



**President's Message:**  
**Associate Professor Michelle Peate**

I would like to start with an expression of my appreciation to Meredith Temple-Smith, our outgoing president, for her leadership and contributions to ASPOG over the past two years. Her presidency was marked by the continuation of our online webinar series, which greatly enriched our engagement with the ASPOG community, and leadership of an inspiring conference in February this year – our first conference since the COVID pandemic. It has been a privilege to be mentored and guided by her. Thank you, Meredith.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Amy Moten to the ASPOG committee and community. Amy was such a warm and kind person, and I am grateful to have known her.

As I step into the presidency, I am eager to expand our online engagement to provide a platform to share and learn about the latest hot topics in psychosocial obstetrics and gynaecology. I'm also excited to support our tradition of impactful conferences, with our 3-4<sup>th</sup> May 2024 conference (block out your calendars now!) looking to be a stimulating event where we will gather to share and grow our knowledge. We already have some exciting speakers lined up. While you wait for more details about the conference, continue to keep a look out for upcoming webinars.

The world is currently witnessing significant upheavals, from the restrictive abortion laws to ongoing conflict. These adversities are a stark reminder of the critical importance of our work in sexual and reproductive rights of women and people. Our research, advocacy and collaboration are needed now more than ever to advance women's health and well-being amidst these challenges.

I am excited about the collective journey ahead and the chance to collaborate with you all.

Warm regards,  
Associate Professor Michelle Peate  
President, ASPOG

**December 2023**

## ASPOG News & Updates

### ASPOG Conference 2024

### “Breaking Boundaries, Bridging Gaps”

3-4<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Our next conference will be held in 3-4<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in Melbourne, at The Royal Women's Hospital. Please keep an eye out for the call for abstracts due out soon.

**For more information:**

Visit our website: [www.aspog.org.au](http://www.aspog.org.au)

Email us: [admin@aspog.org.au](mailto:admin@aspog.org.au)



## Reflections on ASPOG's 2023 February Conference

The Australian Society for Psychosocial Obstetrics & Gynaecology (ASPOG) successfully held its conference on "*Exploring the Tapestry of Psychosocial Obstetrics & Gynaecology*" from 24-26 February 2023 in Adelaide. A significant milestone marking 50 years since the first APSOG conference.

As we reflect on the rich "tapestry of knowledge" shared at the conference, we are reminded of the highly impactful work being undertaken within our community. The conference featured stand out presentations, fascinating panel discussions and an excellent array of poster presentations. Special thanks also to Professor Deborah Bateson for her inspirational oration.

Congratulations to our award winners Vrinda Jain (Best Poster Award); Anastasia Vakkas (New Researcher Prize); Alice Mitchell (Roger Wurm Award); Emma Watson (Suzanne Abraham Award) and Desireé LaGrappe (Emerging Researcher Award).

ASPOG extends its deepest gratitude to all the attendees, speakers, and organizers who made this event possible. We look forward to continuing this journey with you, advancing our knowledge in psychosocial obstetrics and gynaecology at the 2024 conference to be held in Melbourne May 3-4<sup>th</sup> themed - *Breaking boundaries, bridging gaps*.





## Vale Dr Amy Moten (16/04/1978 – 21/10/2023)



### ASPOG WEBINAR SERIES



It is with a heavy heart that we share the passing of Dr Amy Moten, a cherished member of the ASPOG board and community.

Amy was a dedicated general practitioner and educator, fiercely advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights. She worked tirelessly championing the cause in public forums, policy discussions, and community outreach programs at the state and national level.

Her commitment has profoundly impacted ASPOG and left a significant legacy in improving the health and well-being of both her patients and the broader community through her contributions to medical education. Amy will be remembered for her warmth, compassion, and her ability to discuss the most sensitive of health topics with ease.

Our deepest sympathies and collective hearts go out to Amy's family, friends, and colleagues – we are honoured to have been a part of her life.

While we will continue with our webinar series, please remember you can access past webinars here: <https://aspog.org.au>.

We unfortunately had to postpone our last webinar on *Early Pregnancy Loss*. This will be rescheduled for early 2024.

Past topics include:

#### *Perinatal Mental Health, 2022*

Title: Pathways, contexts, and voices of shame and compassion

Presenter: Dr Laura Biggs, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Melbourne

Title: The Supporting Transitions, Attachment and Relationships (STAR Mums) Program

Presenter: Clare Bellhouse, Dept of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne

#### *Reproductive Coercion and Abuse, 2022*

Title: Understanding Reproductive Coercion and Abuse

Associate Professor Laura Tarzia

Measurement of reproductive coercion and abuse: Dilemmas and opportunities  
Presenter: Desireé LaGrappe

#### *Trans Reproductive and Sexual Health Care, 2021*

Title: Key Issues for Trans Reproductive and Sexual Health Care

Presenter Dr Ruth McNair

Title: Temporalities and imagined futures: Trans young people and their parents navigating fertility preservation  
Presenter: Professor Damien Riggs



## MEMBER NEWS & ACHIEVEMENTS

### Women's Health Research Translation and Impact Network Grant Success

Congratulations to Dr Laura Whitburn who received a 2023 EMCR grant from MRFF via Women's Health Research Translation and Impact Network to help share their research on women's childbirth pain experiences.

Congratulations to Dr Rosalie Power and team for their recent grant success "*Sexual Health Across the Margins: LGBTQ Women Living with Disability*" as part of the 2023 Co-Production Grant Scheme MRFF funding via Women's Health Research Translation and Impact Network.



### CanLIT – Cancer LGBTQI Inclusivity Toolkit

CIs: Jane Ussher, Janette Perz, Rosalie Power and team.

Funded by the McGrath Foundation and Breast Cancer Trials group, this project, based on the Out with Cancer Study, aims to enhance cultural safety in Australian cancer care for LGBTQI individuals. It involves developing and evaluating an LGBTQI Inclusivity Toolkit, which will provide health-care professionals and policymakers with evidence-based clinical practices, policy guidelines, and training materials.

### Ann Voda Award Contribution to Menstrual Cycle Research

Congratulations to Professor Jane Ussher and Professor Janette Perz who were jointly awarded the Ann Voda Award for valuable contributions to menstrual cycle research at the 2023 Society Menstrual Cycle Research conference in Washington.



## RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

### Endometriosis, motherhood and family relationships

Researchers Dr Chloe Parton, Lecturer in Health Psychology at Victoria University of Wellington and Dr Alexandra Hawkey, Research Fellow, Western Sydney University are undertaking a project to explore how individuals with endometriosis experience motherhood and family relationships.

This survey is open to mothers who are:

- Aged 18 years or above
- Who have received a diagnosis of endometriosis
- Who have a child aged 18 years or under (including non-biological children)

Please take part here:

[https://vuw.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5cC7NvMMdNPE4ku](https://vuw.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5cC7NvMMdNPE4ku)

### Cervical screening for people with intellectual disability

The 'ScreenEQUAL' study wants to make it easier for people with intellectual disability to have a cervical screening test, and to have a positive experience with the test. This study is interested in talking to people with intellectual disability and their families, support people, managers and leaders in disability organisations and health professionals.

Please take part here:

<https://daffodilcentre.org/news/screenequal-increasing-equitable-access-to-cervical-screening-in-australia/>

### Menopausal symptoms post-cancer treatment

Exploring the facilitators and barriers to using an online patient-driven stepped-care platform for guidance of menopausal symptoms post-cancer treatment.

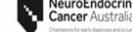
## Are you a healthcare professional?

If you are a GP, practice nurse, oncologist, oncology nurse, menopause specialist, oncology surgeon, surgical nurse, gynaecologist, gynaecological oncologist or a pharmacist, we want to hear from you.

We are inviting you to take part in a study which aims to develop an online platform to improve the management of menopausal symptoms after cancer.



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### Understanding the long-term side effects of cancer

Are you a women cancer survivor? We want to understand the long-term side affects you experience so that we can do a better job at managing them!

## ARE YOU A CANCER SURVIVOR?

We are inviting women cancer survivors\* living in Australia, aged 18 years and above, to complete an anonymous online survey to help us better understand long-term side-effects from cancer and cancer treatment by sharing your experiences with us.

\*For purposes of the current study, we are defining cancer survivors as those who:

- Completed chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery, and/or a stem cell transplant more than six months ago for their first cancer diagnosis
- Currently taking any long-term anti-cancer treatments or treatments to treat advanced disease



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URL: <https://go.unimelb.edu.au/808>



### WHATS NEW IN...

#### ADOLESCENT HEALTH

**Sharp, G.,** Draganidis, A., Hamori, C., Oates, J., & Fernando, A. N. (2023). Beyond Motivations: A Qualitative Pilot Exploration of Women's Experiences Prior to Labiaplasty. *Aesthetic Surgery Journal*, sjad105.

**Sharp, G.,** & Fernando, A. N. (2023). Genital body image education in young adolescent girls: A proof of concept pilot study. *Body Image*, 45, 318-322.

Glackin, A., **Marino, J. L., Peate, M** et al. (2023). Experiences of Oncofertility Decision-Making and Care in a National Sample of Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Patients and Parents. *Journal of Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology*.

**Marino, J. L.,** Lin, A., Davies, C., Kang, M., Bista, S., & Skinner, S. R. (2023). Childhood and Adolescence Gender Role Nonconformity and Gender and Sexuality Diversity in Young Adulthood. *JAMA pediatrics*.

**Marino J, Peate M,** Orme LM et al. Fertility preservation choices and family support among adolescents and young adults undergoing treatment for cancer: A national Australian perspective. *JAYAO*



## FERTILITY

Lensen S, Armstrong S, Vaughan E, Caughey L, **Peate M**, Farquhar C, Pacey A, Balen A, Wainwright E. "It all depends on why it's red": qualitative interviews exploring a traffic light system for IVF add-ons. *Reproduction and Fertility* 2023; 1;4(2):e220136 .

<https://raf.bioscientifica.com/view/journals/raf/aop/raf-22-0136/raf-22-0136.xml>

Sandhu S, **Hickey M**, Lew R, Hammarberg K, Braat S, Agresta F, Parle A, Allingham C, the Eggsurance Collaborative Group, **Peate M**. The Development and Phase 1 Evaluation of a Decision Aid for Elective Egg Freezing. *BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making* 2023; 23:83

Sandhu S, Braat S, **Hickey M**, Hammarberg K, Lew R, Fisher J, Ledger W, Peate M. Information and Decision Support Needs: A Survey of Women Interested in Receiving Planned Oocyte Cryopreservation Information. *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics*.

Armstrong S, Vaughan E, Lensen S, Caughey L, Farquhar C, Pacey A, Balen M, **Peate M**, Wainwright E. Patient and professional perspectives about using in vitro fertilisation add-ons in the UK and Australia: a qualitative study. *BMJ Open*

Chin AHB, Sandhu S, Caughey L, **Peate M**. Systematic protocol and methodology needed for pre-procedure counselling of elective egg freezing patients in Singapore. *Human Fertility* 2023; 26(2):385-397.

Copp T, Thompson R, Doust J, Hammarberg K, **Peate M**, Lensen S, Cvejic E, Lieberman D, Mol BW, McCaffery KJ. Community awareness and use of anti-Mullerian hormone (AMH) testing in Australia: A population survey of women. *Human Reproduction* 2023; 38(8): 1571–1577. doi: 10.1093/humrep/dead111

## MENOPAUSE

An ABC Catalyst special. What is menopause, what are the symptoms and what can we do about it? Watch The Truth About Menopause With Myf Warhurst on iView featuring our very own board ASPOG board member

<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/truth-about-menopause-with-myf-warhurst>

Lan Q, Hickey M, **Peate M**, Marino JL. Priorities for alleviating menopausal symptoms after cancer. *Menopause* 2023; 30(2):136-142. doi: 10.1097/GME.0000000000002108.



## PREGNANCY, BIRTH & MOTHERHOOD

Our ASPOG President Elect, Dr Laura Whitburn's research getting out into the public domain:

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/overwhelming-or-productive-why-we-need-new-ways-to-gauge-birth-pain-20230825-p5dzcj.html>

Dawson, K., **Whitburn, L.**, Newnham, E., East, C., & Jones, L. (2023). Ways of working with labour pain: midwives' preferences and workplace supports and challenges. *Women and Birth*, 36, S40.

From Serial Productions: The Retrievals - explores the stories we tell about women's pain in the context of egg retrieval. How do we tolerate, interpret and account for it? What happens when pain is minimized or dismissed? Listen here :

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/22/podcasts/serial-the-retrievals-yale-fertility-clinic.html>

Early Pregnancy Loss Coalition was founded in 2023 by author and journalist Isabelle Oderberg (Hard to Bear), Miscarriage Australia co-founder Dr Jade Bilardi (Monash University) and Associate Professor Melanie Keep (University of Sydney).

Please see here for more info: <https://eplc.au/>

Please see here for recent media article on the coalition:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/aug/09/early-pregnancy-loss-coalition-miscarriage-support-care>

Launch of Miscarriage Australia website: covers myths and facts about miscarriage, treatment options, how to care for yourself and where to seek help and support. Please click here <https://miscarriageaustralia.com.au/>

Bilardi, J. E., & Temple-Smith, M. (2023). We know all too well the significant psychological impact of miscarriage and recurrent miscarriage: So where is the support?. *Fertility and Sterility*.

Bilardi, J., Webb, A., Trieu, V. H., Sharp, G., McIntosh, J., & Temple-Smith, M. (2023). Miscarriage Australia: the use of a human centered design approach to design and develop a website for those affected by miscarriage. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 1128768.



## CANCER & PREVENTION

LGBTQI+ People and Cancer: A guide for people with cancer, their families and friends. This booklet has been developed by Cancer Council NSW as part of the Western Sydney University research project *Out with Cancer: LGBTQI+ experiences of cancer survivorship and care*, which was funded by the Australian Research Council and led by Professor Jane Ussher.

Please access here: <https://cancercouncil.com.au/cancer-information/lgbtqi/>

**Ussher, J. M., Allison, K., Power, R., Ryan, S., Perz, J., Hawkey, A.,** Parton, C., Davies, C., Watson, L., McDonald, F. E. J., Anazodo, A., Hickey, M., Robinson, K. H., Boydell, K., Bruce, J., Rae, J., Gilmore, T., & The Out with Cancer Study, T. (2023). Disrupted identities, invisibility and precarious support: a mixed methods study of LGBTQI adolescents and young adults with cancer. *BMC Public Health*, 23(1), 1837

**Ussher, J. M., Ryan, S., Power, R., Perz, J., & Out with Cancer Study Team.** (2023). Almost Invisible: A Review of Inclusion of LGBTQI People with Cancer in Online Patient Information Resources. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 107846.

**Ussher, J. M., Power, R.,** Allison, K., Sperring, S., Parton, C., Perz, J., ... & Ellis, C. (2023). Reinforcing or disrupting gender affirmation: the impact of cancer on transgender embodiment and identity. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 52(3), 901-920.

Pasvanis M, Russell H, Hegarty S, **Peate M\***, Marino M\*. Exploring the experiences and challenges of women with a diagnosis of ovarian cancer. *Supportive Care in Cancer* 2023; 31(7): 432.

Slonim M, **Peate M**, Merigan K, Lantsberg D, Anderson RA, Stern K, Gook D, Jayasinghe Y. Controlled Ovarian Stimulation and Oocyte Cryopreservation in the Paediatric and Adolescent Population: A Systematic Review. *Frontiers in Endocrinology* 2023; 19: 14:1146476

Lan Q, Hickey M, **Peate M, Marino JL.** Priorities for alleviating menopausal symptoms after cancer. *Menopause* 2023; 30(2):136-142. doi: 10.1097/GME.0000000000002108



## CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

### Children by Choice

Reproductive Rights and Abortion conference  
8-9 August 2024  
Brisbane

### World Congress on the Menopause

19-22 Oct 2024  
Melbourne, Australia

### 25th IUSTI World Congress

Incorporating the Australasian Sexual and Reproductive Health Conference  
17 - 20 September 2024  
ICC, Sydney

### Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand Congress

7-10<sup>th</sup> April  
Ōtautahi, Christchurch  
New Zealand



## WE ARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1377730518967904/>

And X (Twitter): @ASPOGau



## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

We invite contributions from our membership. If you have read or seen something that you think others would be interested in or have a recent publication you would like to share with the ASPOG community please submit to:

<https://aspog.org.au/newsletter-content-submission>