



## SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

April 2019

### How are relationships impacted by schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia can have an intrusive effect on personal relationships, social interactions and on libido. For people with schizophrenia who experience difficulty forming and maintaining relationships, this may be a direct consequence of the disorder and its debilitating symptoms. Investigations have found that cognitive deficits experienced by many people with schizophrenia, including impairments in social perception and emotional recognition, may also pose hindrance to the formation of meaningful relationships. Antipsychotic medication has also been shown to impact on sexual function.

### What is the evidence for relationships?

Moderate to high quality evidence finds a medium-sized association between increased psychotic symptom severity and increased levels of loneliness. Moderate to low quality evidence finds people with first-episode psychosis have smaller social networks than people without a mental disorder.

Moderate quality evidence finds the marital status of people with schizophrenia varies considerably in the developing world, with marriage rates ranging from 16% to 73%, divorce rates ranging from 6% to 39%, and being single ranging from 26% to 65%. Sexual dysfunction is common and sex education can increase functioning and improve personal relationships, as well as reduce risks of HIV or unplanned pregnancy.

For more information see the technical table



*NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.*

*Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.*

*Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.*

*While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about schizophrenia or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.*

### HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at [neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia](http://neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia).