



# International Clinical Fellowship in Women's Health

*Curriculum 2026/2027*

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## Irish College of GPs - International Clinical Fellowship Programme

### in Women's Health

#### Introduction to the Programme

##### **Irish College of GPs**

The Irish College of GPs is the recognised body for the accreditation of specialist training in general practice in Ireland and is recognised by the Irish Medical Council as the representative academic body for the specialty of general practice.

##### **Aims**

The Irish College of GPs Clinical Fellowship Programme provides a route for overseas doctors wishing to undergo structured and advanced postgraduate medical training in Ireland. The Irish College of GPs Programme enables suitably qualified overseas postgraduate doctors to undertake a fixed period of active training in clinical services in Ireland. The programme is normally offered over one or two years of clinical training.

##### **Objectives**

The purpose of the Irish College of GPs Programme is to enable overseas Clinical Fellowship Doctors to gain access to structured training in active clinical environments that they may not have access to in their own country, with a view to:

- enhancing and improving the individual's medical training and learning,
- empowering them to become clinical leaders in their chosen career pathway in their own healthcare environment and, ultimately,
- enhancing the delivery of health services and clinical care to their own communities.

## Eligibility Requirements

Standard entry requirements apply across all our Clinical Fellowship programmes.

The successful Clinical Fellowship applicants must demonstrate the following characteristics and qualifications:

- studied basic medical degree through English
- completed postgraduate specialty training program in Family Medicine
- completed minimum one further year working full time in the specialty of Family Medicine
- passed all examinations that are appropriate for doctors in Family Medicine in own country
- confirmed government sponsorship in own country
- achieved overall band score of 7.0 or greater in the IELTS and minimum score of 6.5 in each of the four domains. The IELTS test taken must be 'Academic' and must have been completed within the last two years.
- be a highly motivated clinician with a strong desire to develop new skills and to become a clinical leader in the chosen specialist area.

## Programme Structure

2 days/week in General Practice with a GP supervisor who has a special interest in women's health and		
2 days/week in a hospital setting with a women's health specialist consultant supervisor	2 days/week in a hospital setting with a women's health specialist consultant supervisor	1 day/week self-directed study and courses relevant to women's health

## Curriculum & Assessment

In keeping with the Irish College of GPs move to Entrustable Professional Activities (EPA), facilitated by workplace-based assessments, as our primary means of assessing competence, a review has been conducted of the Women's Health Fellowship Curriculum and assessment structures. The curriculum for the international fellowship was generated by subject matter experts, via an iterative process of identifying key learning outcomes, adapting, and adding to the relevant learning outcomes from the Irish College of GPs curriculum for GP training. It has retained the WONCA<sup>1</sup> framework, which reflects the speciality of primary care, and further details on this structure and the learning outcomes is available below. An online Irish College of GPs platform will support both formative and summative assessment.

## Conclusion

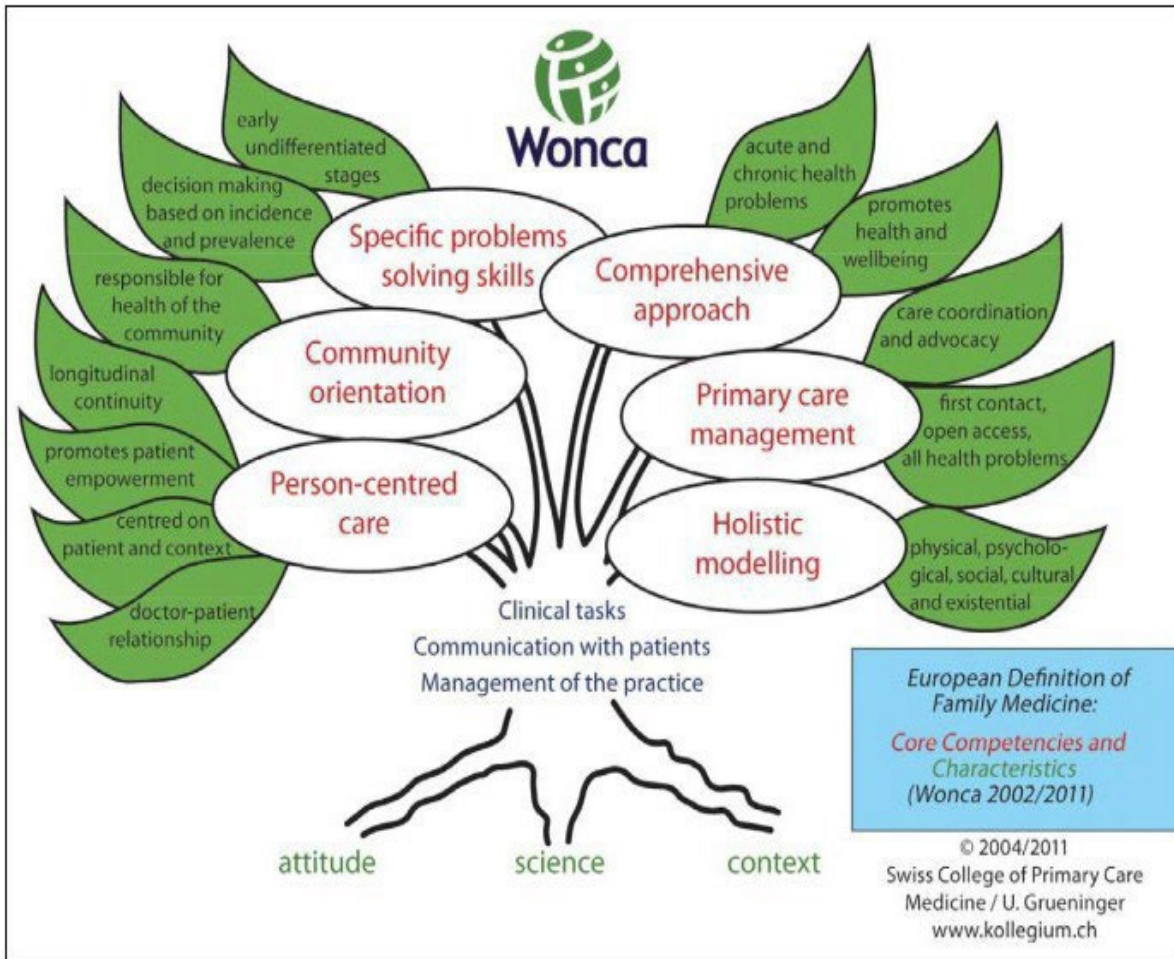
Doctors who complete Clinical Fellowships will return to their own health system as leaders in the provision of care in their chosen fellowship area, ready to become involved in enhancing services and care of their own community in their specialist clinical area, within the larger speciality of Family Medicine.

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<sup>1</sup> World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians

## Curriculum Framework and Development

### WONCA Curriculum framework



This curriculum is based on the original framework statement for the discipline of general practice that was developed by WONCA Europe (World Organization of National Colleges and Academies of General Practice/Family Medicine) and formally launched during its meeting in London in 2002 and revised in 2005 and again in 2011. The WONCA framework describes the fundamental characteristics of general practice, a role description of the specialist in family medicine, and the competencies required. These characteristics of the discipline of general practice relate to the abilities that every family doctor should master and are the basis of developing the curriculum for training in Irish general practice.

They have been used here to develop a curriculum specific to women's health fellowship training, within the overarching general practice framework.

The core competencies which you will need to master to be awarded a clinical fellowship in women's health are grouped into six areas of competence and three essential features of you as a doctor. In the curriculum these are further divided into specific learning outcomes.

This framework is designed to support the premise of lifelong learning as a necessary pre-requisite for doctors to sustain their capacity to practice effectively in an environment of changing expectations about appropriate practice. It is an approach that also recognises that individuals learn at different rates using different styles and, typically, that learning is enhanced when individuals are actively involved in identifying their learning needs and contribute to planning, implementing, and evaluating their programme of learning.

The core competencies are:

**1. Primary care management**

This is about how you manage your contact with patients, dealing competently with any and all problems that are presented to you and coordinating their care using resources appropriately. (This area of competence is not limited to dealing with the management of the practice.)

**2. Person-centred care**

This is about understanding and developing an effective doctor patient relationship.

**3. Specific problem-solving skills**

This is about the context-specific aspects of general practice: Selective history taking, physical examination and investigations leading to an appropriate management plan. It is about how you deal with early and undifferentiated illnesses and the skills you need to tolerate uncertainty, without medicalising normality.

#### **4. Comprehensive approach**

This is about how you must be able to manage co-morbidity, multiple complaints and pathologies, both acute and chronic health problems in the individual, and also applying health promotion and disease prevention strategies.

#### **5. Community Orientation**

This entails reconciling the health needs of individual patients and the health needs of the community in which they live in balance with available resources.

#### **6. Holistic Approach**

This requires taking into account clinical factors, but also any psychological, social, economic, or cultural factors that are important and understanding the ways in which these will affect the experience and management of illness and health.

#### **Applying Core Skills**

In applying these core skills in practice, three personal features are important. These personal features relate to factors which have an impact on your ability to deliver the competencies in real life in your work setting:

#### **7. Contextual aspects of care.**

The environment in which you work; working conditions, community, culture, financial and regulatory frameworks; the impact of workload and the practice facilities and how that may influence the quality of care you provide to your patients.

#### **8. Attitudinal aspects of care.**

Your awareness of your attitudes and capabilities; ethical aspects of clinical practice; achieving a good balance between work and private life.

#### **9. Scientific aspects of care.**

Adopting a critical and evidence-based approach to your practice and maintaining this through continued learning.

## International Clinical Fellowship in Women's Health

### Curriculum Learning Objectives

#### Primary care management

- FW-PTLPM3A Demonstrate the ability to coordinate a team-based approach to the care of patients
- FW-PTLPM19A Organise planned care for specific populations (e.g. people with chronic conditions) through use of registers, recall and reminder systems.
- FW-PTLPM22A Successfully manage a research project/audit/quality initiative project.
- FW-PTLPM24A Understand the process of, and factors that influence change.
- FW-EBLPM2A Outline the essential components of the research process (e.g. developing a research question, identifying appropriate research methods, basic qualitative and quantitative analysis skills, appropriate data interpretation, writing up and disseminating research findings)
- FW-SULPM1A Be aware of guidelines in relation to breast screening
- FW-SULPM2A Know appropriate referral pathway for breast lump
- FW-WNLPM1A Know the causes of and management strategies for post-menopausal bleeding
- FW-WNLPM2A Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the GP in the structure of antenatal care
- FW-WNLPM3A Recognise the role of the GP in the management of higher risk pregnancies e.g. multiple pregnancy
- FW-WNLPM4A Recognise the role of the GP in the management of bleeding in pregnancy
- FW-WNLPM5A Complete with confidence the two- and six-week checks
- FW-WNLPM6A Recognise and manage Ectopic pregnancy
- FW-WNLPM7A Recognise the role of the GP in identifying and managing Pre-eclamptic toxemia, premature rupture of membranes and Precipitate labour
- FW-WNLPM8A Recognise the role of the GP in diagnosing and managing Postpartum haemorrhage, Breast abscess, Mastitis, Involution and Retained products of conception
- FW-WNLPM9A Identify and manage the medical and psychosocial elements associated with sub-fertility

- FW-WNLPM10A Understand the GP's key role in providing emergency contraception including LARC
- FW-WNLPM11A Identify the common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) along with their natural histories and management
- FW-WNLPM12A Define a woman's level of individual risk of specific infections based on her sexual history
- FW-ADLPM2A Evaluating the role of the GP in the management of sexual health in adolescents
- FW-SXLPM2A Apply the information gathered from the patient's sexual history and examination to generate a differential diagnosis and formulate a management plan
- FW-SXLPM3A Manage common as well as rare but important presenting signs and symptoms which will require subsequent examination, investigation, treatment and/or referral, as appropriate (e.g. genital skin/mucosal conditions, abnormal genital odour, discharge, presentations of pain, and vaginal bleeding)
- FW-SXLPM4A-Perform a bimanual and speculum examination, and assessment of the size, position and mobility of the uterus, and be able to recognise any abnormality of the pelvic organs
- FW-SXLPM5A-Know the limitations of investigations and how to interpret them: e.g. blood tests for HIV, Hepatitis, microbiology swabs, cervical screening, and secondary care investigations like colposcopy
- FW-SXLPM6A-Refer to specialist services if further assessment or treatment is needed
- FW-SXLPM7A-Promote sexual health and well-being by applying health promotion and disease prevention strategies appropriately e.g. HPV vaccine, early cervical screening for at risk groups
- FW-GELPM1A-Aware of preventive measures or targeted treatments exist for some genetic conditions (for example: lifestyle intervention; mastectomy and/or oophorectomy for BRCA 1/2 mutations; colectomy for adenomatous polyposis coli mutation carriers, statin use for familial hypercholesterolaemia; venesection for hemochromatosis; losartan for patients with Marfan's Syndrome)
- FW-GELPM2A-Understand the systems in place to follow-up patients who have or are at risk of

- genetic conditions and have chosen to undergo regular surveillance (for example breast imaging for breast cancer or endoscopy for colon cancer)

### **Person-centred care**

- FW-WNLPC1B Understand national guidelines when managing a woman with an unplanned pregnancy including termination of pregnancy
- FW-WNLPC2A Define the legal aspects of managing a woman with an unplanned pregnancy
- FW-WNLPC3A Demonstrate an understanding of the GP's duty of care for a woman post termination of pregnancy
- FW-ADLPC2A Awareness of sexual and physical abuse and recognise opportunity of disclosure
- FW-SXLPC1A Understand developmental sexuality including the physical, emotional and social changes of puberty in girls and boys
- FW-SXLPC2A Understand the psychology relating to sexuality and management of sexual abuse and violence
- FW-SXLPC3A Understand sexual dysfunction as a common issue and have the ability to discuss this with patients
- FW-SXLPC4A Assess the competency of young people in making their own health decisions regarding their sexual health, including contraception
- FW-SXLPC5A Explain to patients the strategies for early detection of sexual health problems that may be present but have not yet produced symptoms

### **Specific problem-solving skills**

- FW-EBLSP3A Understand the limitations and strengths of screening programmes including the criteria for what makes a good screening test
- FW-EBLSP6A Explain features of diagnostic tests ( i.e. sensitivity, specificity, positive and negative predictive values) and defend their use in including and excluding diagnoses
- FW-SKLSP23A Gain skills in the examination of frequently overlooked or challenging

areas such as the flexures, genitalia, eyes and mucous membranes

- FW-SULSP11A Diagnose and manage breast abscess
- FW-SULSP13A Diagnose and manage mastalgia
- FW-WNLSP1A Differentiate the common and serious causes of Abnormal Vaginal bleeding FW-WNLSP2A Assess women's contraception needs including LARC
- FW-WNLSP3A Recognise the role of the GP in routine pre pregnancy counselling, antenatal and postnatal care, including after unanticipated pregnancy outcomes
- FW-WNLSP4A Diagnose and manage (including referral) obstetric emergencies including ectopic pregnancy, pre-eclampsia, placental abruption
- FW-WNLSP5A Describe maternal immunisation
- FW-WNLSP6A Distinguish the causes of bleeding in pregnancy
- FW-WNLSP7A Combine available evidence to manage common medical disorders in the setting of pregnancy and lactation, including diabetes and hypertension
- FW-WNLSP8A Perform routine antenatal assessments including abdominal palpation, use doppler ultrasound and /or fetal heart auscultation, recognise inter uterine growth restriction (IUGR) and other abnormal presentations
- FW-WNLSP9A Accept the GP's role in identifying high risk pregnancies and referring appropriately
- FW-WNLSP10A Diagnose labour and outline the GP relevant issues in managing labour including precipitate labour and premature rupture of membranes
- FW-WNLSP11A Identify those women at risk of postnatal depression
- FW-WNLSP12A Diagnose and manage women with postnatal depression and baby blues
- FW-WNLSP13A Accept the role of the GP in identifying and managing post-partum complications including haemorrhage, infection and mastitis
- FW-WNLSP14A Perform a cervical smear and manage an abnormal cervical smear results appropriately
- FW-WNLSP15A Perform Breast Examination while being conscious of the patient's feelings FW-WNLSP16A Perform appropriate gynaecological assessment including history and pelvic examinations

- FW-WNLSP17A Perform sample taking for common STIs
- FW-ADLSP7A Recognise abnormal pubertal development
- FW-SXLSP1A Perform and interpret results of investigations in primary care: e.g. pregnancy testing, urinalysis, approaches to the diagnosis of bacterial vaginosis
- FW-SXLSP2A Be aware of the guidelines of cervical screening and colposcopy
- FW-SXLSP3A Know how to prescribe contraception including emergency contraception and its pharmacology, use, patient concordance issues for all patients
- FW-SXLSP4A Manage genital dermatology issues and common uro-gynaecology problems
- FW-EXLSP1A Manage uro-gynaecology presentation (pessary fitting, urodynamics)
- FW-EXLSP2A Perform and interpret common ultrasound procedures in obstetrics and gynaecology
- FW-EXLSP3A Be familiar with the procedure and able to interpret findings of hysteroscopy
- FW-EXLSP4A Be familiar with the procedure and able to interpret findings of colposcopy
- FW-EXLSP5A Be familiar with the procedure of cervical polypectomy
- FW-EXLSP6A Perform vulval examination

### **Comprehensive approach**

- FW-PSLCA3A Evaluate the quality improvement systems and processes within your current workplace setting
- FW-EBLCA3A Evaluate professional performance in clinical and non-clinical areas, using appropriate research methods (e.g. clinical audit, needs analysis, significant event analysis, and critical incident analysis)
- FW-EBLCA7A Plan quality improvement initiatives in your practice
- FW-EBLCA8A Understand that most clinical interventions in general practice are complex and require the use of multiple or mixed research methods to evaluate them (i.e. quantitative (what?/how much?) and qualitative methods (why?/how?/ who?)).
- FW-SULCA3A Demonstrate the ability to counsel patients about benefits, risks, and complications of a procedure

- FW-SULCA7A Demonstrate the ability to interpret histology reports
- FW-WNLCA1A Demonstrate knowledge of national screening programmes including Cervical Check and Breast Check
- FW-WNLCA2A Explain the supports available to a woman who is experiencing domestic violence
- FW-WNLCA3A Explain the obstacles to women in seeking health care
- FW-WNLCA4A Explain the obstacles to women disclosing a history of gender-based violence
- FW-WNLCA5A Define the legal framework that a GP operates in when it comes to consideration of contraception options in females under the age of 18
- FW-WNLCA6A Manage common medical presentations in pregnancy including hypertension and diabetes as well as low mood and depression
- FW-WNLCA7A Improve efficiency of appropriate data recording
- FW-ADLCA5A Maintain continuing support and care in crisis pregnancy
- FW-SXLCA1A Understand the GP's role and the patient's role in contact tracing
- FW-SXLCA2A Understand issues relating to sexual assault and refer to appropriate centres
- FW-SXLCA3A Understand legal/consensual issues surrounding treatment of minors, age of consent and notification of young people at risk of harm

### **Community Orientation**

- FW-PTLCO2A Demonstrate knowledge of the structure of the local healthcare system and its economic limitations
- FW-PTLCO3A Understand the variety of ways in which healthcare and health promotion may be appropriately delivered in the community.
- FW-WNLCO1A Distinguish the role that socioeconomic conditions play in relation to women's health
- FW-WNLCO2A Identify the effect of psychological stresses on a woman's physical health
- FW-WNLCO3A Show continual desire to address health inequalities
- FW-SXLCO1A Recognise the prevalence of sexual health problems in the local community
- FW-SXLCO2A Know the principles of, and current guidance for notifiable infections and contact tracing

- FW-SXLC03A Refer patients to local sexual health services, including services for specialist contraceptive care further STI diagnosis and management; HIV management; and services for relationship problems and sexual dysfunction

### **Holistic Approach**

- FW-PTLHO1A Recognise the positive benefits of involving patients in their care and in the systems of healthcare provision and quality improvement.
- FW-WNLHA1A Understand the unique way that women may present with medical conditions, e.g. atypical symptoms in myocardial infarction
- FW-WNLHA2A Know how to screen for and manage psychological conditions associated with the different stages of a woman's life
- FW-WNLHA3A Adopt a supportive role for all new mothers both those breast and not breast feeding
- FW-WNLHA4A Adopt a supportive role for all those with a crisis pregnancy
- FW-WNLHA5A Support a woman to make decisions about contraception in an individualized manner that takes into accounts her cultural and personal beliefs
- FW-ADLHA2A Be aware of emerging sexuality and personal identity
- FW-SXLHA1A Communicate effectively when talking about sex and sexual health, and display confidence with language and cultural sensitivity.
- FW-SXLHA2A Describe the ethical principles involved when treating patients who have sexual health concerns, e.g. contraception and abortion
- FW-SXLHA3A Understand the importance of confidentiality, informed choice, and valid consent
- FW-SXLHA4A Understand the wider determinants of unplanned pregnancies and their impact on the individual and society

### **Contextual aspects of care**

- FW-PTLAC2A Know how the health service is organised locally and nationally, and how variation in resources can impact provision of care
- FW-EBLAC1A Demonstrate sound skills in evidence gathering (e.g. where to find resources, how

- to search databases, internet searching skills)
- FW-WNLAC1A Use resources to make your GP practice approachable for women experiencing gender based violence
- FW-WNLAC2A Adapt your practice to recognise women's key role in caring for children and other members of the community and understand how this can affect their health and their health can affect their ability to provide this care

### **Attitudinal aspects of care**

- FW-PSLAA1A Develop and maintain an approach to continuing learning and professional development
- FW-PSLAA3A Demonstrate awareness of your own capabilities, values and ethics
- FW-EBLAA1A Include a non-judgmental evidence-based approach to problem-solving, taking into account your patients' values
- FW-EBLAA2A Examine your own attitudes, values, professional capabilities and ethics so that, through the process of reflective and critical appraisal, you are not overwhelmed by personal issues and gaps in knowledge
- FW-EBLAA3A Judge the value of incentives and interventions, and be able to recognise where conflicts of interest may occur in clinical practice and in research
- FW-EBLAA4A Outline how research funding and publication bias can influence the evidence base of clinical practice
- FW-EBLAA5A Demonstrate awareness of external influences on one's knowledge, how different sources bring their own biases to the information they present (e.g. Pharmaceutical companies, media), and how to critically evaluate these influences.
- FW-WNLAA1A Seek to support patient autonomy
- FW-WNLAA2A Accept the role of a chaperone, and offer same as appropriate
- FW-WNLAA3A Maintain a non-judgemental approach to women suffering domestic violence
- FW-WNLAA4A Advocate for women, whose right to healthcare is being infringed
- FW-WNLAA5A Initiate systems to make the GP practice approachable to all women
  - including for lesbian, bisexual and transgender patients

- FW-WNLAA6A Adopt an approach to women that is appropriate to their cultural and personal context
- FW-ADLAA1A Assess sexual health and STI screening in a sensitive and non-judgmental fashion
- FW-SXLAA1A Manage patients in a non- judgmental way and understanding different patient groups, including young people, people in same-sex relationships, older patients, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities, injecting drug users and sex workers
- FW-SXLAA2A Counsel impartially in areas around crisis pregnancy, implications of termination and post termination care
- FW-SXLAA3A Ensure that your own beliefs, about any contraceptive methods, sexual behaviour and practices do not adversely affect the management of a patient’s sexual health
- FW-SXLAA4A Ensuring sensitivity to particular cultural beliefs and patient choice, e.g. the need for a female practitioner

### **Scientific aspects of care**

- FW-PSLAS2A Produce a quality improvement activity focused on improving practice processes.
- FW-EBLAS1A Demonstrate the use of clinical guidelines and recent evidence to guide patient care decisions
- FW-EBLAS2A Examine new research/guidelines for validity and reliability using published appraisal tools (i.e. CASP tools) for systematic reviews, RCTs, and observational studies
- FW-EBLAS3A Critique the validity and generalizability of new research
- FW-EBLAS4A Evaluate the role of new research in your practice, after applying appraisal skills to the papers
- FW-EBLAS5A Evaluate the cost-benefit of new interventions for individual patients (financial, time to wellness, return to work etc.)
- FW-EBLAS6A Apply new research to your practice in a systematic way.
- FW-WNLAS1A Practice evidenced based medicine with consulting skills to explain diagnoses and management options to patients and their families
- FW-WNLAS2A Adopt an evidence-based approach to individual women’s contraceptive needs

- from early sexual encounters to the menopause, including LARC insertion
- FW-WNLAS2.1A Breast Cancer
- FW-WNLAS2.2A Breast Pain
- FW-WNLAS2.4A Endometriosis
- FW-WNLAS2.5A Gynecological cancers
- FW-WNLAS2.6A Pelvic Inflammatory Disease
- FW-WNLAS2.8A Premenstrual Syndrome
- FW-WNLAS2.9A Symptoms of Menopause
- FW-WNLAS2.10A Treatment options for menopause
- FW-WNLAS2.11A Urinary Incontinence
- FW-WNLAS2.12A Vaginal Prolapse
- FW-WNLAS2.13A Vulvovaginitis
- FW-EXLAS1A Abnormal Uterine bleeding
- FW-EXLAS2A Chronic pelvic pain (including vulvodynia)
- FW-EXLAS3A Oligomenorrhea and amenorrhoea (including PCOS)
- FW-SXLAS1A Practice evidence-based medicine and be aware of constant changes in therapeutics and management options for various conditions.

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