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Summary

INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE AND IMPAIRMENT OF WORKING LIFE

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A cross-sectional study of 45 employed IBD patients found substantial workplace impact, with 69% reporting physical fatigue, average absenteeism of 49.6 days per year, and 44% experiencing salary restrictions due to their illness.

KEY POINTS

- The study included 45 working IBD patients (80% Crohn's disease, 20% ulcerative colitis) with mean age 44 years and average 9 years of follow-up, most working full-time (85%) with average 38.8 hours per week.
- Physical fatigue was the predominant workplace complaint (69% of patients), followed by abdominal pain (53%), diarrhea (38%), and subocclusive syndrome (40%), with 33% reporting lack of accessible restrooms.
- Average absenteeism was 49.6 days in the last twelve months (range 0-240 days) and average hospitalization was 30.7 days (range 0-150 days).
- 44% of patients reported salary restrictions during their career due to IBD, and psychological impacts including anxiety and depression were present in 27% of cases.
- Only 5 patients had accessed occupational medicine services; the authors conclude that workplace accommodations and appropriate supports are needed to improve working experience for IBD patients.

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