

LET`S TALK ABOUT IT- ADDRESSING SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION IN DIABETES

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Purpose: Sexual dysfunction is a common complication of diabetes. Research is sparse. Many patients are unaware of the link between diabetes and sexual dysfunction, and how to treat it. This study aims to improve the level awareness, knowledge and self-efficacy regarding sexual dysfunction among healthcare professionals in diabetes clinics, and to improve patient experience. Methods: 1. Validation of healthcare staff and patient questionnaires 2. Baseline assessment of healthcare teams (physicians, nurses, social workers, dieticians), and patients 3. Building and conducting workshops for healthcare teams 4. Evaluation- staff and patients. Results: Pre-intervention: Most carers agreed they are responsible for providing support on sexual dysfunction (81%), but preferred the patient raise the subject (78%). Among patients, most stated the issue was not raised by healthcare teams. Although there was no difference between orthodox and secular patients regarding their needs, a much higher proportion of secular patients stated the issue was raised by staff (22.1% vs. 6%, $p < 0.05$). Post intervention: There was a significant increase pre and post intervention ($p < 0.01$), although the proportion of patients who stated that the issue of sexuality was not raised by their caregiver (45%) and their needs were not addressed (35%) remained high. Staff questionnaires demonstrated a small increase in awareness and improved attitude towards discussing sexual function. Conclusion: There is a gap between patient needs and expectations regarding support for sexual dysfunction in diabetes clinics. Our workshop narrowed the gap but further work is required.