

	<h2 style="text-align: center;"><b><i>NACC Survey Exposes Shortage of IBD Nurses</i></b></h2>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Patient charity aims for each PCT to fund at least one specialist gastroenterology nurse</b></p>

**23rd November 2005, NACC at the RCN Gastroenterology & Stoma Forum**

**Conference, Telford.** A recent survey conducted by The National Association of Colitis and Crohn's Disease (NACC) has highlighted a significant shortage of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Nurse Specialists amongst the 489 UK PCTs, NHS Trusts and Local Health Authorities. With an overall response rate of 28%, the key findings showed only forty nine (42%) of the responding English NHS trusts and PCTs are currently funding IBD Nurse Specialists. In Scotland and Wales, the picture is even gloomier with just three Health Boards and Trusts supporting these important posts in Scotland and only two of the eight responding Trusts funding a post in Wales.

This worrying situation is underlined by the fact that the number of responding authorities intending to create new posts in the future is disappointing, particularly in Scotland and Wales, where to date the survey indicates that no new posts are anticipated. The main reason given for the shortage of specialist nurses is a severe lack of funding.

On a more positive note, some authorities stated they are developing a range of approaches to the management of chronic disease which could be used to support patients with Colitis and Crohn's disease. Some of these approaches include nurse-led community based teams working across primary and secondary care, as well as the implementation of patient programmes which focus on the self management of chronic conditions, through knowledge and skills.

Richard Driscoll, Director of NACC explains, "This important survey of UK health authorities is further evidence for the poor provision of Colitis and Crohn's Nurse

Specialists in the UK. In a recent NACC membership survey only 26% of Colitis and Crohn's patients had the support of a Nurse Specialist. Most people living with these distressing and sometimes life-threatening diseases do not have access to this essential element of good gastroenterology care."

Richard continues, "NACC launched a major campaign in 2005 to call for the development of more IBD Nurse Specialist posts within the healthcare service, and in an effort to increase the number of funded posts, has commissioned research to review the evidence for the effectiveness and value of these key roles. The charity's aim is for each Primary Care Trust to fund a minimum of one Gastroenterology Nurse to provide specialist support for Colitis and Crohn's patients.

NACC is working closely with the Royal College of Nursing, the British Society of Gastroenterology and other professional associations and charities, in order to establish a strategic framework for gastroenterology which includes the funding and development of better Colitis and Crohn's nursing services."

With Colitis and Crohn's disease affecting people between the ages of 15 and 35, these chronic life-long conditions are relatively common, affecting 1 in 400 individuals which is similar to Parkinson's disease (1:500) where there are more than 200 nurses in post. The serious lack of recognition of Colitis and Crohn's disease at both Government level and in the NHS is reflected in the lack of provision of specialist Colitis and Crohn's nurses. **ENDS**

**Health professionals, patients or their families seeking further information or support can contact:**

**National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease (NACC)  
4 Beaumont House, Sutton Road, St Albans, Herts. AL1 5HH**

**Daytime Information Line 0845 130 2233      NACC-in-Contact Line 0845 130 3344**  
**Website [www.nacc.org.uk](http://www.nacc.org.uk)**

## **Editor's Notes**

- **NACC provides Support and Information**

NACC provides a valuable support network and information resource for people and families affected by Colitis and Crohn's Disease as well as raising significant funds for research. The 70 NACC Groups across the UK enable members to share information and experiences. The Daytime Information Line is available to members and non-members alike who have queries about all aspects of their disease. The NACC-in-Contact Line offers members a chance to speak to a trained volunteer with Colitis or Crohn's Disease. Membership of NACC is open to anyone who has Colitis or Crohn's Disease, their friends and families, health professionals and anyone who wishes to support the charity. Membership costs £12 in the first year, £10 thereafter.

### **NACC – Improving Life for People Affected by Colitis and Crohn's Disease**

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