# Stars Shine Light on Bowel Health: Campaigns to Raise Awareness of Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Early Cancer Detection



**Mollie Pearce Leads Campaign to Raise Awareness About Inflammatory Bowel Disease**

Mollie Pearce, a 22-year-old star from the show "The Traitors," is spearheading a new campaign aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Diagnosed with ulcerative colitis at the age of 11, Pearce has dealt with severe symptoms including stomach pain, diarrhea, and anxiety related to frequent bowel movements.

Ulcerative colitis is a condition causing lesions and inflammation in the colon, resulting in symptoms like bloody stools and the sudden urge to use the toilet. Pearce's personal journey led her to eventually receive a stoma—an opening that connects the bowel to an external bag—at age 18, which has provided her with greater confidence and independence.

The new campaign, titled "Where’s Crohn’s & Colitis," draws inspiration from the "Where’s Wally" series and aims to educate the public about IBD through an engaging online game. Developed by the South Korea-based biopharmaceutical company Celltrion, the initiative invites people to learn more about these often-invisible conditions.

Pearce hopes the campaign will address the embarrassment many feel when discussing bowel health, encouraging individuals to seek medical advice if experiencing symptoms. An estimated one in every 277 people in the UK has ulcerative colitis, which underscores the necessity of raising awareness and reducing the stigma surrounding the condition.

Further details about the "Where’s Crohn’s & Colitis" campaign can be found online, offering an interactive way for the public to engage with and better understand IBD.

**Maia Kennedy’s Experience Highlights Importance of Early Cancer Detection**

Maia Kennedy, a 38-year-old cancer survivor, aims to inspire others to heed their body’s signs and seek medical advice promptly. Her ordeal began just before Christmas last year during a train journey in Switzerland when her GP informed her that blood had been found in her stool. Upon returning to the UK, an urgent colonoscopy revealed a bowel cancer tumor.

Due to the early detection, Kennedy avoided chemotherapy and had a successful surgery to remove the tumor and part of her colon. Now cancer-free, she actively encourages others to monitor and report any unusual symptoms, such as increased bowel movements, blood in stool, or changes in toilet habits. Kennedy supports the Bowel Cancer UK campaign "Tell Your GP Instead," which promotes timely doctor visits for early diagnosis and treatment.

Kennedy’s story underscores the importance of recognizing and acting on abnormal symptoms, which can lead to early and potentially life-saving treatment. Her experience has led her to share her journey, helping raise awareness and urging others not to delay seeking medical advice.