

**Dr Aileen Burton works as a lecturer in the School of Nursing and Midwifery in UCC.**

**Email: [a.burton@ucc.ie](mailto:a.burton@ucc.ie)/ Phone: 353 21 4901464**

**She leads diabetes education at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and is also the Programme Lead for the BSc General Nursing programme.**

**She completed her PhD at Ulster University where she examined sexual functioning among women with Diabetes. Recently she presented at the World Congress for Sexual Health in Prague in May this year where she also chaired the session on female sexuality.**

**Aileen gave us a brief overview of her work in the area sexual functioning in women with diabetes:**

Female sexual dysfunction (FSD) is a prevalent, multidimensional and complex healthcare concern. It remains a hidden and invisible issue for women with diabetes. Existing research mainly focuses on physical factors and does not consider a holistic view. The objectives of this study were to investigate sexual functioning of Irish women with and without diabetes and to explore associated predictors utilising a holistic framework. The sample size was n=103 Type 1 diabetes; n=106 Type 2 diabetes and n=129 controls. A correlational cross-sectional survey was used to collect data via social media. Outcome measures included level of sexual functioning, sexual self-concept, sexual relationships and psychological well-being. Hierarchical multiple regression and path analysis was used to analyse sexual functioning and its associated predictors. The risk of FSD was 61% for Type 1 and 98.9% for Type 2 diabetes compared with 21.5% in the control group. This study illustrated that sexual functioning is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and not one that is predominantly focused on physical aspects. As healthcare professionals we need to recognize and understand the multidimensional phenomenon that is female sexual function and diabetes.