



Event Booklet

RCPsych in Scotland Bipolar Disorder Conference 2026

@RCPsychScot
#RCPsychiSBPD2026

8 May 2026

at the
[Edinburgh Training and Conference Venue](#)

16 St Mary's Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SU

Registration from 9.10am

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A register will be taken to confirm attendance upon arrival.



Please turn your phone/devices to silent and your email notifications off for the duration of the event.



A link to our online feedback form will be shared with you during the event. We would be grateful if you could take a few moments to complete it.



Certificates of attendance will be emailed to you within 10 days of the event.



RCPsych in Scotland Bipolar Disorder Conference 2026

Friday, 8 May | Edinburgh Training and Conference Venue
16 St Marys Street Edinburgh, EH1 1SU

Morning Programme: Chaired by Dr Vivek Pattan

09:10 – 09:25	Arrival / Registration
09:30 – 09:45	Welcome and introduction to the day Professor Daniel Smith, Chair of Psychiatry, University of Edinburgh Maja Mitchell-Grigorjeva, CEO, Bipolar Scotland
09:45 – 10:30	Improving the Assessment and Diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder Dr John Ferguson, Consultant Psychiatrist, NHS Lothian/Edinburgh Adult Psychiatry and Dr Joyce Wilkinson, Retired Lecturer
10:30 – 11:00	Delivering Psychoeducation for Bipolar Disorder Fiona Neilson, CPN Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS and Hazel Muir, Training and Resources Lead – Bipolar Scotland
11:00 – 11:30	Comfort Break
11:30 – 12:30	The power of lived experience: Bipolar Scotland's programme of support for individuals and families across Scotland Maja Mitchell-Grigorjeva and team
12:30 – 13:15	Lunch

Afternoon Programme: Chaired by Professor Daniel Smith

13:15 – 13:45	Managing Bipolar Disorder in Older Adults Dr Vivek Pattan, Consultant Old Age Psychiatrist, NHS Forth Valley
13:45 – 14:30	ENERGISE-BD Evaluating Nutritional Ketosis Versus NHS EatWell Guide for Bipolar Depression: Single Blind Randomised Controlled Trial Professor Daniel Smith and Dr Iain Campbell, Baszucki Research Fellow in Metabolic Psychiatry
14:30 – 14:50	Comfort Break
14:50 – 15:20	Women with Bipolar Disorder and the MENO-BD study Dr Katie Marwick, Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist, NHS Lothian
15:20 – 16:05	Panel Q&A and Discussion All speakers
16:05 – 16:15	Thanks and close

The views expressed by speakers during presentations and panel discussions are their own and do not represent the views of the College.

*The RCPsychiS reserves the right to change the programme without prior notice.
1 point per hour of educational activity can be allocated, pending peer group review*



Event Chairs

Dr Vivek Pattan

Vivek is currently working as Consultant Old Age Psychiatrist NHS Forth Valley. He has previously worked as clinical director in NHS Forth Valley and as National clinical director for Dementia with HIS. Currently holds the position of Chair of the Old Age Faculty with the RCPsych in Scotland and the role of Meetings Secretary. He is interested in Dementia, functional illness including late onset psychosis and affective disorder. He is a believer in Lithium treatment for bipolar and unipolar illness. He is hoping to bring back “Lithium clinics” for older adults. He is actively involved in research studies in older adults.

Professor Daniel Smith

Daniel is a Professor of Psychiatry, Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist and Head of the Division of Psychiatry at the University of Edinburgh. He has a longstanding clinical and research interest in the causes and treatment of bipolar disorder and is Medical Adviser to Bipolar Scotland. He runs a specialist clinic for bipolar disorder within NHS Lothian. Professor Smith is Co-Director of the [Edinburgh Mental Health Network](#) and Director of the MRC [UK Mental Health and Circadian Science Network](#). He is the Principal Investigator (PI) for two programme grants funded by the Wellcome Trust: [HELIOS-BD](#) (Lithium's mechanism in bipolar disorder: investigating the light hypersensitivity hypothesis) and [AMBIENT-BD](#) (Ambient and passive collection of sleep and circadian rhythm data in bipolar disorder to understand symptom trajectories and clinical outcomes). He also leads the new MRC [Hub for Metabolic Psychiatry](#).

Speaker Biographies & Presentation Abstracts (in programme order)

Dr John Ferguson

John trained in medicine in Aberdeen before moving to Edinburgh in 2000 to specialise in psychiatry. He has been a Consultant Adult Psychiatrist with the NHS in East Lothian since 2009, recently helping develop a dedicated ADHD clinic.

After eight years in private practice at Spire Edinburgh Hospitals, he founded Edinburgh Adult Psychiatry in 2023 to offer high-quality private mental health care. This practice has steadily grown, with some excellent consultants and associates joining the team.

He has a special interest in ADHD and bipolar disorder, shaped in part by personal family experience.

John lives in East Lothian with his wife, a local GP, their three children, and two dogs

Dr Joyce Wilkinson

Joyce has a background in nursing – sick children, adult nursing and health visiting. She worked with people with mental health problems in each of these roles. After undertaking a PhD in healthcare management, she worked as an academic, latterly at Stirling University. She retired in 2022.

Joyce has lived experience of Bipolar and is the vice-chair of the Board of Bipolar Scotland. She is actively involved in voluntary roles as a Patient Partner and in PPIE in health research in the Medical School at the University of St Andrews and also with the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership.

Presentation Overview:

It is reported that on average patients wait for 9.6 years from first consulting with health care professionals about their mood, before a diagnosis of bipolar is made. This delay is associated with lost opportunity for effective treatment, with associated impact on quality of life, symptoms and functioning. This talk outlines the impact of this through someone with lived experience and thoughts on why this may be from a clinically perspective. Some ideas on how to improve this are also presented.

Fiona Neilson

Fiona is a Community Charge Nurse with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, working within community mental health services for the past 22 years. She has extensive experience in the assessment and ongoing management of individuals with severe and enduring mental illness, with a particular clinical focus on bipolar disorder. Fiona is CBT trained and integrates cognitive-behavioural formulation and interventions into her clinical practice alongside pharmacological management. She has over 10 years' experience delivering structured psychoeducation groups within CMHT settings, with a focus on relapse prevention, early warning sign identification, and collaborative care planning within multidisciplinary teams.

Fiona has worked closely alongside Bipolar Scotland and the Mental Health Network, and is a strong advocate for the role of the third sector in improving patient engagement, continuity of care, and long-term outcomes through collaborative, recovery-focused approaches. She is committed to evidence-based, psychologically informed practice for Bipolar Disorder within community mental health services.

Hazel Muir

Hazel is the training and Resources Lead with Bipolar Scotland. She has a background in developing and delivering training and many years' experience of supporting people with self-management, for both physical and mental health. Most of her work experience has been in the third sector, with local and national organisations. Much of this has been in partnership with local authorities, the NHS, other third sector organisations and private companies across Scotland. In addition, she is a freelance trainer delivering courses on mental health awareness.

Presentation Overview:

This joint presentation by Fiona Neilson (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde) and Hazel Muir (Bipolar Scotland) explores the delivery of psychoeducation for bipolar disorder across statutory and third-sector settings. It will focus on psychoeducation delivered within Community Mental Health Teams alongside self-management approaches offered by Bipolar Scotland. The session will examine current clinical guidelines for psychological interventions in bipolar disorder, the evidence base for psychoeducation, and its effectiveness in supporting recovery. The presentation will also include patient quotes to illustrate lived experience and the impact of these interventions in practice.

Maja Mitchell-Grigorjeva

Maja is the Chief Executive of Bipolar Scotland, the national charity supporting people living with bipolar across Scotland. She has extensive experience in charity leadership, service design and partnership working within the mental health sector, with a strong focus on peer-led and lived-experience-informed approaches.

Alongside her role at Bipolar Scotland, Maja is the Secretary of the European Network for Bipolar, supporting international collaboration, knowledge-sharing and advocacy. She regularly engages with policymakers, clinicians and researchers to improve understanding of bipolar, tackle stigma, and strengthen joined-up support.

Presentation Overview:

An engaging session exploring how lived experience and peer support help people with bipolar to feel understood, connected and hopeful. It highlights Bipolar Scotland's programmes and the role they play alongside clinical care in helping people to stay well. Includes a panel discussion with audience Q&A.

Dr Vivek Pattan

Presentation Overview:

In this presentation he will discuss diagnostic and management of bipolar illness in older adults with case examples and experience of using Lithium in bipolar illness.

Dr Iain Campbell

Iain's research is driven from his lived experience of bipolar disorder which has led him to investigate whether bipolar may be a condition of metabolic dysregulation in the central nervous system.

He is the Baszucki Research Fellow in Metabolic Psychiatry at the University of Edinburgh where he completed his PhD in Global Health. He served as a co-PI on a pilot study of a metabolic intervention - Ketogenic Diet - for bipolar disorder at Edinburgh University. He is now a co-I and workstream lead in the UKRI MRC Hub for Metabolic Psychiatry and a co-I and PPIE lead in ENERGISE-BD, a Wellcome Trust RCT studying ketogenic diet and the NHS Eatwell Diet for bipolar disorder.

Iain's work has been published in Nature Mental Health, Molecular Psychiatry, Translational Psychiatry and The British Journal of Psychiatry Open. He has presented his work at The Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress, The International Society of Bipolar Disorders and Mayo Clinic Grand Rounds.

Presentation Abstract:

Introducing a recently launched RCT studying the effects of a Ketogenic Diet and NHS EatWell Guidelines for Bipolar Depression.

Dr Katie Marwick

Katie is an academic psychiatrist specialising in reproductive psychiatry across the lifecourse. Clinically, she works in a multidisciplinary premenstrual syndrome clinic and inpatient perinatal psychiatry. She is a Wellcome Trust funded Research Fellow, investigating the links between the menopause and severe mental illness. She is currently a Senior Clinical Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist with NHS Lothian.

Presentation Abstract:

The relationship between reproductive hormones and mental health is receiving increasing attention from the public and the College. This presentation will summarise the links between bipolar disorder and reproductive transitions. It will provide a clinical overview for psychiatrists of how to assess and manage mood symptoms related to the menstrual cycle and menopause, including what is known about hormonal treatments and bipolar disorder. An opportunity to contribute to research in this area will be briefly mentioned.