



01

Examples of conversation starters

I recognise this is a sensitive topic, but we know that some treatments can impact sexual health and relationships in different ways. Is this a concern for you?

Is that something you'd like to talk about? If not today, we can another time.



02

Invite questions

Assume people have questions, encourage them to ask.

What questions do you have about intimacy, sex or your body in relation to your treatment?

If person says "none", you could give a further explanation of what you mean, for example using the text in the first box. Encourage them to raise the topic later. For example,

I understand this may not be a concern today, but if you do have any concerns or questions later, please let me know.



03

Provide reassurance

For some people, especially adolescents and young adults, indirect language can make it easier to engage without feeling singled out.

When talking to adolescents and young adults, it can help to say things like:

Some people are interested in...

Another young person asked me about that...

This helps to encourage comfort in raising concerns, and situations relating to sexual health and relationships.

Many people experience treatment-related changes that can impact sex and intimacy but there are simple strategies that can help. Is this something you want to talk about, or would you prefer we revisit it another time?



04

Use person-centred language

Use appropriate and inclusive language to raise the topic considering the person in your care.

Sexuality and intimacy can be important for people of any age, even though people might not talk about it much. Cancer treatment can change the way bodies work and feel sexually, with or without a partner. Is that something you'd like to talk about?



05

Establish a baseline understanding

Seek to understand what a person already knows about sex and intimacy and what they would like to know.

Can you tell me what you understand about sex?

Can you tell me what you understand about intimacy?

Would you like to know about how sex and intimacy can be impacted by the treatment you are having?