

# THE WORLD ENDOMETRIOSIS CONGRESS RECAP

## SYDNEY, MAY 2025

Written by Dr Andrew Leech (Director of The Garden Family Medical Clinic)

A small team from our Pelvic Pain Clinic (part of The Garden Family Medical Clinic), travelled to Sydney to represent our team at the World Endometriosis Congress. We had the honour of presenting our model of care via a poster presentation that highlighted the importance of a multidisciplinary team approach in supporting patient outcomes.

The opportunity to develop a dedicated pelvic pain clinic - supported by Federal Government grant funding has provided us with a unique platform to transform primary care. While initially designed to support those living with endometriosis and chronic pelvic pain, the clinic has broadened our thinking about how we care for patients as whole people, delivering holistic and compassionate care.

We have learnt that a multidisciplinary clinic should allow patients to move seamlessly between providers, receiving expert care without needing to repeat their story time and time again. Working collaboratively as a team of healthcare professionals with diverse backgrounds, we are gradually shaping our model into something that is sustainable, teachable, and a gold-standard model for managing complex pelvic pain - a condition that many people have silently suffered through for years and who deserve a better approach.

## SHARING OUR EXPERIENCE

We incorporated direct patient feedback into our poster, presenting both subjective insights (patient quotes about their care experience) and objective measures, including changes in pain, mental health, and sleep scores. Our work drew significant interest from participants across Australia and internationally. We engaged with colleagues trialling nurse-led clinics, telehealth models, and services designed to reach populations with limited access to specialised care.

*The congress reinforced some important issues:*

The profound impact of endometriosis on mental health and the urgent need for improved access to psychological support services, an area we too have found challenging to navigate.

The shortage of clinicians experienced in addressing not only pain, but also infertility, relationships, sexual health, and the vicarious trauma often caused by fragmented healthcare interactions.

The global challenge of providing timely, evidence-based, and patient-centred care - particularly for minority groups, including LGBTQIA+ and Indigenous populations, where gaps in care and missed opportunities remain significant.

One particularly moving session featured two speakers from WA sharing their lived experiences during a Q&A panel. Their stories were emotional and raw, reminding us that we still have much work to do in building a healthcare system that validates pain, listens without judgement, and fosters genuine understanding.



Dr Andrew Leech (left), Miss Lucy Stewart and Dr Michelle Luy (right) presenting the Garden Family Medical Clinic poster

## MOVING THE MODEL FORWARD



Representatives from the 22 Australian Pelvic Pain Clinics meeting at the Congress

It was inspiring to see that research and innovation in endometriosis are accelerating. The Australian Government's investment in advancing screening, testing, and treatment options is commendable and will continue to drive improvements in care.

A personal highlight for me was connecting with other pelvic pain clinic teams across Australia. Despite the diversity of demographics and care models, there is a clear momentum towards transformational change:

- Reducing time to diagnosis
- Delivering earlier and faster treatments
- Acknowledging the deeply personal impact of chronic pain on life's most precious aspects—youth, relationships, career opportunities, and freedom.

Finally, I would like to thank Lucy, our Pelvic Pain Clinic Lead, and Dr Michelle Luy, one of our Pelvic Pain GPs, for attending the congress alongside me. Their active participation in discussions and events continues to inspire the next chapter of our clinic's journey.