

# EDAC ∞ NEWSLETTER

## EDAC Events

A Belated Happy  
New Year

Table Talk  
Podcast: New  
episodes and  
Spotify wrapped!

## EDAC Research

New recruitment  
opportunities  
including  
Underpinning  
Mechanisms That  
Lead to Eating  
Disorders in  
Autistic and/or  
ADHD Groups

## Knowledge Exchange

New publications  
and conference /  
seminar updates!

The Real PPI toolkit

Implemented  
adaptions to NHS ED  
services



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[@edac.uk](https://www.instagram.com/edacuk)



<https://edacresearch.com>

## EDAC Spotlight on DR Michelle Sader



*Penultimate issue*

12.02.2026

# EDAC EVENTS

## A Belated Happy New Year

Here at EDAC we want to wish you all a very Happy New Year! We want to thank you for your support so far and for contributions to making 2025 another wonderful year at EDAC, whether this was being part of the community through our mailing list, research collaborators, research participants and more. We hope to keep the momentum going throughout 2026, and we are excited to see what the year will bring!

## Table Talk Podcast: New episodes and Spotify wrapped!



You're a top 10 show for

**46**

fans



Your average rating was higher than 75% of other shows.

**Thank you for your support!**

Check out our latest episodes by clicking below

**CLICK HERE**



**TABLE TALK**  
Special Guest: Gem  
Today I speak to Gem about recovery from eating disorders, including what "recovery" means to her, how it is different for each individual, and how we can achieve it. Our discussion delves into some critiques around traditional definitions of recovery and we begin to think about how we can improve how recovery is conceptualised both within treatment and research.  
TOPIC: What is Recovery?  
EP. 10  
**TABLE TALK**  
By the Eating Disorders and Nutrition Collaborative  
EDAC

# EDAC RESEARCH

## Examining Underpinning Mechanisms That Lead to Eating Disorders in Autistic and/or ADHD Groups

Student researchers at the University of Edinburgh are conducting a study investigating the mechanisms that contribute to eating disorders in Autistic and/or ADHD people, focusing on intolerance of uncertainty (difficulty coping with not knowing what will happen), body image (thoughts and feelings about your body), sensory processing (responding to things you see, hear, smell, taste, or touch), alexithymia (difficulty recognising and describing emotions), and childhood trauma (e.g. neglect in childhood). Click the link here to take part:

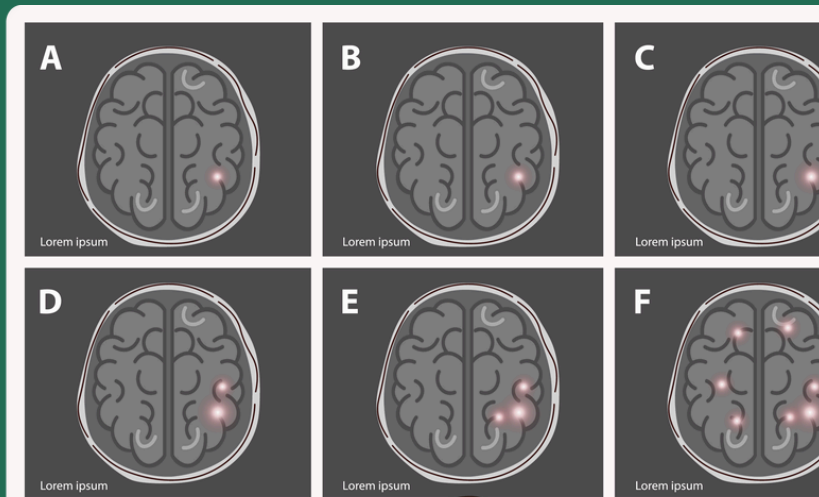
[https://edinburgh.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6rRGrAXPrUrr8q2](https://edinburgh.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6rRGrAXPrUrr8q2)

## Neuroanatomical Differences Associated with Anorexia Nervosa and Masking Behaviour in Autistic Individuals

Our final study from Workstream 3 is still recruiting! This study aims to investigate brain structure and masking behaviour in Autistic individuals with anorexia nervosa. Are you an Autistic person aged 25-45 either with or without anorexia nervosa? Keen to take images of your brain home with you? Scan this QR code to see if you can take part, or click the [following link](#) to read more!



SCAN ME



# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



## Publications:

**Towards identifying Autistic adults at risk for eating disorders: A brief report into clustering of social camouflaging and sensory processing differences**

An article led by Dr Emy Nimbley has identified particular clusters of mechanisms that may increase Autistic risk for eating disorders. This data-driven approach identified three main clusters that place Autistic individuals at high risk: High social camouflaging, low sensory processing; high social camouflagage, high sensory processing; low social camouflaging, average sensory processing. Have a more in-depth read here! <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/erv.70062>

## Implementation Insights from the PEACE Pathway Across UK Eating Disorder Services

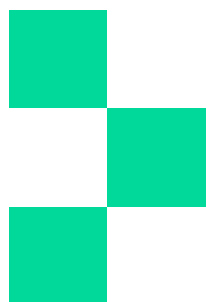
Led by Professor Kate Tchanturia, a recent EDAC paper has used clinical data, stakeholder feedback and service evaluations to understand implementation insights for the PEACE pathway, an autism-informed approach to ED treatment. There were eight core domains important for implementation (pathway knowledge, assessment and planning, psychological interventions, sensory management, nutritional care, lived-experience feedback family/community engagement, staff training), which informed the development of the PEACE self-assessment checklist to support adoption of PEACE. Read up on implementation of PEACE here: [Implementation Insights from the PEACE Pathway Across UK Eating Disorder Services](#)

**Remember: You can access our plain speaking summaries [here](#)**



Have a listen and look to see Ellen ask Lauren Makin about her recent qualitative research on neurodivergent experiences of binge eating disorders, ask Michelle Sader about our current EDAC MRI study investigating the role of Autistic masking in ED development, or to ask Laurence Cobbaert on experiences associated with the intersectionality of autism and EDs.

# Medical Research Foundation Public Science Seminar



**Medical  
Research  
Foundation**

EDAC team members Professor Kate Tchanturia, Dr Fiona Duffy and Dr Karri Gillespie-Smith were invited to speak on EDAC's research for a Medical Research Foundation (MRF) Public Science Seminar. Kate, Fiona and Karri spoke about the research EDAC is focusing on, with a special focus on transforming eating disorder care for Autistic people. Thanks for sharing the important work EDAC is doing, Kate, Fiona and Karri! Take a look at the [recording here](#)



*Great work guys!*

# EDAC and co-production:



EDAC team member Michelle has been focusing heavily on how researchers can implement co-production in their own work! Following a workshop from June 2025, she has worked with multiple researchers, members of the lived experience community and other important stakeholders to co-design a 35-page toolkit on all things co-production, titled "The Real PPI: The Researcher's Toolkit".

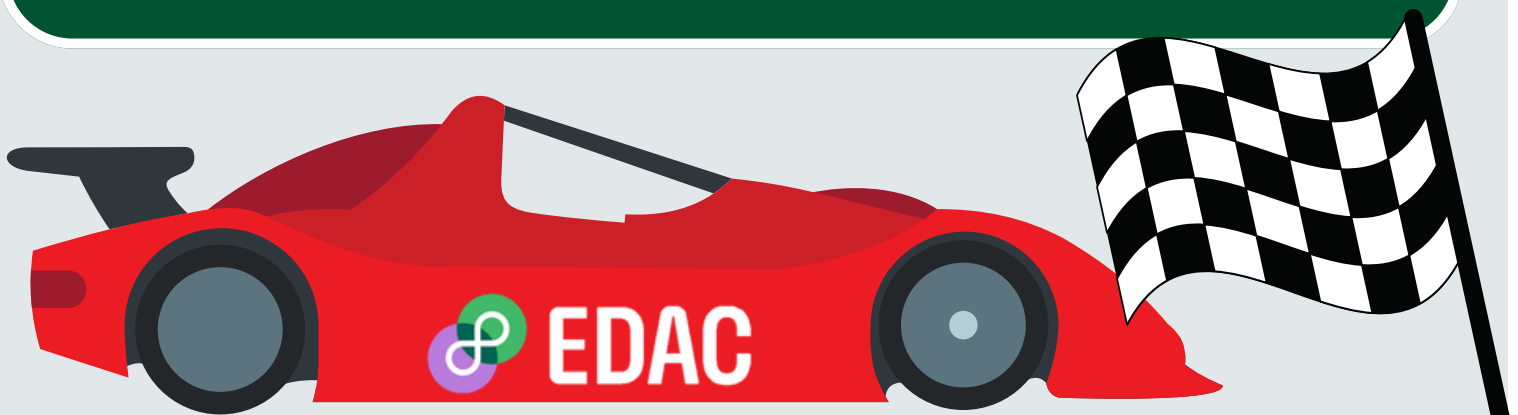
Interested in learning more about co-production? Take a look at the toolkit [here!](#)

# Community News!

As part of our WS4 work, EDAC is delighted to share that autism-affirming approaches to ED recovery are currently being implemented at various Scottish NHS sites, including NHS Lothian! Through loads of work involving walkthroughs of the service environment, implementation of the PEACE framework and incorporation of Autism-identification tools in ED services, EDAC aims to improve the experience of recovery for members of our Autistic community!

# Coming Soon!

ICED – Keep your eyes out for EDAC during the International Conference of Eating Disorders in 2026, in which Fiona will be presenting important EDAC work, as well as a study co-authored by Michelle Sader, Emy Nimbley and Dr Tine Opitz on experiences of being an early career researcher in the ED field!



EDAC is officially approaching the end of our grant, and as we race toward the finish line we still have lots of publications and collaborations to come! We will provide a final update in July of all these exciting developments.

# EDAC SPOTLIGHT: DR MICHELLE SADER!

## What is your role at EDAC?

I am currently a postdoctoral research fellow at EDAC! I co-lead EDAC's third workstream with Karri, called "Testing the Approach". While conducting my own research, I work with our Autistic research collaborators to make ensure the many projects EDAC is working on are always led by lived experience!

## What has been your pathway to joining EDAC?

Supervised by our lovely Gordon, my PhD focused on using brain imaging techniques to understand the relationships between eating disorders and brain structure. A lot of my work also included neuroimaging research covering Autistic participants, and I became quite fascinated in the overlap between autism and eating disorders. I had the utmost pleasure of meeting and working with Kate during my PhD, and thanks to her I was introduced to Karri and Fiona. The rest is history!

## What is exciting about the field of autism and eating disorders?

This may be a bittersweet answer, but what's quite exciting for me is how much we have yet to understand about this intersectionality! What's bitter about this is that research and clinical services have (unintentionally) overlooked the co-occurrence of autism and eating disorders, meaning many of our lived experience community members have felt that they've 'fallen through the cracks' when accessing services, so to speak. However, the sweet part is that through EDAC, we can now fully focus on this intersectionality to improve and tailor support measures for Autistic folks. From a personal perspective, I'm really interested in improving our understanding of Autistic brains, such as what mechanisms are involved in Autistic masking!



# EDAC SPOTLIGHT: DR MICHELLE SADER!

## What do you think we need to understand more about in the field of autism and eating disorders?

What we've yet to understand feels limitless. How does development and maintenance of an eating disorder differ between Autistic and non-Autistic people? How we use strength-based frameworks to actively support Autistic people during their recovery journey from an eating disorder? How can we continue to tailor support systems for underrepresented groups within this community? How can we better understand Autistic brains to reduce stigmatisation of Autistic people? We're only just scratching the surface!

## What is your favourite book or film?

I'm going to pretend that you've asked what my favourite video game is - I'm a huge Pokémon and Legend of Zelda fan!

## What is something that brings you comfort?

Outside of my fiancé/best friend, I love animals, and have a bearded dragon and two cockatiels (as well as 80+ plants). Together, they always keep me grounded and cheery!



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