

EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES OF IBS

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common health condition but little is known about it, and symptoms can impact people's everyday lives.

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 their interactions and relationships**.

FINDINGS

Negotiating dietary requirements

including uncertainties of what foods to eat and how dietary changes are met with public understandings and attitudes

Managing symptoms of IBS within the home and in public life and ensuring privacy in both.

This includes carrying personal belongings such as spare tissues, change and medication in the presence of symptoms.

Being aware of the role of routines in managing symptoms and often reimagining them e.g. allowing extra time to account for symptoms or slowing down daily routines.

Knowing where toilets are on everyday journeys such as reliable shops and restaurants with toilet facilities, having a mental map of toilets and anticipating toiletry time on daily journeys.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Better structural support and accessibility for those living with IBS related to their everyday lives, working environments and everyday journeys.

Increased awareness and understanding

of what it means to live with IBS with a view to improving support.

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