

# IMPROVING EVERYDAY JOURNEYS FOR PEOPLE WITH IBS

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common health condition but little is known about it, and symptoms can impact people's everyday lives. Accessible toilet facilities facilitate everyday journeys. Knowledge and availability of toilets as part of travel and journeys can improve comfort and social participation for people with IBS.

## THE RESEARCH

Research from The University of Sheffield **explored what it means to live with the common condition, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).**



25 people who identified as living with IBS took part in the research by **completing a daily diary and a follow up qualitative interview.**



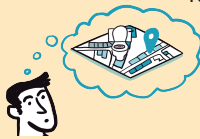
They were asked how the condition affected the places **people could or couldn't go, the routines of their day, and interactions and relationships.**



## FINDINGS

Those with IBS explained how **knowledge and availability of toilets were paramount** in facilitating everyday journeys. This included:

having a **mental map of toilet locations** based on comfort and convenience;



a **reliance on commercial spaces for toilets** and encounters of **inaccessibility** for hidden conditions such as IBS;



and **discomforts of toilet provision (or lack of)** on transport services.



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**I find travelling difficult.** I think I'm ok with my commute now, its 25 minutes so I'm not too bad, I generally know that I've got time to get to work and be able to get to the toilet if I need to, but **I do find that a longer journey or travelling abroad because you're up at different times can put my stomach on edge.**



## RECOMMENDATIONS



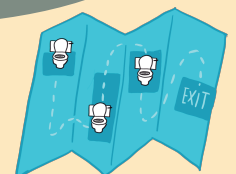
Ensure toilets are **always FREE** to use and **always OPEN**



**Easy to access information** of toilet facilities when planning journeys



**Facilitate training and awareness into radar keys and Can't Wait Cards** for those with invisible health conditions to improve access



**Improve toilet access and provision** on public transport and in transport hubs

**FIND OUT MORE:** Contact Lead researcher Lauren White

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