

## **Resources for Effective Sleep Treatment (REST Project)**

Sleep problems are common, affecting over a third of adults in the United Kingdom and leading to reduced productivity and impaired health-related quality of life. Published research has shown that the clinical benefits of hypnotic drugs are small with significant risks of complications from adverse cognitive, psychiatric or psychomotor effects which may persist for several months after stopping the drug. Psychological methods for managing sleep problems, including cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBTi) have been shown to be effective and cost effective but have not been widely implemented or evaluated in a general practice setting where they are most likely to be needed and most appropriately delivered.

This is an improvement project involving practice teams and patients in general practice. The study aims to;

1. Improve user experience of consulting with insomnia by increasing the use of social and psychological interventions for insomnia as well as reduce the prescribing rate of hypnotics.
2. Evaluate and increase capacity for quality improvement in primary care.

An evaluation study was conducted using structured questionnaire to understand the nature of leadership and culture for innovation within Lincolnshire general practices and to measure the rate and extent of spread and adoption of techniques for quality improvement.

We also carried out patients and prescribers focus group study to explore their experiences of consulting and being consulted with insomnia.

A pilot cluster randomised controlled trial will be carried out in 4 general practices in Lincolnshire from September 2008. General practices will be randomised to an educational intervention for problem focused therapy which includes a consultation approach comprising careful assessment and use of modified CBTi for insomnia in the consultation compared with usual care. The study will also test procedures and collect information in preparation for a larger definitive cluster-randomised trial.

We observed that there was the need to develop leadership skills and provide training in quality improvement skills and techniques in general practices in Lincolnshire.

Patients and GPs recognised insomnia is a response to adversity and that patients welcome careful assessment and advice about non-drug methods. Practitioners are positive towards finding new approaches that enhance their skills in non-pharmacological management methods.

This is a 3 year project Funded by the Health Foundation.