

What is the role of the Advanced Practice Provider in IBD?

Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) consist of Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, and Clinical Nurse Specialists. They support gastroenterologists, surgeons and other providers in GI practices as they can bill for their services and act independently while expanding specialty services in the practice. They can take a detailed patient history, perform physical exams, diagnose and treat patients, order and interpret laboratory and radiographic studies as well as prescribe medications. In some areas APPs are credentialed and trained to perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. APPs also focus on chronic patient care management and monitoring, prevention, health care maintenance and patient education. Their scope of practice will vary depending on location but are extremely valuable as they can improve patient access to care, provide a unique skill set and are often able to spend more time educating and counseling patients while improving patient satisfaction. They generally manage outpatient, inpatient, routine and established care patients as well as emergent walk in visits which frees up the gastroenterologist's and surgeon's time to focus on the more complicated patients and perform procedures.

What is the role of the Nurse in IBD?

Nurses play a very important role as they typically are the first point of contact for the IBD patient and are the patient's lifeline to care. They usually also serve as the care coordinator, communicating with the healthcare team and the patient to ensure that the treatment plan is carried out and triaged appropriately. Nurses also help with patient education on the disease process and treatments, motivate patients to ensure adherence to their treatment plan, are great listeners and provide patients with emotional support.

For more information on educational resources for nurses and advanced practice providers, check out: www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org/nurseandapp