

Together we *know more*.  
Together we *do more*.



## Dr Falk/Guts UK Awards 2024

### DIETITIAN RECOGNITION PRIZE WINNER: **MS LEAH SEAMARK**

#### PROJECT:

The Development of Dietetic-led Patient Webinars and website [www.patientwebinars.co.uk](http://www.patientwebinars.co.uk)



*Ms Seamark is a Community Gastroenterology Dietitian at Somerset NHS Foundation Trust*

#### Ms Seamark explains:

'In 2012, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust became the first in the UK to commission a specialist community dietetic gastroenterology service. It was originally focussed on providing dietetic support for people with intractable irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and gastrointestinal allergies, however as the service proved to be successful there was a plan to expand it to offer dietetic support to patients with other gastroenterology conditions, including coeliac disease and inflammatory bowel disease in remission. Unfortunately, funding was not approved, however the team continued to look for other ways to offer patients support and the idea of utilising digital technology to deliver dietetic advice to patients was formulated.

'The first dietetic-led live webinar took place in 2017, delivering dietary advice to patients with IBS and in 2018 we moved to pre-recorded webinars to provide more convenience for patients. From there, the service expanded rapidly with a range of webinars, providing accessible and reliable dietary information to people with newly diagnosed coeliac disease. These were developed and recorded with the support of two gastroenterology consultants.

'As the number of webinars increased, it became evident that a central platform was needed to host and share the information with Somerset patients as well as other health care professionals so that they, in turn could share the information with their patients and [www.patientwebinars.co.uk](http://www.patientwebinars.co.uk) was launched in April 2020.

'One of the key aims of the project was to support people with self-managing their conditions, allowing dietitians to focus their capacity on patients who need more 1-to-1 support. Data showed a 44% reduction in referrals to the Somerset community dietetic gastroenterology clinic in the year following the launch of the webinars. In particular, the Low FODMAP webinar service evaluation demonstrated significant improvements in gut symptoms and bowel habits in post-webinar evaluations when compared to pre-webinar responses, suggesting dietetic-led webinars are an effective means to deliver dietary advice, which can improve gut symptoms.

'Currently, the webinars provide dietary advice to patients for a wide range of conditions including irritable bowel syndrome

(IBS), constipation, coeliac disease, diverticular disease and inflammatory bowel disease. They are incorporated into local management pathways for these conditions, allowing people to access reliable information as soon as they have a diagnosis and are freely accessible to everyone. As a result of this, they are being used for the benefit of patients across Somerset, the UK and beyond.'

'Using data from google analytics, over the last 12 months alone, the website has had 30,000 users. The low FODMAP webinar is the website's most viewed webinar, followed by the IBS first-line dietary advice webinar.

'Being able to offer dietary advice to patients with gut conditions is so important, as myself and the rest of my team have seen the positive impact dietary advice can have on gut symptoms and subsequent quality of life. We are passionate about continuing to find ways to offer patients reliable dietary support at the right time and in the right way, whilst recognising that to offer an equity of care, different people require different levels of support.'

#### Ms Seamark's Line Manager Alison Booth, Deputy Lead for Community Dietetics within the Somerset NHS Foundation Trusts comments:

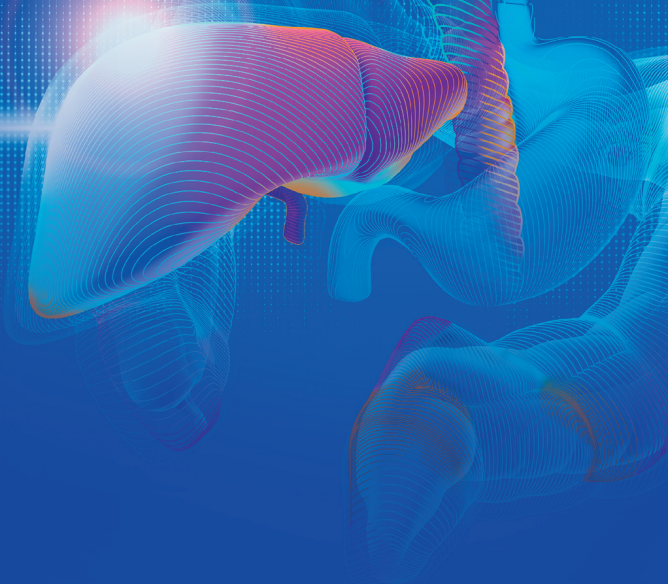
'Leah, along with other members of Somerset NHS Foundation Trust Community Dietetic Team, have worked incredibly hard over the years to develop the website and the webinars. These tools have become a fundamental part of our dietetic management pathways for various conditions and are utilised extensively within our department as part of our triaging process for dietetic referrals. I am extremely proud and delighted that Leah and the team have been recognised with this award; it is very much deserved.'

#### Ms Seamark states:

'I feel incredibly honoured to accept this award on behalf of the Somerset Dietetic Gastroenterology team and all involved. The whole team has worked so hard over several years to develop the resources, and having this recognition is a fantastic achievement. Winning this award has inspired our team to continue to develop and update the webinars available for patients, and the funds from the award will be instrumental in supporting this endeavour. Personally, I take great pride in leading a team that continues to develop innovative ways of delivering dietary support to patients both locally, and nationally.'



Together we *know more*.  
Together we *do more*.



**Collaboration**



**Formulation**



**Value**

At Dr Falk, we do things differently. Our focus is on people. So for every treatment we develop, from gastroenterology to liver disease, we do it our way.

It's a simple formula.  
**We call it the Dr Falk way.**

[www.dralk.co.uk](http://www.dralk.co.uk)

Dr Falk Pharma UK Ltd  
Unit K, Bourne End Business Park  
Cores End Road  
Bourne End SL8 5AS  
Tel: +44 (0) 1628 536 600  
Email: [office@dralkpharma.co.uk](mailto:office@dralkpharma.co.uk)

Company Registration Number: 2307698

UI--2400150

Date of preparation: June 2024