
Nurses Presentations

Abstract citation ID: **jjae190.1581**

N49

Sexual and reproductive health of Australian women who live with Inflammatory Bowel Disease

K. O'reilly¹, K. Peters¹, E. Holroyd²

¹Western Sydney University, Nursing and Midwifery, Penrith, Australia ²Auckland University of Technology, Nursing and Midwifery, Auckland, New Zealand

Background: Robust research in the field of inflammatory bowel disease is readily available, however an exploration of gender issues which are specific for women who live with inflammatory bowel disease remain limited in the literature. Currently much of the literature regarding sexual health is limited to reproduction and sexual dysfunction and the broader impact that inflammatory bowel disease has on sexual wellbeing is not well understood. By exploring sexual and reproductive health issues for Australian women who live with inflammatory bowel disease, this research aims to draw attention to the current limitations within the literature and to stimulate discussion and inform future directions for research, policy, and practice.

Methods: An exploratory concurrent mixed methods study, using an online survey and qualitative interviews, was employed to develop an understanding of the sexual and reproductive health needs of Australian women who live with inflammatory bowel disease. The survey included questions specific to women's physical and emotional health, their self-esteem, their satisfaction with life and women's pregnancy related knowledge specific to inflammatory bowel disease. Additionally qualitative interviews allowed for further exploration of women's experiences accessing health services and more detail regarding the challenges for them as women and the impact of inflammatory bowel disease on their identity. In keeping with feminist frameworks, qualitative data collection and analysis was informed by Anderson and Jack (1991) and Hesse-Biber (2014). This included the interviewer actively listening and encouraging women to talk about their day-to-day experiences and feelings which were related to their sexual and reproductive health and how this may have been impacted by their diagnosis of inflammatory bowel disease.

Results: Australian women participated in conversational interviews and completed an online survey. Preliminary themes which have emerged from this research include Sexuality, Sexual and reproductive health; Feeling vulnerable and dismissed.

Conclusion: Research which focuses specifically on the sexual health experience of women living with inflammatory bowel disease is important to inform acute and chronic models of care which are relevant across women's lifespan. Findings may help to inform nursing curricula, primary healthcare service delivery and sexual and reproductive health services policy development.

References:

- Anderson, K., & Jack, D. (1991). Learning to listen: Interview techniques and analyses. In S. Berger-Gluck, & D. Patai (Eds.), *Women's words: The feminist practice of oral history* (pp.11 – 26). Routledge Publications.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2016). Thematic Analysis. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data in Psychology* (2nd ed., pp.84 – 103). SAGE publications.
- Hesse- Biber, S. (2014). Feminist approaches to in-depth interviewing. In S. Hesse- Biber (Ed.), *Feminist Research Practice* (pp. 182 – 232). SAGE publications.