

Snore Centre Patient eNewsletter

November 2011

Raising Awareness of Sleep Apnoea In The Middle East

At the World Health Care Congress Middle East (11-13 December 2011) I will be speaking about the benefits of preventative treatment in delivering cost savings, using the example of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) testing and treatment in Lincolnshire.

It is suspected that about 20% of car accidents are sleep related and research has shown that sleepiness can impair driving more than drink! Indeed, patients with Obstructive Sleep Apnoea have a 7-12 fold chance of a road traffic accident (RTA) compared to those who do not, and results in Lincolnshire have shown that treating the condition can reduce the accident rate dramatically.

Fatal road accidents in Lincolnshire used to average about 79 per year. By December 2010, the number of fatal road traffic accidents had fallen from 79 to 45. A significant contributory factor in this success is that since 2006 the Snoring Disorders Centre has treated over 1,200 patients with sleep apnoea and these people are now able to drive more safely, rather than being in fear of falling asleep at the wheel. As well as the lives that have been saved by this initiative, this reduction in accidents also represents a saving



Mr Oko being presented with an award for excellence in respiratory care by Professor the Lord Darzi at Arab Health

of over £55 million to the economy, including the NHS.”

“With the low level of awareness of sleep apnoea in the Middle East it’s no surprise that road accident rates in the Gulf region are dreadful. In fact road traffic accidents are the second major cause of death in the UAE and there are 3500 fatalities per year from RTAs in Saudi Arabia alone. I believe that the success I have had in Lincolnshire can be replicated in

the Middle East by raising awareness of the condition, and forming long-term partnerships with local hospitals, doctors, and government departments.”

I have already been very active in bringing this message to the healthcare community in the Middle East throughout 2011. For his work in this area I was awarded the Middle East Hospital magazine award for excellence in respiratory care.

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Hospitals Find It Pays to Keep Patients Happy



Hospitals with high performance scores in patient care are more profitable, according to a new Press Ganey report. The top 25 percent of U.S. hospitals with the highest scores on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) question about performance were, on average, the most profitable and had the highest clinical scores, suggesting that patient experience, coupled with clinical outcomes, can mean financial profitability for the institution.

It is interesting to note that the only hospitals that showed a positive profit margin were those that were highly rated by their patients," the report states. "...Although there is not a lot of difference in the clinical measures among the four groups of hospitals segmented on patient rating score, the top quarter of hospitals based on HCAHPS

overall rating score also have the highest average clinical score. Taken together, these [results] suggest that excellence in patient experiences, clinical outcomes and financial profitability often occur together.

This is also highly relevant to the way the NHS is going. When revalidation comes doctors will be judged on how happy their patients are, and patients will choose doctors with the best track record.

**The Snore Centre
treated over 400 pa-
tients in the past year**
**96% were very
satisfied with the
service they received**

Sleep Apnoea Causes Loss of Libido

A growing body of research has also found that sleep apnoea can be a drain on intimacy, causing erectile dysfunction in men and loss of libido in women.

Scientists suspect this may have to do with sex hormones like testosterone, which rise with sleep and fall when there is a lack of it. Because it causes intermittent waking and chronic sleep deprivation, apnea may directly drive down levels of these hormones, causing sexual dysfunction.

In the most recent study, published last month in *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, scientists compared 80 women with obstructive sleep apnoea between the ages of 28 and 64 with 240 women without the condition. They found that the apnea patients had significantly higher rates of sexual dysfunction. Their findings echoed those of earlier studies on women and apnoea.

But on the bright side, treatment can make a difference. Patients who undergo surgery to correct facial abnormalities that contribute to apnea see improvements in intimacy, and those who start using CPAP masks at night also report benefits in their sexual relationships.

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