



Patient Reported Sleep Problems in the UK

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Patients **Direct**

Aim:

To assess the frequency, severity, use of hypnotics and impact of sleep problems in the community in the UK

Method:

Questionnaires were inserted into a national newspaper and patients with sleep problems requested to complete them and return by post.

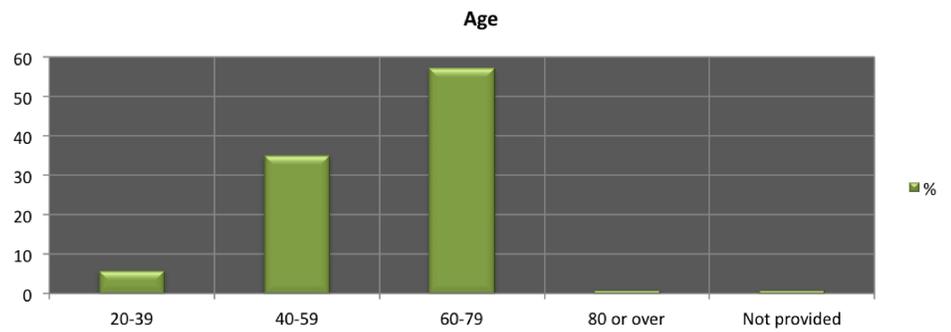
Results:

Participations: A total of 2082 questionnaires were returned. Within the questionnaires returned not all of the questions were answered, with some questions being more frequently completed than others. We report the outcome for individually completed questions.

Demographics:

64% of respondents were female.

92% were aged over 40 and 57% were aged over 60.



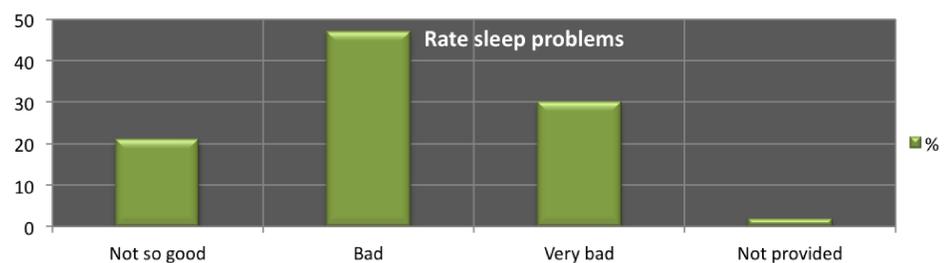
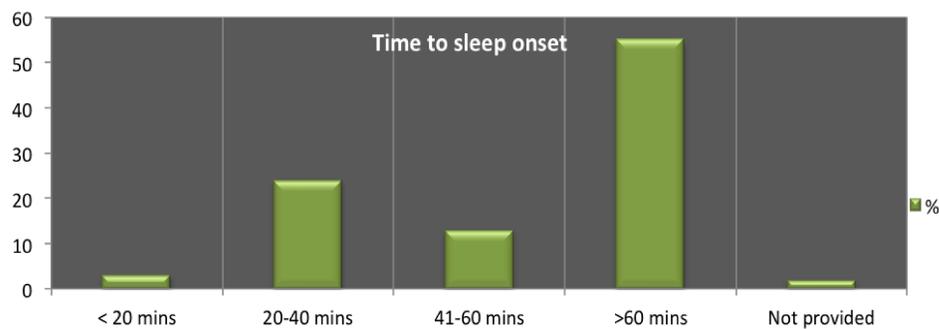
Sleep problems:

94% of respondents reported insomnia for more than a year.

77% of respondents described their sleep as “bad” or “very bad”.

3% thought they got off to sleep in less than 20 minutes.

55% reported taking greater than 1 hour to get to sleep.



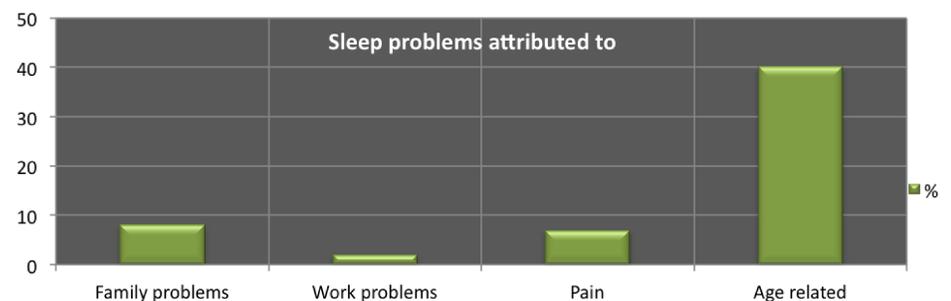
64% complained of feeling tired after rising and starting the next day.

Although 88% of patients attended their doctor up to 4 times per year they apparently did not complain about sleep problems.

42% of respondents regularly wake to use the bathroom but in general did not attribute their sleep problems to this reason.

In contrast 40% of respondents felt that their problems were age-related.

Only 10% to problems at work or at home and only 7% of respondents attributed their sleep problems to pain.



Conclusions:

- Insomnia is a common, longstanding, serious problem which afflicts and impacts upon older rather than younger people.
- While almost half of respondents had received hypnotics in the past, they were not currently taking them despite continuing to suffer from insomnia.
- There appears to be a common acceptance that sleep problems are simply a function of ageing.
- This study demonstrates a clear unmet need for patient education and for physicians to address the problem of insomnia in older age.