



ADHD Women Unite – Session Summary

Date: 16 April 2026

Topic: ADHD, Hormones & Women's Health

Guest Speaker: Kirsty Crouch

Attendees: 11-12 participants

Source: Transcript

Note:

This session included general educational discussion and lived experience sharing. Information discussed should not be taken as medical advice. Please consult qualified healthcare professionals regarding medication, HRT, supplements, or treatment decisions.

Overview

This week's session explored how hormonal changes across the lifespan can affect ADHD symptoms in women.

We discussed lived experiences and emerging research around:

- Puberty
- Menstrual cycle changes
- Pregnancy/postpartum
- Perimenopause and menopause

Key Discussion Themes

1. Hormones Can Affect ADHD Presentation

Many attendees resonated with the idea that ADHD symptoms may fluctuate alongside hormonal changes, particularly when oestrogen levels shift.

Common experiences shared included:

- Increased emotional dysregulation premenstrually
- Worsening focus/brain fog during perimenopause
- Medication feeling less effective at certain times

2. Menopause & ADHD

Group discussion highlighted that many women experience:

- Significant worsening of ADHD symptoms during perimenopause
- Delayed recognition/diagnosis because symptoms intensify midlife
- Difficulty accessing joined-up menopause and ADHD support

3. ADHD Diagnostic & Medication Access Barriers

Strong discussion around:

- Right to Choose pathway limitations
- Shared care refusal by GPs
- Regional variation in service provision
- Long waits for titration despite diagnosis
- Emotional frustration of diagnosis without treatment access
- Diagnosis without timely access to treatment

Clinical perspective from NHS attendee highlighted:

- Cornwall ADHD waitlist approx. 8 years
- Workforce shortages within ADHD prescribing services
- Structural failures in current RTC/shared care pathway

Attendees shared frustrations regarding:

- Long waits for diagnosis and titration
- Shared care refusals
- Regional inconsistency in ADHD pathways

4. Workplace Support

We discussed:

- Equality Act protections for ADHD
- The importance of reasonable adjustments
- Access to Work as a potential support route for employed attendees
- Challenges disclosing ADHD in workplaces
- Fear of stigma/discrimination despite legal protections

5. Key Reflection From the Group

A strong theme emerged around the need for:

- Better understanding of women's ADHD across healthcare, workplaces, and wider society.

Many attendees reflected on how hormonal changes have shaped their ADHD experience throughout life.