

## Editorial

# Self-Administered Questionnaires in the *International Journal of Impotence Research: The Journal of Sexual Medicine*

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The quadrupling of manuscripts submitted to the *International Journal of Impotence Research: The Journal of Sexual Medicine* (IJIRjsm) over the last few years directly reflects the rapid growth, development and interest in sexual medicine as a genuine health discipline in medicine. To continue with the highest standards of publishing, an editorial will accompany each issue of the IJIRjsm based on a specific manuscript or series of manuscripts within the current issue.

This issue (15.3) contains four articles discussing the use of self-administered questionnaires as tools for assessment of efficacy and outcome of specific therapies in sexual medicine. In this field, it is critical to scientifically evaluate each specific therapy. It is only through rigorous clinical standards that we as health-care providers in sexual medicine will be able to rationally manage patients with sexual health concerns. In erectile dysfunction, several methods have been utilized historically for the objective measurement of penile rigidity and engorgement. In contemporary clinical trial design, however, the use of self-report measures of sexual function, especially by diary or event logs and self-administered questionnaires, has become more widely relied upon. In particular, the self-administered questionnaire has the advantage of providing a standardized, relatively cost-efficient assessment of past and current sexual capabilities at low patient burden that can be utilized in international multi-institutional and multicultural studies.

Given the importance of the IJIRjsm to sexual medicine and given the importance of these validated instruments to our field, several critical articles concerning the use of questionnaires in sexual medicine have been published in this journal. Ray Rosen, one of the developers of the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF), wrote an outstanding review article in the documentation of the successful use of the IIEF in multiple multi-international, placebo-controlled clinical trials to assess therapeutic outcome in oral pharmacotherapy.<sup>1</sup> Also in that issue was an article on the IIEF translated into Malay.<sup>2</sup> A 5-item version of the IIEF was also developed as a simplified assessment tool for diagnosis of erectile dysfunction.<sup>3</sup> Derby *et al*<sup>4</sup> wrote an intriguing article

comparing a single-item questionnaire to multi-item questionnaires including the IIEF. The IIEF has been used to assess treatment outcome in special populations as well, including patients treated by hemodialysis.<sup>5,6</sup> Other self-administered questionnaires have been published in the IJIRjsm, including the Golombok Rust Inventory of Sexual Satisfaction.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to look into the past to gain perspective for the future. As the IJIRjsm continues in different areas in male and female sexual dysfunction, editorials will highlight peer-reviewed manuscripts previously published in the IJIRjsm. Referencing past IJIRjsm manuscripts is a way of strengthening the *International Journal of Impotence Research: The Journal of Sexual Medicine* and making it easier for health-care professionals in sexual medicine to find past critical building blocks for relevant basic science and clinical information in our field. I remind you that this is your journal, so read your journal faithfully, contribute manuscripts often, cite it routinely, and contact us whenever you feel necessary.

I Goldstein  
Editor

## References

- 1 Rosen RC, Cappelleri JC, Gendrano III N. The International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF): a state-of-the-science review. *Int J Impot Res* 2002; **14**: 245–250.
- 2 Quek KF *et al*. Reliability and validity of the Malay version of the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF-15) in the Malaysian population. *Int J Impot Res* 2002; **14**: 310–315.
- 3 Rosen RC *et al*. Development and evaluation of an abridged, 5-item version of the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF-5). *Int J Impot Res* 1999; **11**: 319–326.
- 4 Derby CA *et al*. Measurement of erectile dysfunction in population-based studies: the use of a single question self-assessment in the Massachusetts Male Aging Study. *Int J Impot Res* 2000; **12**: 197–204.
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- 6 Arslan D *et al*. Sexual dysfunction in male patients on hemodialysis: assessment with the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF). *Int J Impot Res* 2002; **14**: 539–542.
- 7 van Lankveld JJDM, van Koeveringe GA. Predictive validity of the Golombok Rust Inventory of Sexual Satisfaction (GRISS) for the presence of sexual dysfunctions within a Dutch urological population. *Int J Impot Res* 2003; **15**: 110–116.