

Breaking through the Pain Barrier in Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Inflammatory Bowel Disease

During this October's National Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) Festival, people with lived experience, researchers, clinicians, and members of the public gathered at the University of Galway to learn about and discuss pain and related symptoms in IBS and IBD. The insights below, gathered through a post-event survey, highlight what matters most to attendees and may help direct future pain research.



Research Priorities for Pain in IBS and IBD



- New pain management options (accessible, affordable, easily implementable)
- Dietary triggers and interventions
- Early detection and monitoring
- Understanding the lived experience
- Improving quality of life

Improving Research Relevance

- Strong dialogue with patients and clinicians throughout the research cycle
- Widening research beyond individual symptoms or factors: a whole-person approach



Partner Involvement:
Listen, Engage, Talk, Ask,
Learn, Consult, Co-produce

Barriers to Research Participation



- Lack of awareness
- Limited understanding
- Practical barriers (travel, cost, time, work, childcare)
- High symptom burden
- Low energy levels
- Low self-confidence
- Anxiety, stress, shame
- Previously feeling dismissed by healthcare professionals