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Integrating Sexuality Issues into Medical Consultation: the Gynaecologists' Point of View

Angélick **SCHWEIZER**, Christine **BRUCHEZ** &

Prof. Marie **SANTIAGO DELEFOSSE**

University of Lausanne, Switzerland

angelick.schweizer@unil.ch

Objective: Recent studies show that less than one out of two physicians would incorporate sexuality issues during the anamnesis, whereas a majority of patients (2/3) would wish to talk about during medical consultation. This study aims to explore the integration of sexuality issues during consultations, through the analysis of gynaecologists' discourse. Method: We conducted 44 in-depth semi-structured interviews with male and female gynaecologists, in the French part of Switzerland. A thematic content analysis was applied to the corpus. Results: Most of gynaecologists interviewed are interested in discussing sexuality during consultations. However, our analysis highlights disparities of knowledge, attitudes and practices among gynaecologists. For some, their knowledge on sexuality seems mainly based on their personal experience (years of medical practice, familial experience, readings). Furthermore, our findings suggest how attitudes and practices differ among physicians, according to their gender and their own sexuality, as well as to their patients. Conclusion: Nowadays, gynaecologists come across sexuality issues that go beyond anatomical and physiological considerations and for which they are not necessarily qualified. Our research suggests to question the role and the limits of gynaecologists considering sexuality issues and to analyse the possibility to work together with others health professionals.

Angélick Schweizer PhD Student ; **Christine Bruchez** ; PhD Student, **Marie Santiago Delefosse** Professor From University of Lausanne, Institute of Psychology, Research Centre for Health Psychology (CerPsa) www.unil.ch/cerpasa