

WHMC NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER
2025



About Us!

The Women's Health Multidisciplinary Consortium is a student led organization here at UNC.

Our mission is to create a trainee-focused, unified community of faculty, clinicians, and researchers with a vested interest in women's health research and sex-specific pathologies.

Upcoming WHMC Events

6

Sept

NC Diaper Bank
Volunteering

9:30 - 11:30 am

18

Sept

Women's Health Journal
Club First Meeting

5 - 7pm

18

Oct

NC Diaper Bank
Volunteering

9:30 - 11:30 am

Excited to
Meet
Everyone!

Hot Off the Press!

A new study found that nearly 30% of women with primary ovarian insufficiency experience depressive symptoms, highlighting a significant mental health burden in this population. Interestingly, depression was not linked to hormone therapy use or estradiol levels; instead, it was associated with younger age at diagnosis, genetic causes of POI, severe menopausal symptoms, and lack of emotional support. This suggests that while hormone therapy addresses physical symptoms, it may not protect against depression, underscoring the need for integrated care approaches alongside medical treatment

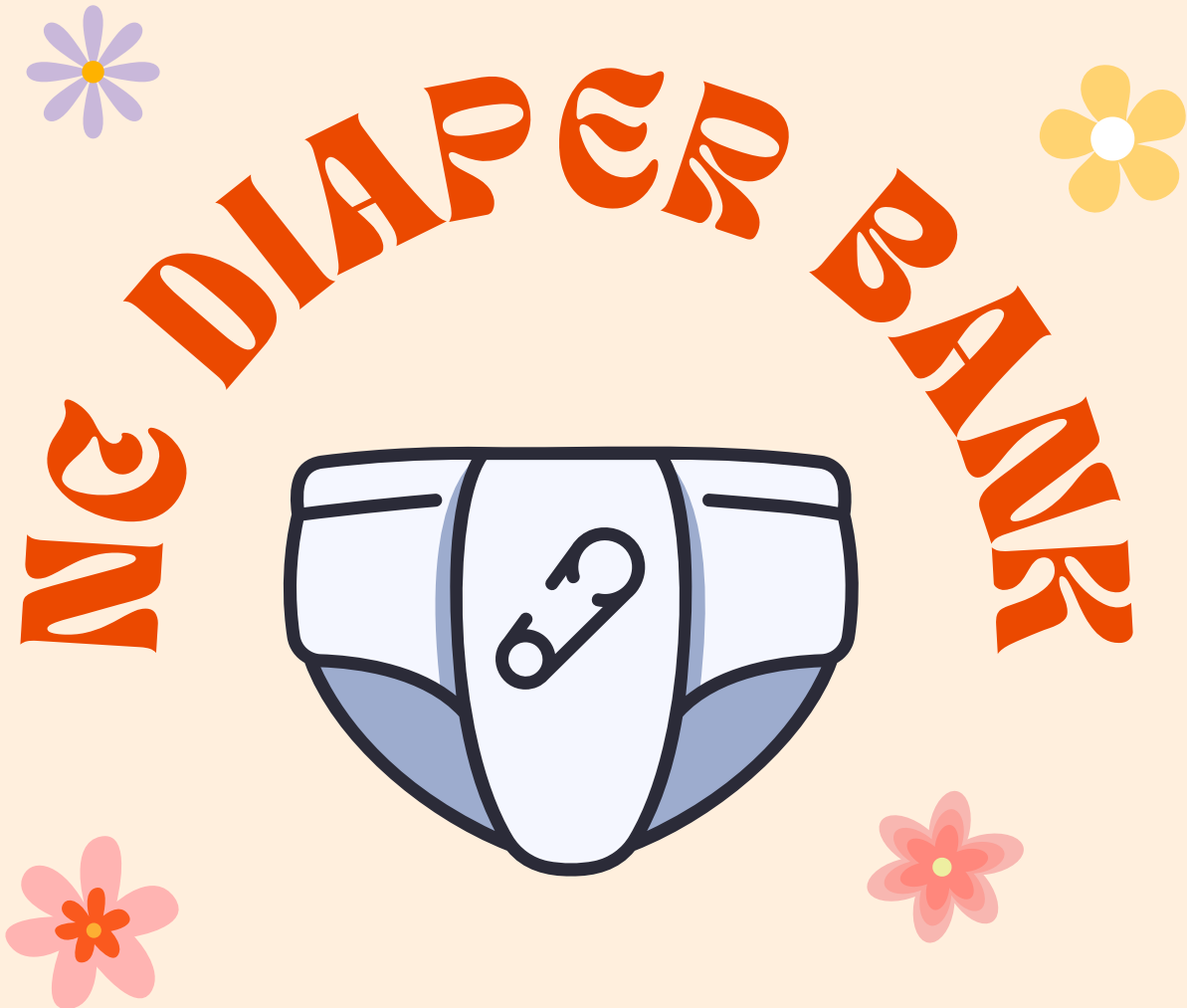


Access the article [here](#).

JAMA is launching a new Women's Health Newsletter starting Sept 5th!



HOSTED BY WHMC AND FAMILY MEDICINE INTEREST
GROUP



[HTTPS://GO.UNC.EDU/B4DBE](https://go.unc.edu/B4DBE)
437 Dimmocks Mill Rd

JOIN US

SEPT 6TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

OCT 18TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

NOV 8TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

DEC 6TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

AFFILIATED FACULTY INTERVIEW:

DR. ANDREA KNITTEL, MD-PHD

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR UNC DEPT. OF OB-GYN
MEDICAL DIRECTOR FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN'S HEALTH



Could you tell us briefly about your background and how it shaped your academic interests?

I grew up in the Detroit Metro Area where divisions on the basis of race and class were and still are highly visible in the urban and suburban landscapes - I've been interested in how social structures shaped people's lives for as long as I can remember. I knew that I wanted to be a clinician and engage directly with patients, but also that I wanted to study those social and structural factors that affected health on a larger scale. That led me to the combined MD-PhD program in public health.

What research or other work in women's health are you involved in currently?

My research and clinical work focus on the obstetric and gynecologic health disparities that occur as a result of, or are exacerbated by, incarceration in US jails and prisons. My current research focuses on the effects of prison incarceration on the perinatal opioid use disorder cascade of care,

the effectiveness of pre-trial diversion for pregnant individuals with substance use disorders in NC jails, the ethics of postpartum permanent contraception in carceral settings, and the experience of menopause in carceral settings.

Who inspires you academically or otherwise?

I have lost several mentors recently who continue to inspire me with their memories. Ada A.

Adimora, MD MPH was a preeminent HIV clinician and researcher who never lost sight of the communities most affected by HIV and of the potential for new investigators to make a difference. Tim RB Johnson was a visionary

leader in obstetrics and gynecology and my first role model of the clinician-advocate-educator-researcher. I also draw inspiration from the students, residents, and fellows who work with me and bring fresh perspectives to the questions at hand.

WHMC Member

Highlight



Shout out to Celeste Robles for winning the Gilliam Fellows Program!

Celeste is a UNC School of Medicine third-year PhD student in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology studying the pathogenesis of herpes simplex virus (HSV). Her and her advisor, Helen Lazear, PhD, Associate Professor of Microbiology and Immunology are in the 20th Cohort of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Gilliam Fellows Program, representing 23 different institutions across the United States.

Congrats!

Into the Unknown: Autistic Females' Mental Health Experiences During Perimenopause



As part of the Autism, Mental Health and Perimenopause (AMP) study, the Harrop Lab has openings for student researchers interested in women's health and neurodiversity.

The AMP study uses a three-pronged, mixed-methods approach (online surveys, interviews, daily diaries) to characterize mental health challenges and health care experiences during perimenopause in autistic women.

More information regarding the study can be found [here](#).
If interested, please email Dr. Harrop at clare_harrop@med.unc.edu



SONJA HAYNES STONE CENTER FOR
RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE AND HISTORY

BOOK TALK

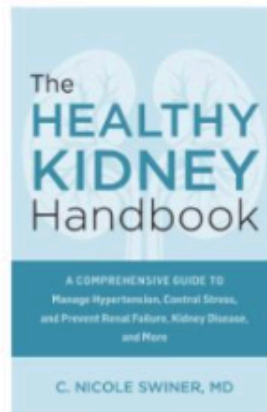
A Healthy Kidney: A Comprehensive Guide to Manage Hypertension, Control Stress, and Prevent Renal Failure, Kidney Disease, and More

Join Dr. C. Nicole Swiner — “DocSwiner” for an engaging talk on her exciting new book!

Discover practical, everyday tips for kidney wellness and overall health.

Voted 1 of 10
Best Doctors
in NC

REGISTER NOW



Monday
September 8th, 2025



3:30 PM - 5 PM



Stone Center Library

Dr. Nicole Swiner

Family Medicine Physician
International Best-selling Author

STAY CONNECTED



Lunchbox Talk: From Soil to Sovereignty

📅 Thursday, September 11, 2025 12:00pm to 1:00pm
EDT

Happening at The Reeves Auditorium at the
NC Botanical Gardens and Online!



Ashlie Thomas

AUTHOR, NUTRITION SCIENTIST, AND HOME
GARDENING ADVOCATE

Can a garden change how we understand health and wellness? This talk explores the dynamic relationship between soil health, human behavior, and food sovereignty rooted in what science and experience can teach us about staying well through the simple act of growing food.

Ashlie Thomas will show how gardens can shift habits, enhance dietary quality, and spark community-driven strategies that address health disparities. She will break down the science behind soil microbiomes and nutrient density, the behavioral shifts that come with hands-on food production, and the broader implications for health equity in under-resourced communities.

This talk does not claim to offer a single solution. Instead, it invites a unique reframe that gardens, when used intentionally, can be part of a meaningful ecosystem for healing, agency, and systemic change.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Are you interested in extra pain medication during your IUD insertion?

2/3rd of volunteers in this research study will receive extra pain
medication for their IUD insertion

Who can participate?

- Women ages 18+
- Planning an IUD insertion
- Able to spend 3 hours for their appointment at UNC Hospitals-
Hillsborough campus

If chosen for the study, you will receive a giftcard for participating.

Contact our study coordinator to schedule your screening and IUD appointment!

(910) 683-0178

This study (IRB# 24-2276) has been reviewed by the UNC-CH Institutional Review Board



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: MAAME INC.'S FIRST FOODS COMMUNITY PANTRY

WE NEED HELP WITH

- Helping organize and pack fresh produce boxes
- Distributing boxes to families in need
- Providing support during pantry events

INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

<https://maameinc.org/volunteer/>



Got a sweet tooth for everything campus has to offer? Come get the Q-munity Scoop!



Join the LGBTQ Center in the Stone Center Hitchcock Room from 3pm-5pm on Wednesday, September 3rd to see the featured flavors of campus! Beat the heat and cone-nect with student orgs and community resources to sprinkle some fun into your first week of class. Featuring Locopops, free swag, and unique prizes, Q-munity Scoop is your chance to chillax to the max. Don't have a meltdown - this event is sure to be the cherry on top and a dairy (& dairy-free) good time, so bring a friend and get the inside scoop on rainbow resources at Carolina



QGAPS Connect - First Meeting Sept 4

Ready to connect with your LGBTQ graduate community? 🌈✨

Join us for QGAPS Connect on September 4th at 5:30 PM in the Graduate Student Center! This is more than just a meetup, it's your chance to build meaningful connections with fellow queer grad students who get it. Whether you're navigating research challenges, looking for community, or want to share resources and experiences, this space is for you. We're bringing together support and social connection in one welcoming environment.

Free food included! Just make sure to [RSVP Here](#)

(RSVP is not required to attend, but we can't guarantee food without an RSVP)!

★ UNC LGBTQ Center ★

WELCOME HOME

OPEN HOUSE

LGBTQ Center
SASB South Suite 3308

Food! Games! Prizes!
Come meet the team!

SEP
12
2025

11am - 2pm



[RSVP HERE](#)

Community Events

Free Health Screening Events in Durham

Sep 13 & Sep 28

There are two opportunities to receive free onsite screenings for a variety of health issues, hosted by the Duke Cancer Institute, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Lincoln Community Health Center. Free onsite screenings include: prostate cancer, skin cancer, colon cancer, HIV/Hep C, blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes risk & A1C, and nutrition counseling.

Event 1 is Saturday, September 13 from 8am to 12pm at the Lincoln Community Health Center (1301 Fayetteville St, Durham, NC 27707). Event 2 is Sunday, September 28 from 12pm to 4pm at Duke Primary Care Croasdaile (1821 Hillandale Road, Durham, NC 27705).

Walk-ins are welcome, but registration is encouraged. [Register here](#), and direct any questions to dcicoe@dm.duke.edu!



NCSU Psychoeducational Clinic Affirm Group



North Carolina State University's Psychoeducational Clinic will be offering a CBT therapy group this fall for college-aged students who will be living in NC during the semester. The focus of the group is to affirm various gender and sexual identities for college-aged students using an adapted form of CBT, called Affirmative CBT. This is an evidenced-based intervention that is informed by minority stress theory and utilizes cognitive behavior therapy techniques to reduce stress and distress as well as increase coping skills.

NCSU is planning to offer one virtual group starting in September 2025 to be held on Mondays from 3-4:30pm for 8 weeks (with breaks for relevant holidays). Participating in this group would be free for NCSU students or any college-aged student residing in NC for the semester.



Interested? Fill out the [interest form](#)!

Free "Know Your Rights" Training

Sept 16 via Zoom



Join the UNC Carolina Pride Alumni Network (CPAN) for a free, virtual "Know Your Rights" training on Tuesday September 16 from 12 to 1 pm on Zoom. This important and informative virtual event will be led by Sheryl Weikal, a transgender lawyer, and will help trans, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming students and alums understand their legal rights. Bring any and all questions -- you won't want to miss this.

Interested? [Register here](#)!

MONTHLY CALENDAR



UNC
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

SEPTEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 1 st UNC Football Game vs TCU	2 Q-munity Scoop	3 UNC QGAPS Connect	4	5	6 NC Diaper Bank Volunteering
7	8 The Healthy Kidney Handbook with Dr. Swiner	9	10	11 Lunchbox Talk: From Soil to Sovereignty	12 UNC LGBTQ Center Open House	13 Free Health Screenings in Durham
14	15	16 "Know Your Rights" Training	17	18 WHMC Journal Club	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Free Health Screenings in Durham	29	30				

happy fall!

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



Our lovely community engagement team welcomed back all our undergrads and graduate students!

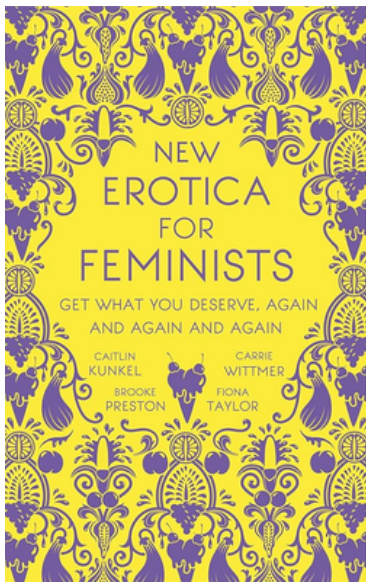
They met many of you at the graduate school activities fair and SOLE fest, and we can't wait to learn more about you!



WHMC BOOK RECOMMENDATION OF THE MONTH

New Erotica for Feminists: Satirical Fantasies of Love, Lust, and Equal Pay

by Caitlin Kunkel, Brooke Preston, Fiona Taylor, Carrie Wittmer



As the title suggests, this novel is a collection of a feminist's daydreams and satirical retellings of famous stories. Reviewers rave about these laugh-out-loud stories that combine sexual fantasies about your favorite celebrities with what feminists really want - equal pay and respect. Written by four activists, the authors use their short stories to respond to current events including Time's Up and #MeToo. While many readers are empowered by these light-hearted stories, others find that the book falls short of representing the wider feminist movement by focusing heavily on the cis, white female perspective.

**THE FIRST LONGITUDINAL
STUDY IN WOMEN'S HEALTH
WAS FOCUSED ON
MENOPAUSE**

**Fact
or
Fiction
?**

The first landmark study dedicated to women's health was the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), launched in the early 1990s by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) to fill gaps in research on post-menopausal women's health, particularly regarding women's bodies and illnesses. The WHI is still considered the first of its kind in the United States, providing critical data that has improved the understanding and treatment of various health conditions affecting women.

In other news, JAMA is launching JAMA+ Women's Health magazine in an effort to recognize that women's health goes beyond just reproductive health, gynecologic and breast cancer.

For more: [Women's Health Initiative](#)

GET INVOLVED WITH THE WHMC!



Visit our website!

Submit your work, recent publications, upcoming events, and more **here** to be featured in our monthly newsletter!



Share the WHMC
listserv with others!

It's your WHMC
communication
engagement team
here!

We're looking for your submissions! This is a
space for a community bulletin – a place to
look for research or work positions, fill
professional needs, submit shoutouts, and
submit photos to be used in future newsletters!

Kate Aberman



Sarah Rebbeor



Kylie Hutchison



Mehnaz Shafquat



Emily Perou

