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Survey: 97% of patients concerned about cleaning and re-using catheters

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A new survey has revealed significant levels of patient concern about the prospect of being asked to administer a reusable catheter, which require the user to wash and re-use their device.

Patients fear reusable catheters, if prescribed by the NHS as part of a mixed-use regime, will have a damaging impact on their daily lives and increase their chances of contracting a urinary tract infection (UTI).

The survey of 2,243 people who require intermittent self-catheterisation, found that 89% were either 'very concerned' or 'concerned' about being required to undertake a 'mixed use' regime.

Some 95% of respondents, to the survey commissioned by Coloplast, found the process of self-catheterisation using a disposable single-use catheter either 'very easy' or 'easy'.

Other key findings include:

- 97% of respondents said they would feel 'very uncomfortable' or 'uncomfortable' about cleaning and re-using their catheter in a communal place such as a public toilet or at work.
- 95% of respondents felt that using a re-usable catheter would make them more concerned about contracting a urinary tract infection.
- 93% of respondents felt that cleaning and re-using their catheter would have a 'significant' or 'some' impact on their daily lives and their day-to-day lifestyle.
- Just 6 per cent of respondents said they would be interested in learning and trying to undertake a re-usable intermittent self-catheterisation regime with 80 per cent saying they would not.

When intermittent catheterisation was introduced in the 1970's, catheters were usually cleaned and re-used, often for several days or longer (multi-use catheters). Since then, catheters have been developed that are intended to be used once only and then thrown away (single-use catheters). Most people in the UK use single-use catheters now and multi-use catheters are not readily available any more.

However, the MultiCath study, commissioned by the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) and the University of Southampton, is considering whether the NHS should ask patients to switch to a mixed-use regime – which would often require patients to clean and re-use their catheter.

Source:

<http://www.nihr.ac.uk/>
