

March 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to the March edition of the Women's Health & Fertility Specialist Group newsletter! March marks Endometriosis Awareness Month, and in this edition, we place a dedicated spotlight on the condition. You'll also find updates from our recent AGM, exciting news about committee volunteer opportunities, the launch of our Student Corner, and the latest CPD and career listings. As always, there's plenty to keep you informed and inspired.

Research update

Endometriosis is a chronic, oestrogen-driven inflammatory condition affecting approximately 10% of women of reproductive age, around 190 million women worldwide, yet remains significantly underdiagnosed, with an average diagnostic delay of 7-10 years. Characterised by the growth of endometrial-like tissue outside the uterus, it causes debilitating pelvic pain, fatigue, and in many cases subfertility. This month we focus our research update entirely on endometriosis, exploring the role of dietary and nutritional interventions, the emerging microbiota evidence and a striking new meta-analysis on cardiovascular risk.



[Dietary and Nutritional Interventions for the Management of Endometriosis](#)

This article explores the promising role of dietary and nutritional interventions as adjunct therapies for endometriosis. While conventional treatments like surgery and medication remain central, increasing numbers of patients are turning to dietary changes for symptom relief, even though no single diet has been universally validated.

The authors highlight emerging scientific evidence that anti-inflammatory diets, especially those rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and omega-3 fatty acids (such as the Mediterranean diet), may help downregulate inflammatory pathways, reduce oxidative stress, and ease pelvic pain. In contrast, diets high in red meat, trans fats, and processed foods are associated with increased symptom severity, likely due to their pro-inflammatory mechanisms.

The review delves into the potential of micronutrients and bioactive compounds, including vitamin D, antioxidants, curcumin, resveratrol, and omega-3 supplements. These nutrients may modulate immune responses, influence estrogen metabolism, and even alter the gut microbiome; factors believed to be key in endometriosis pathogenesis. Exclusion diets like low-FODMAP, gluten-free, and low-nickel protocols show promise, particularly for patients who

experience gastrointestinal symptoms, though larger clinical trials are needed. The article also notes the ongoing debate about dairy, with research showing mixed effects on estrogen levels and inflammation.

Ultimately, the authors conclude that while dietary interventions hold potential for personalised, holistic management of endometriosis, more rigorous and large-scale research is needed to fully understand mechanisms and develop robust, evidence-based dietary guidelines.

[Microbiota insights into endometriosis](#)



This comprehensive review explores the emerging role of the microbiota, both gut and gynecological, in the pathogenesis and management of endometriosis. The authors highlight how endometriosis is not just a localised pelvic disorder, but a systemic, immune-mediated condition with complex origins. Recent research reveals that alterations in the gut, vaginal, and endometrial microbiota may influence disease development, symptoms, and immune responses, though findings are often inconsistent. Animal and human studies suggest a possible bidirectional relationship: endometriosis can alter the microbiota, while dysbiosis might also promote endometriosis. The review discusses links between microbiota-driven inflammation, hormonal regulation, and pain, and examines novel therapeutic approaches such as probiotics and dietary interventions. The authors underscore the need for rigorous research design to control for confounding factors and conclude that a deeper understanding of microbiota-endometriosis interactions could open up innovative avenues for diagnosis and treatment.

[Risk of cardiovascular disease and mortality among women with endometriosis: A systematic review and meta-analysis](#)

This systematic review and meta-analysis examines the link between endometriosis and the risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and mortality. Analysing data from 12 cohort studies, the authors found that women with endometriosis have a significantly increased risk of stroke, coronary heart disease, and composite cardiovascular disease compared to women without the condition. The review highlights that chronic inflammation and changes in lipid profiles associated with endometriosis may contribute to these risks.



These findings underscore the need for primary cardiovascular prevention in women, particularly those with endometriosis, an emerging, female-specific risk factor. Women with endometriosis should have regular cardiovascular risk assessments, including screening for

hypertension, migraine with aura, lipids, diabetes, BMI, and early family history of cardiovascular disease.

However, findings on all-cause and cardiovascular mortality remain inconsistent. The authors emphasise the importance of integrating cardiovascular risk assessment and prevention strategies into the management of endometriosis, calling for further research to clarify these associations and improve care for affected women.

Together, these papers paint an important picture of endometriosis as a condition that extends well beyond pelvic pain. The evidence points to diet and microbiota as meaningful, modifiable factors in disease management, while the cardiovascular data reminds us that our role in supporting women with endo may have implications far beyond reproductive health. As the evidence base grows, dietitians are increasingly well-placed to offer holistic, meaningful input into the multidisciplinary care of this complex condition.

News and Updates

Specialist Group Resources

The committee continues to lead the development and coordination of practical, evidence-based resources to support both healthcare professionals and the public in key areas of women's health and fertility nutrition.

We are pleased to share that our **vegan pregnancy resource** will be released soon.

Work will begin on a new **nutrition and endometriosis resource**. We are currently inviting members who may be interested in contributing to the development of this resource, to volunteer.

If you would like to get involved, please email cathygdietitian@gmail.com to register your interest.

Recent Relevant Research

- We are delighted to celebrate a new publication from our committee member Julie Abayomi. Her paper, "*Exploring Challenges and Co-Developing a Nutritional Resource for Antenatal Care: A Participatory Stakeholder Engagement Study with Midwives and Public Involvement*", published in *Health Expectations*, explores the real-world challenges midwives face in delivering nutrition advice during antenatal care, and how collaborative, co-produced solutions can help bridge the gap. [Read the full paper here.](#)
- The British Nutrition Foundation has published a new briefing paper, *Diet in Pregnancy*, covering nutrition from preconception through pregnancy. Despite widespread

recognition of the importance of a healthy diet, many women in the UK fall short of recommended intakes for key nutrients including iron, folate, iodine and vitamin D. A useful practice resource. [Read it here.](#)

Call for Participants - Endometriosis & Dietetic Practice

A dietetics student, Emma Seymour, is researching the experiences of UK-registered dietitians providing dietary advice to people with endometriosis. The study aims to better understand how dietary information is delivered, the approaches taken in practice, and to identify common themes, challenges and potential gaps in service provision. Participation involves a 45-minute online interview, scheduled at a time convenient to you. If you would like to take part or would like further information, please complete the interest form here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/t6zasr9WPf> or email Emma at ems0505@my.londonmet.ac.uk before

31 March.

There is also a separate project, conducted by Aga Wajszczuk, also a dietetic student, focusing on dietetic support for people with endometriosis in community settings. Community dietitians can find further information and complete a short survey here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/jSiYkHkbuK>

If you are working in this area, this is a valuable opportunity to contribute to the evidence base and help shape future service development.

Thank you to those who joined our AGM

A sincere thank you to all members who attended our recent Annual General Meeting. It was a pleasure to come together as a specialist group, reflect on the progress we've made over the past year, and share plans for the months ahead.

For those who were unable to attend, the session was recorded and is available on the members' section of our website. We encourage all members to watch it if you can, as it includes important updates on our current projects, priorities, and opportunities to get involved.

Thank you for being part of a growing and dynamic specialist community. We look forward to continuing this work together.

New Manual of Dietetic Practice - Out May 2026

We are pleased to see a strong representation of women's health and fertility nutrition in the upcoming 7th edition of the *Manual of Dietetic Practice*. Several chapters across the

reproductive life course have been authored or edited by colleagues working within our specialist field.

We are particularly proud of the contribution from members of our committee, including Kate Maslin (Editorial Team), Ro Huntriss (Fertility), Julie Abayomi (Pregnancy), Claire Pettitt (PCOS) and Anita Beckwith (Type 1 Diabetes). Additional chapters covering preconception, postpartum, endometriosis and menopause have also been developed by experts within fertility and women's health dietetics.

The expanded depth across these chapters reflects the increasing demand and interest in this specialism, highlighted through previous BDA survey work. It is encouraging to see fertility and women's health so comprehensively represented in this key reference text.

Committee Spotlight - *Highlighting the brilliant members of our committee so you can get to know the team behind the work*

This month, **Ami Loughins, Student Representative**

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I am very grateful for the opportunity to work as a student representative on the committee for the Women's Health and Fertility Specialist Group. It is a privilege to be able to represent the student voice within this important area of dietetics. I really enjoy having the opportunity to collaborate with specialist dietitians, gaining insight from their expertise and contributing to meaningful discussions that support women's health and fertility practice.



What have been the highlights of your role so far?

A key highlight of my role so far has been having the opportunity to attend events and regular team meetings. These experiences have significantly enhanced my practice and strengthened my knowledge within this field.

Outside of work, what do you enjoy doing?

Outside of work, I enjoy travelling and experiencing new places. I enjoy staying active – whether that's competing on the hockey field, hiking or playing padel with friends. I also love cooking and always love to try out new and tasty recipes!

You asked, we answered! - *Updates from our Women's Health and Fertility Specialist Group Facebook Page*

- There was a question regarding calcium requirements in individuals with secondary amenorrhoea, which remains unanswered. Currently, there are no specific recommendations for calcium intake in this group. However, it is well established that people with low body weight (BMI below 18.5) have a higher risk of developing osteoporosis and fractures compared to those with a healthy weight. Additionally, underlying conditions that cause secondary amenorrhoea, such as anorexia nervosa, further increase the risk of osteoporosis and bone fractures. Therefore, it is advisable to ensure an adequate calcium intake of at least 700 mg daily. Clinicians may consider recommending a slightly higher intake, such as 1000 mg, while continuing to monitor the patient's bone health.
- There was another question about the availability of 'scanning pathways for pregnancy following gastric sleeve'. Unfortunately, we have not received any answers. We are aware that GPs normally follow [the BOMSS post-bariatric surgery nutritional guidance](#) to monitor their patients. Some Trusts also have antenatal bariatric clinics where dietitians work. We would appreciate it if our readers and FB group members could help us answer the above question and provide additional information about bariatric antenatal services in their area.

Student Corner (New)

We're pleased to introduce a new **student-led newsletter** created by our student representatives to support dietetic students with an interest in women's health and fertility nutrition. The newsletter shares learning opportunities, useful resources and insights relevant to those exploring this specialist area.

We are delighted to showcase their work and highlight the enthusiasm and engagement of students entering the field. Supporting the next generation of dietitians interested in women's health and fertility is an important part of the group's mission.

You can access the [WHFSG Student Newsletter here!](#)

CPD/Learning Opportunities

WHFSG: Nutritional Management in Pregnancy Course

Our flagship Nutritional Management in Pregnancy course is back for 2026, fully revised and updated with four brand new sessions. Running across 13 taught sessions from 2nd June to 29th September, it offers a comprehensive, evidence-based overview of the latest guidance and practical strategies for supporting women before, during and after pregnancy.

Registration opens this week at £395 for WHFSG members. The early bird discount of £100 closes 1st May 2026, and alumni can take advantage of 50% off full rates with proof of previous attendance by contacting sgevents@bda.uk.com.

GP Pathways for Endometriosis

Dr Rebeccah Tomlinson will be discussing GP pathways for those with endometriosis.

19th March 2026 7:00-8:00PM [online event]

Registration: <https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=1148>

Bridging the Gap in Endometriosis Care: Integrating Health and Wellness Coaching into Clinical Practice

23rd March 2026 6:00PM NZDT (5 am in London) [online event]

Registration: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Dietitians Roundtable: Women's Health Case Studies

15th April 2026 7:30PM-8:30PM [online event]

Registration: [Dietitians Roundtable: Women's Health Case Studies Tickets, Wednesday, Apr 15 from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm GMT+1 | Eventbrite](#)

Menopause Nutrition Foundations for Dietitians

The Centre for Advanced Learning (Australia) is excited to bring you the Menopause Nutrition Foundations for Dietitians **Evergreen course**.

Registration: <https://member.dietitiansaustralia.org.au/ItemDetail?iProductCode=WMNHTHO>

Autism in Women, Girls and those Assigned Female at Birth

9th April 2026 8:00-10:00 PM [online event]

Registration: [Autism in Women, Girls and those Assigned Female at Birth Tickets, Thursday, Apr 9 from 8 pm to 10 pm GMT+1 | Eventbrite](#)

PCWHS Annual Conference: Her life, her health in balance-hormones, health and the female experience

5th June 2026 8:50AM – 4:25PM

Location: The Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists (RCOG)

Registration: [PCWHS Annual Conference: Her life, her health in balance– hormones, health and the female experience | Primary Care Women's Health Society](#)

Job/Career Opportunities:

BDA Women's Health & Fertility Specialist Group Committee

We are pleased to highlight our current volunteer vacancies:

- Co-Research Officer: Open to applications
- Events Coordinator: The position is now open for external expressions of interest.
- Co-Treasurer: The position is now open for external expressions of interest.

Members interested in getting involved please email the group committee at maternalfertilitysg@bda.uk.com

You can find full details and the application process for the role of Co-Research Officer via [the link here](#).

Academy & Women's Nutrition Undergraduate Placement student

<https://careers.nottinghamforest.co.uk/jobs/7233576-academy-women-s-nutrition-undergraduate-placement-student?itk=KXAMGS08KT>

Menopause Care Expert

[Progyny Global \(Remote\): Menopause Care Expert \(m/f/x\)](#)

Best wishes,

BDA Women's Health and Fertility Nutrition Group Committee