

## Problem

What if you could step into the shoes of someone living with a chronic illness? Would that experience help you to deliver better outcomes for patients?

Being able to take time to 'walk in someone else's shoes' and understand a different experience would benefit all of us but for those working in healthcare, empathy and being able to connect to 'patient hood', the experience of living with an illness, is a common objective in order to enhance understanding of the patient perspective. Increasing HCP empathy is demonstrated to positively impact the therapeutic alliance, leading to increased patient satisfaction, adherence and improved health outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

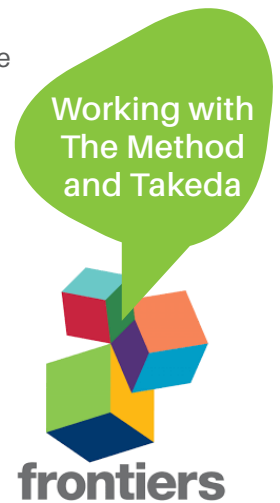
## Solution

**Studio Health** was integral to the design and development of award-winning digital immersive learning tool 'In Their Shoes', working with The Method and Takeda Pharmaceuticals. One hundred and fifty-five employees took part in the immersive program at Takeda offices in Europe, Asia, North and South America. The design of 'In Their Shoes'® draws on the biopsychosocial model of illness,<sup>2</sup> highlighting the psychological and social impact of living with a chronic condition as well as physical symptoms. The constructed narratives contain around 70 individual challenges typically faced by someone living with Inflammatory Bowel Disease. Scenarios touch on the stresses chronic illness exacts on work and personal relationships.

## Benefit

This study found that an immersive training program, conducted amongst pharmaceutical company employees, led to increased understanding of and empathy for the lived experience of patients with IBD. We found statistically significant increases pre/post participation on self-rated disease understanding, self-rated connection with and advocacy for people living with IBD, and belief that job role can positively impact others. The study's mixed methods approach offers an in-depth perspective on how empathy can propel learners through the experiential learning cycle and how this may activate behavioural change in the workplace.

'In Their Shoes' continues to be utilised by multiple audiences including employees, patient groups, nurses, specialists, MPs, advocates and lobbyists. It has now reached over 30 countries worldwide, is in 9 languages and so far reached 13000 participants (and counting). Our study was published in 'Frontiers', one of the world's top journals.



Promoting  
Health

Digital  
Innovation

Behaviour  
Change

Enhancing  
Services

Professionals  
Training

Patient  
Led Design

### References:

1. Kim et al., 2004; Di Blasi et al., 2001; Hojat et al., 2011; Rakel et al., 2011; Canale et al., 2012; Roche and Harmon, 2017
2. Engel, 1977