

Facilitating Female Sexual Function Assessment

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to facilitate the conversation about sexual function at the annual visit. The goal was to provide an efficient, standardized way for a provider to assess the patient's concerns regarding sexual dysfunction, in a clinic setting that currently did not assess women's sexual function.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

- ▶ Sexual health is a key component to overall health and quality of life
- ▶ The World Health Organization recognizes the importance of sexual health
- ▶ The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recognizes female sexual dysfunction (FSD) can adversely affect the quality of life for women
- ▶ 43% of women are affected
- ▶ Healthcare professional related factors
 - ▶ lack of adequate training in their professional programs
 - ▶ low confidence in their ability to adequately address the topic
 - ▶ perception that few treatment options are available
 - ▶ inadequate clinical time to obtain a sexual history
 - ▶ the underestimation of the prevalence of FSD

METHOD

Site
Gynecology clinic in Phoenix, Arizona

Population

- ▶ One provider
- ▶ Women over the age of 18, English speaking, and being seen for an annual exam only

Instrument
Brief Sexual Symptom Checklist (Female)

- ▶ Published by Hatzichristou et al (2004)
- ▶ Recommended by multiple organizations for use in discussing female sexual function

Process

- ▶ Brief Sexual Symptom Checklist (Female) was used during a one-month time period
- ▶ Women that met the study criteria were offered an opportunity to complete the questionnaire
- ▶ Women choosing to participate answered the questionnaire prior to the provider entering the room
- ▶ The provider then documented if the concern was discussed, a return visit was scheduled, or a referral to another provider was given

Satisfaction with Sexual Function			
	N=34	Yes	No
Satisfied with Sexual Function		79%	21%

Provider Action		
Discussed	Return Visit	Referral
100% *	0%	0%

Patient Reported Problems with Sexual Function	
1	Decreased vaginal lubrication
2	Little or no interest in sex
3	Pain during sex
3	Orgasm
X	Decreased genital sensation

Patient Reported Most Bothersome Problem with Sexual Function	
1	Decreased vaginal lubrication
2	Orgasm
3	Pain during sex
3	Little or no interest in sex
X	Decreased genital sensation

Conclusion

- ▶ Utilizing a sexual function assessment tool does assist the provider in identifying sexual dysfunction in women
- ▶ An assessment tool helps promote the conversation for both the provider and patient
- ▶ Women want to discuss sexual function concerns with their provider
- ▶ Asking women about sexual function can easily be incorporated into their annual visit
- ▶ The provider said, "This took less time in the visit than I originally thought it would."
- ▶ Clinic flow was not interrupted
- ▶ No appointment schedule changes were necessary to include the assessment