



Key considerations before setting up an IBS Network Support group

Setting up and running an IBS support group is an extremely rewarding experience. Before putting yourself forward as a support group leader, and attending the training day, please take time to consider the following.

1. Alternatives: is there already a support group in your area?
2. Time: do you have the time to plan and promote the meetings, coordinate speakers, respond to questions from support group members both at, and in between meetings?

The amount of time each leader spends will vary significantly but may take up around three to four evenings per month.

3. Your attributes:

- Are you comfortable talking in front of a group?
- Can you be assertive as well as empathetic with IBS patients during meetings?
- Do you have a positive and encouraging attitude?
- Are you a good listener?
- Will you be committed to planning and attending the meetings – even if you're not feeling 100%?
- Do you have the skills required?
(For example: are you organised, self-motivated and do you possess basic IT skills with access to a pc and the internet?)

4. Objectives: what are your key reasons for setting up a support group? For example:

- Do you want to help and meet people living with IBS?
- Are you planning to educate and encourage members?
- Would you like to spread awareness of IBS in your community?
- Would you like to be instrumental in changing national policies relating to IBS?
- Would you like to raise funds for research into IBS?