Intimate Links: Applying a Critical Sexuality Framework to Promoting Women's Sexual Health in Spinal Cord Rehabilitation Settings

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BACKGROUND
• Disparities in sexual health outcomes are amplified for WWSCI in rehabilitation settings
• Sexual healthcare practice is based on cis-gendered male norms and a heteronormative approach
• Paralyzed bodies of WWSCI are rarely if ever discussed or portrayed

CRITICAL SEXUALITY STUDIES
• A critical theory examining how power and privilege in systems shape assumptions of sexuality
• Calls for the conceptual analysis of sexuality and the examination of heteronormativity in sexuality research
• Attends to the qualities of marginalized bodies

PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
• This preliminary framework speaks to the lived experience of WWSCI in spinal cord rehabilitation and their sexual health care
• Sexual health outcomes are tied to the power and influence of the SCI rehabilitation system
• Able-bodied, gendered, and heterosexual norms minimize sexual health outcomes as a high priority for WWSCI
• Sexuality research lacks critical examination of rehabilitation systems

APPLICATION OF CSS TO SCI REHABILITATION
• Reconceptualizes current heteronormative and gendered educational materials
• Systematically examines provider bias toward the sexuality of WWSCI
• Disrupts gender disparities in the approach to SCI sexual health education
• Shifts research aims to interrogate gendered biases in institutional and organizational policies

REFERENCES