

Amanda Epps

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Amanda Epps is the lead diabetes specialist nurse at East Kent hospital university NHS foundation trust. Amanda is a non-medical prescriber and an advanced nurse practitioner; Amanda has recently completed an MSc in Diabetes at Kings College London. Amanda is the founder of the diabetes specialist nurse forum UK, an online support group for diabetes specialists that now has over 2000 members. The forum won the prestigious QIC healthcare professional of the year award in 2018 and were invited to meet the prime minister at Downing Street for their work improving diabetes specialist HCP networking across the UK. Amanda is a Committee member for the DISN UK group. Amanda is a healthcare professional advisory board member for Action for Diabetes and Help Madina charities. Amanda has a personal interest in type 1 diabetes care as her son was diagnosed aged 7 and recently, she was also diagnosed later in life with the condition.

ABSTRACT

Background

Wearable diabetes devices are becoming more widespread. While there is some literature on the impact of these devices on day-to-day life there is little research on sexual activity in people living with type 1 diabetes (T1D).

Aims and Objectives

This research aimed to investigate the literature available on the impact of wearable diabetes technology on sexual activity. The literature review identified no interview-based UK studies on the topic

The objectives of the research were to:

- Study the impact of T1D on relationships.
- Examine the influence of T1D on sexual activity.
- Research the effect of wearable diabetes devices on sexual partners.
- Investigate the impact of wearable diabetes devices on sexual activity.
- Explore the discussions that people with T1D have with healthcare professionals (HCPs) about sexual activity and wearable diabetes devices.
- Uncover suggestions for the designers of wearable diabetes devices to improve the impact during sexual activity.

Methods

A framework analysis was used

Findings

21 participants were recruited, 11 interviews were completed. There were 6 main themes, the impact of T1D on relationships, the impact of T1D on sexual activity, the impact of wearable technology on partners, the impact of wearable technology on sexual activity, the strategies to improve knowledge and lastly improvement suggestions for the designers of wearable diabetes devices.

Conclusions

This research has shown the impact of alarms, hypoglycaemia, and the importance of the discussion of sexual activity with technology. This highlights the impact of sexual activity when deciding on treatment choice. This research also raises awareness to device manufacturers when designing future wearable diabetes technology. Further research ideas identified include to investigate the same topic in non-white individuals, young adults and to investigate the impact of hypoglycaemia on sexual function in women with T1D.