pictured) will make a welcome return to provide relaxation tips and advice.

Book your ticket at: <https://iasupport.org/scotland26/>



Bowel disease goes under a new microscope



A BBC News story has reported on the hopes that a new microscope, officially launched on 14 September at the Rosalind Franklin Institute, Oxfordshire, will 'help pave the way for a greater understanding of conditions like inflammatory bowel disease'.

A trio of American and German award-winning scientists developed the cutting-edge tech for the 'Stimulated Emission Depletion' (STED) optical microscope, which a researcher at Rosalind Franklin has called a "game changer" and "unique in the UK".

According to the BBC News report, 'the STED microscope uses lasers shaped like a doughnut to vastly increase the resolution of images'.

The powerful scope will allow processes within cells from tissue samples to be studied, with one of its first tasks to focus on cell creation in the bowel, to discover how disease affects them. (*Photo: generic*).

You can read the full BBC News story [here](#).

Open day & exhibition for Royal Stoke University Hospital patients

Saturday 17 October 2026, 1pm to 4pm

Bradwell Lodge, Bradwell Lane, Porthill, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffs ST5 8PS

Gain insight and reassurance at this annual event for ostomates, supported by Royal Stoke University Hospital. All patients with a stoma resulting from bowel or bladder diversion surgery are welcome to attend, along with their friends/family/carers. Members of the Bowel Care Team from the hospital and leading manufacturers will be present, and light refreshments will be available.



For more details, email Moira Hammond at: cm.hammond@ntlworld.com

IA Information Day, 24 April 2027

SAVE THE DATE ***** SAVE THE DATE ***** SAVE THE DATE ***** SAVE THE DATE

IA Information Day, Saturday 24 April 2027, 9am to 5pm

Radisson Blu East Midlands Airport, Herald Way, Pegasus Business Park, Derby DE74 2TZ

We're thrilled to announce that we have reserved a venue for IA's AGM and Information Day 2027. After the wonderful turnout at our 70th anniversary meeting this year, we hope you'll be keen to join us once again for more expert insight in the form of presentations and workshops, and the chance to relax and socialise with friends old and new.

IA's Information Day is *the* event of the year for anyone seeking advice and support on all things ileostomy and internal pouch. Product reps will also be in attendance to showcase the latest innovations in stoma care and management, so don't be shy about approaching them with any questions you may have.



By the close of the event, it is our hope that you return home with renewed confidence, new contacts and stacks of information to support your current stage of health, whether that's pre-surgery anxieties or post-surgery recovery.

Concluding Information Day, our gala dinner at the same venue is a popular way to wind down, followed by live entertainment into the evening. Dancing shoes at the ready!

While it's still early days in our planning, we will release more information very soon, including booking information and (*for company law members and board trustees only*) details of our AGM which will also take place at the Radisson Blu East Midlands Airport on Friday 23 April 2027.

If you're new to IA and would like an idea of the topics covered at Information Day, please see some [past presentations on our website](#).

Bag, pouch, appliance... what do you call your stoma device?

Recently, some of our members raised whether “bag” is the right way to describe a stoma device. It’s a simple question, but the answer is less straightforward. Emma Greenwood, IA’s Stoma and Pouch Care Specialist Nurse, said: “I’ve researched and considered IA’s response carefully as I’m aware of the importance of the use of language and the impact it can have.



“Why does the word matter? Studies show that stoma surgery can influence body image perception and self-esteem, and research tells us that how we talk about life with a stoma can influence how people feel about themselves. Person-centred care includes the type of language used, which can shape how people feel about their bodies and their condition day to day. Currently, the reality is that stoma -bag, -appliance, and -pouch are used interchangeably and inconsistently by many.”

Share your thoughts about stoma device terminology in our online survey

To have your say about the terminology you prefer to use to describe your stoma device, please visit bit.ly/4x5CTXL to complete our short online-only survey, which will remain open until 31 December 2026. The results could shape IA’s communications, and we hope to share the findings more widely to help inform how stoma care is discussed across the NHS and beyond.

There is no requirement to provide your name or other identifying details. IA will update members on how we plan to proceed based on the survey outcome in due course.



Neil Smart Memorial Research Award

In memory of Professor Neil Smart, colorectal surgeon and IA trustee for many years, IA has established a dedicated research award, recognising Neil’s commitment to advancing research and improving patient outcomes through knowledge and collaboration. Funds donated will directly improve quality of life for people living with an ileostomy or an internal pouch.

Donate online or via Text Giving

iasupport.org/neilsmartaward **OR**

Text NEIL to 70480 to donate £10 OR text NEIL plus donation amount of your choice, e.g.,

NEIL1 to 70480 to donate £1*

NEIL20 to 70480 to donate £20*

**Please ensure you have the bill payer’s permission. Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message. Text Giving allows the maximum of £20 per donation subject to maximum of £240 per month per mobile number. IA will receive the cost of your donation less processing fees charged by our third party suppliers. For online payments this is 1.5% (UK cards) of the donation amount plus 20p; for donations via Text Giving this is 5% of the donation amount plus a single monthly payment fee. Fees may be subject to change.*

Otto Ostomy model presentation at QE Birmingham



Birmingham IA's John Woolston (Chair) and Maggie Butler (Secretary) were pleased to present an 'Otto Ostomy' model to Rachel Henbrey, Lead CNS Colorectal Department QE, and Lisa Shrimpton, Colorectal Clinical Nurse Specialist, at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust on 16 September 2026.

The Otto Ostomy model is a realistic educational model for healthcare providers, patients, and families.

It features a clear torso with removable, colour-coded organs and stoma openings. It comes with a number of stomas that can be incorporated and allows hands-on practice with ostomies, to support understanding, teaching, and confidence in managing this life-changing condition. The purchase and presentation of this model by Birmingham IA (supported by National IA) continues the long-standing link between the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Birmingham IA.

Active support from Birmingham [IA's One2One Support Volunteers](#) to new and established ostomists forms a key part of the relationship. Above L-R: Rachel Henbrey, Lisa Shrimpton and John Woolston.



Colorectal cancer patients' meeting in Solihull

On Thursday 13 August, Birmingham IA was invited to take part in a colorectal cancer meeting at Marie Curie Hospice in Solihull, organised by Heartlands Hospital stoma care team. There were about ten cancer patients in attendance, some of whom had stomas, along with their relatives.

The theme was 'Travel with a stoma' and Alison Roberts, a Clinical Nurse Specialist from Heartlands, gave a thorough and very informative presentation.

Birmingham IA's Maggie Butler and Bogusha Bury conversed with all the patients and members of the stoma care team. Maggie said: "Our presence was very much appreciated, and we gave a short talk about Birmingham IA and also about our own travel experiences with a stoma. We are lucky to have such events organised by the Birmingham nursing teams."

Above: Heartlands Hospital's stoma care team, from left: Rebecca Billingsley, Alison Roberts, (Birmingham IA's Maggie Butler and Bogusha Bury), Emma Astley-Hill and Stacy O'Shea.



IA Group News from Roy Bustin, Group Relationship Lead

Highlights from around the network

It's been a busy few weeks for our group network, with lots of high-quality support on offer throughout the UK and Ireland. There were too many events to mention here, but particular highlights include the work being done in Scotland to relaunch our Fife IA group, along with the first Highland IA meeting (*pictured below*) in over two years. The groups connected with over 40 members between them.



Donna Ross-Hatton, Committee Member with Highland IA, said: "We had a lovely few hours at The Drumossie Hotel in Inverness catching up with all our members, many of whom we haven't seen for a couple of years. We were joined by Nicola from Vanilla Blush, Rebecca from Coloplast and Joanna from Salts, along with Cathie and Fiona from Raigmore Hospital Colorectal/Stoma Nurse Team. We look forward to seeing everyone next year at our next event." *Well done to everybody involved!*



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups

King's Award for Voluntary Service

Nominations are now open for the King's Award for Voluntary Service, which celebrates the outstanding work of local volunteers. It is the highest award given to voluntary groups and the equivalent of an MBE.

If you are a member of a local group and receive support from it, please consider helping the group to get recognition by nominating it for an award. The [nominations for the 2027 King's Award for Voluntary Service](#) are now open online, closing 1 December 2026.

Further [details of the award can be found here](#).

Volunteer network meeting - Tuesday 1 December

Our next volunteer network meeting will take place on Tuesday 1 December at 7pm. This is just ahead of International Volunteer Day, and a chance to celebrate the unique support that volunteers contribute to IA. Whatever your volunteering role, we would love to see you there for some friendly and informal networking amongst the team. The session will happen on Zoom, so let us know if you're planning to attend by emailing volunteering@iasupport.org and we will send you the link to join.

Thank you!

Thank you to those groups who completed our recent survey regarding the use of WhatsApp. The results show that WhatsApp is currently being used inconsistently across the organisation. Therefore, we will be putting guidance in place to ensure that we are using WhatsApp safely and effectively when communicating with members. In the meantime, please get in touch with me if you would like to discuss this further: roy.bustin@iasupport.org