Focus on: Novel Technologies
The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation is increasingly focused on the latest technological and research advances—both inside and outside the IBD space—that could improve the care and enhance the lives of people living with IBD. We're convening experts to identify key unmet clinical needs for patients and working together to identify and promote technologies that can facilitate studies to meet those needs in an accelerated, three- to five-year timeframe.

Progress on the path to better treatments and cures for IBD is accelerated by incorporating technology into research. Key advancements that have revolutionized IBD patient care since the Foundation was established 50 years ago include:

- The ileal pouch-anal anastomosis (IPAA or j-pouch), which allows patients to dispense with an external ostomy bag by having, instead, an internal pouch.

- Biologic therapies which use antibodies (blood proteins produced by the body to fight disease) to decrease inflammation in the intestine that results in IBD. The discovery and development of biologic therapies provide treatment options that have helped more IBD patients go into and remain in remission.

New technologies to meet clinical needs

The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation is intensifying its efforts to look outside the IBD space at new technologies that could be applied to help meet the clinical needs of our patients. In 2017, the Foundation convened a “Novel Technologies” workshop with an international, multidisciplinary group of professionals to discuss current, unmet needs in IBD patient care, including:

- Detecting active disease associated with ongoing inflammation;
- Preventing and managing recurrent disease after surgery; and
- Managing perianal and post-operative complications.

Workshop participants explored how to meet these clinical needs through innovative applications of advanced technologies, such as imaging and sensing technologies, surgical tools and implantable devices, and regenerative medicine/stem cell-based technology.

The Foundation is building on these discussions and ideas to help formulate a strategic “road map” to identify and promote new technologies and their application to improve care and enhance the quality of IBD patients' lives in a short timeframe.