



NEWS RELEASE

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Think About Sex on Valentine's Day

It's a fact that men have sex on the brain more than women. Yet, encouraging men *and* women to think about sex in a different way is important for the public's health and wellbeing according to the Sexual Advice Association*. Launching its *Thinking About Sex Day* (TASD), an awareness campaign, on Valentine's Day, the Sexual Advice Association takes its commitment to raise awareness of physical and psychological issues around sexual activity to new heights.

Three actors, Alistair McGowan, Miranda Richardson and Ronni Ancona support TASD with their creation and performance of original comedy sketches. Why? Simply to help more people open up about sex and talk about some of the problems that can occur. The Sexual Advice Association (www.sexualadviceassociation.co.uk) can provide support when people need it – it is the only national organisation offering a professionally staffed confidential helpline to deal with questions on male and female sexual health.

In keeping with its heritage, the charity remains focused on information and support around male and female sexual problems, but the charity also takes the TASD opportunity to further its aims with a more positive and less scientific approach. The Sexual Advice Association was previously the Sexual Dysfunction Association.

Tricia Barnes, Director of TBA Practice - a multidisciplinary Sexual & Relationship Therapy Service in London and Trustee of the Sexual Advice Association says: "The aim of TASD is to generate communication as a result of people enjoying (and possibly identifying with) the film sketches, which highlight common sexual difficulties in a lighthearted way. Various studies and surveys show that up to half of women may experience sexual difficulties at some point in their life. This often involves problems with loss of sexual desire or libido, difficulty with becoming sexually aroused or reaching orgasm, or experiencing discomfort or pain with sex.

Living with sexual problems can be very distressing to the woman and her partner. But frequently there is also a negative effect on her sense of wellbeing and on the relationship, with women expressing concerns about the partner's possible lack of sexual satisfaction, fear of relationship breakdown, and not being able to talk about such anxieties openly. For those who do experience distress, and have tried to manage the issues themselves but without significant change, the Sexual Advice Association can point individuals in the right direction to obtain professional help", Tricia continued.

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Dr Graham Jackson, Chair of the Sexual Advice Association and Consultant Cardiologist, London, comments on male sexual problems: "Probably the most talked about and thought about issues for men are erections and confidence that they can satisfy their partner's sexual needs and get a hard erection. Erection problems affect 40 per cent of men over the age of 40. What people aren't so familiar with is that erection problems can be caused by, or be an early warning sign, of cardiovascular disease. Men aged 30-40 years experiencing erection problems have a seven-fold risk of coronary artery disease as they age over their next 10-15 years.

The risk of experiencing erection problems increases with age, yet age should not be a barrier to an enjoyable sex life. The Sexual Advice Association is there to offer support to people of all ages and does not discriminate either around sexual orientation. We are simply here to help", Dr Jackson continued.

Both male and female problems can be caused by a number of factors including underlying physical, psychological, emotional and cultural conditions. Staying generally healthy, including psychological health, can therefore often keep a couple's sex life healthy too.

A wealth of information on male and female sexual problems and how to seek help is available on the Sexual Advice Association website all year round. The Sexual Advice Association's helpline is 020 7486 7262. One of the Trustees also runs a personal email reply service, which is proving a very popular offering from the Charity.

The first film sketch is already on the Sexual Advice Association website (www.sexualadviceassociation.co.uk) the second will be posted on TASD (February 14th) and further sketches will be released later in the year.

The Sexual Advice Association is extremely grateful to Alistair McGowan, Miranda Richardson and Ronni Ancona for their positive response to the invitation from the Sexual Advice Association to support the TASD campaign.

The Chair and Trustees are available for interview about TASD and the workings of the Charity.

TASD activities have been supported financially by the Sexual Advice Association and unconditional educational grants from Boehringer Ingelheim and Pfizer Limited.

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For further information and to organise interviews, please contact:
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