
Call for participants in the ECCO Topical Review on IBD Beyond Medicine and Surgery 2026-2027

Deadline for submission is April 16, 2026

Context:

Inflammatory bowel disease is a chronic disease where both medical and psychological factors have a major impact on several domains of patient's quality of life. Patients with IBD report higher levels of psychological and emotional distress, fatigue, anxiety, centrally mediated abdominal pain, depression and sleep disturbance. These complex complaints require integrative and appropriate management. Psychotherapies and body-mind interventions may have beneficial impact on coping skills and stress management, but their efficacy and best use remain a matter of debate.

CAM – complementary and alternative therapies – are commonly used by patients with IBD, and often not reported to their treating physician. Complementary therapy is used together with conventional medicine, while alternative therapy is used in place of conventional medicine. Importantly, most of these therapies lack FDA or EMEA approval, haven't been subject of randomized controlled trials, and lack appropriate evidence. Taking into account their increasing usage, it is important that physicians actively enquire patients about their use and are ready to provide evidence-level advice on their efficacy, potential benefits and risk, as well on their impact on quality of life.

Aim of the project:

The ultimate aim is to provide evidence-level appraisal of the available literature on the use of complementary, alternative and psychotherapy interventions in the treatment of IBD, that can be used by physicians and patients to discuss and guide advice on the best use of these strategies. With this in mind this review will mainly focus on CAM and psychotherapy interventions for which there is available data on a preclinical or clinical setting. Likewise, this topic will not cover the efficacy of psychotropic drugs used to treat centrally mediated disorders of gastrointestinal pain.

Timeline

DATE	ACTION
LATE MARCH 2026	Call sent out
LATE APRIL 2026	Applicants selected and notified
21 MAY, 2026	Virtual Kick off meeting (mandatory)
LATE MAY – END OF AUGUST 2026	Literature research First draft of "Current Practice Positions" (incl. first draft of supporting text and recommended summary tables for literature research)
SEPTEMBER 2026	Online voting
EARLY OCT – MID NOV 2026	Revision after online voting Final draft of "Current Practice Positions" and supporting text
23 NOVEMBER 2026	Abstract submission deadline
11 DECEMBER 2026	Virtual Consensus meeting (half day/mandatory)
LATE DEC 2026 - END JANUARY 2027	Finalisation
EARLY FEBRUARY 2027	Cross-check by medical writer
FEBRUARY 2027	Revisions by Coordinators
MARCH 2027	Revision by GB
MARCH 2027	Submission to JCC
PRESENTATION	ECCO'27

Failure to deliver any task by the defined deadlines can lead to exclusion from the Project.

Topics and questions will be addressed in these proposed Working Groups:

WG 1 – Psychological and psychotherapeutic interventions

- To review the main psychological domains altered in IBD, their risk factors and diagnostic tools, including anxiety, depression, fatigue, functional abdominal pain, and sleep disturbances.
- To review the available evidence on the use of:
 - Hypnosis
 - Cognitive behavioural therapy
 - Mindfulness
 - Meditation and other relaxation techniques
 - Supportive and behavioural therapies
 - Digital psychotherapy
 - Others

WG 2 – Mind-body and physical complementary interventions

- To review the available evidence on the use of:
 - Yoga
 - Exercise-based interventions
 - Acupuncture
 - Moxibustion
 - Massage and manual therapies
 - Breathing-based interventions
 - Others

WG 3 – Non-dietary complementary and alternative therapies

- To review the available evidence on the use of:
 - Cannabinoids/cannabis and marijuana
 - Herbal medicines
 - Traditional or alternative remedies
 - Helminth therapy
 - Other non-dietary CAM therapies
 - Others

In each workgroup, 1 seat is reserved for a Y-ECCO Member – who will specifically be in charge of the drafting of an e-Course.

If you are:

- an ECCO Member (in good standing – 2026 membership)
- and are interested in joining one of the working parties for this project

To apply online*, please [click here](#) and use your **ECCO Portal Credentials**.

Deadline for submissions is April 16, 2026.

ECCO is looking forward to your application!

Best regards from the Project Coordinators,

Charlotte Hedin and Johan Burisch

If you have trouble logging in, please contact ecco@ecco-ibd.eu.

**Data processing consent and retention: By sending an application, you agree to the data processing for the above-described project: ECCO Office stores applicants' personal data of this application for the project timeframe. You have the right to object at any time at ecco@ecco-ibd.eu. ECCO Office will delete data securely after the end of this project*