

# Sex in the spotlight: A qualitative, phenomenological study of the role of sexuality in the lives of persons with severe mental illness.

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<b>Ethical review</b>	Approved WMO
<b>Status</b>	Recruitment stopped
<b>Health condition type</b>	Schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders
<b>Study type</b>	Observational non invasive

## Summary

### ID

NL-OMON51431

### Source

ToetsingOnline

### Brief title

Sex in the spotlight

### Condition

- Schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders

### Synonym

Severe mental illness/ sensitivity to psychosis

### Research involving

Human

### Sponsors and support

**Primary sponsor:** Academisch Medisch Centrum

**Source(s) of monetary or material Support:** Onderzoeksbudget GGZ instelling

## Intervention

**Keyword:** Severe Mental Illness, Sex, Sexuality, SMI

## Outcome measures

### Primary outcome

N/A specifically qualitative research with a phenomenological approach

### Secondary outcome

N/A

## Study description

### Background summary

Sexuality and intimacy are fundamental elements of general well-being and quality of life, including for individuals with an SMI. Nevertheless, wishes regarding intimacy and sexuality often remain unfulfilled (McCann et al., 2019). Due to the regular onset of the disorder during adolescence, the phase of life in which the development of sexuality and romantic relationships is central, it can be more complicated to enter into these relationships. In addition, the risk of sexual problems also plays a role. This risk is 86-96% in people with, for example, a psychotic vulnerability and is explained in 30-60% of the cases by the use of antipsychotics (Cloutier, Francoeur, Samson, Ghostine, & Lecomte, 2020; De Jager et al., 2016).

From our observations in practice and by Voermans, Van, Peen, and Hengeveld (2012), it has been found that sexuality is hardly discussed during the treatment. Little or no attention seems to be paid to sexual development, wishes and needs, partly due to the lack of sexuality as part of the treatment plan, somatic screening, and reports. Shame among care providers seems to play a major role in not discussing sexuality (Voermans et al., 2012).

Social relationships, intimacy, and sexuality should be discussed in the counseling of persons with an SMI. Meaningful relationships stimulate the client's recovery process and thus the quality of life (AKWA GGZ, 2018a). At the moment little information is known about the experience of sexuality by clients with an SMI. This research must start with a general exploration of the subject.

### Study objective

This research aims to generate knowledge about the sexual experience of clients with an SMI. Possibly the acquired knowledge can be used to create awareness among care providers. The ultimate wish is to adapt the treatment to the sexual experience of clients with an SMI and the problems they encounter in the field of sexuality. This requires further research based on the results of this study. This may lead to a follow-up question to investigate the problems and treatment options within Arkin.

## **Study design**

This qualitative research focuses on the experience of sexuality by persons with an SMI. Phenomenological research has been chosen for this, in which in-depth interviews will be conducted to gain insight into the experience of the research population. This phenomenological study aims to understand the lived experience of individuals with an SMI about sexuality and to gain insight into underlying thoughts.

## **Study burden and risks**

The interview may bring to mind difficult events or memories for the client. It also costs the client time (estimated is 90 minutes in total).

## **Contacts**

### **Public**

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### **Scientific**

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## **Trial sites**

### **Listed location countries**

Netherlands

## Eligibility criteria

### Age

Adults (18-64 years)

Elderly (65 years and older)

### Inclusion criteria

- clients from the age of 18;
- diagnosed with serious mental illness;
- under treatment by the FACT Team or Basis GGZ of Mentrum - Arkin.

### Exclusion criteria

- clients with a current decompensation of their mental illness;
- where an IQ lower than 70 has been established;
- who have insufficient command of the Dutch language.

## Study design

### Design

**Study type:** Observational non invasive

Masking: Open (masking not used)

Control: Uncontrolled

Primary purpose: Other

### Recruitment

NL

Recruitment status: Recruitment stopped

Start date (anticipated): 07-07-2022

Enrollment: 15

Type: Actual

## Ethics review

Approved WMO

Date: 04-07-2022

Application type: First submission

Review commission: METC Amsterdam UMC

## Study registrations

### Followed up by the following (possibly more current) registration

No registrations found.

### Other (possibly less up-to-date) registrations in this register

No registrations found.

### In other registers

Register	ID
CCMO	NL79199.018.21