

Michael Oko joins DH Sleep Apnoea Working Group

The Department of Health has set up a Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) Working Group with a brief to produce a report outlining recommendations for the Department of Health's (DH) Respiratory Programme Board on a clinically effective strategy to improve outcomes for adults with obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) from April 2013. Consultant ENT surgeon, and founder of the Sleeping Disorders Centre, Michael Oko, welcomed the formation of the working group:

"I am looking forward to contributing to the work of DH in this important area. Awareness of sleep apnoea and its associated risks has been historically low, with many sufferers undiagnosed. However, evidence shows that the condition is widespread with around 4% of the population affected, and there is a growing body of evidence linking the condition to an increased risk of stroke, heart failure, diabe-



tes, and other serious illnesses. The rising tide of obesity and cardiovascular disease, coupled with the increasing public awareness of sleep apnoea, will mean that diagnosis of sleep apnoea is set to keep rising and we will need to have a strategy in place to cope with this growth in demand for sleep apnoea services in the UK".

The terms of reference of the working group, which met for the first time on 19 July, include identifying the quality and economic costs to the NHS of the burden of OSA; reviewing current initia-

tives and incentives to improve the quality of care for people with OSA; prioritising interventions that will have the most impact on improving quality, outcomes and procurement of equipment; highlighting the impact of OSA on patients with co-morbidities including those with hypertension, obesity, stroke, cardiovascular disease, heart failure and diabetes; and to align development of the strategy with the objectives of the Outcomes Strategy for COPD and Asthma and existing work undertaken by the BLF, BTS, ARTP Sleep and British Sleep Society.

New Harley Street Clinic Now Open!

Michael Oko has established a Sleeping Disorders Centre clinic at London's most respected medical address to cater for private patients in need of diagnosis and treatment for sleep apnoea and other sleep disorders

Clinics on Fridays and Saturdays

Call 0203 0753 150 to arrange an appointment

Or book online at: www.150harleyst.com/michael-oko

ENT at 150, 150 Harley Street, London W1G 7LQ



Are commercial drivers not reporting sleep apnoea symptoms?

People who drive commercial vehicles, such as buses, taxis, trucks and aeroplanes, could be incorrectly reporting their symptoms of sleep apnoea due to their fears of endangering their employment, according to a new study.

Researchers examined 37 commercial vehicle drivers with sleep apnoea and compared them with a control group of 74 patients. Both groups had similar characteristics of age, body mass index (BMI) and similar numbers of disturbances suffered on average during the night.

Both groups also underwent treatment using CPAP. Levels of sleepiness were then analysed using the Epworth Scale. At the start of the study, commercial drivers reported an average score of 8.1 on the sleepiness scale, compared with an average of 11.0 reported by non-commercial drivers, despite a similar number of disturbances at night between the two groups. The difference was also seen after 6 months of treatment using CPAP therapy with the drivers reporting an average sleepiness score of 4.8... [continue reading](#)



Patient story: Getting the right treatment

Well I had to just put pen to paper about my care and treatment to try and give a bit of hope to anyone that is struggling. I started on CPAP about 7 months ago. At first I was given a normal CPAP machine and full face mask. Things did not go too well and I kept going back to my local sleep clinic. The sleep tech was really good and helpful, she did all she could to help me, she sent me home with an APAP to see what pressure my normal machine needed setting at.

I had it for 2 nights and these were the only 2 nights I had any sleep at all!!! During my time struggling I had to go off work sick, as it made me so down, and I could not think what I was doing. I asked about seeing if there was any chance getting an APAP, but this area does not prescribe APAP and seeing as I had only had used one for two nights I was unsure if it was all in the mind!!! I used my CPAP every night without fail for at least 4 hours but I was just feeling worse and worse.

I was due to go and see the specialist and I was at my wits end as I had been trying for about 20 weeks. I am a fighter but by this time I was in bits and unable to think about anything, so I came off my CPAP thinking that in 2 weeks' time I was seeing the specialist and I would get some help!!!! Little did I know what was going to happen!! I saw the so-called sleep consultant for this area he basically he told me that there was nothing he could do!!!!

He said I was suffering from insomnia and needed to see a psychologist. Then he looked in down my throat said I could not have an operation to help me because I had too much fat, and because I had not used my machine for the last 2 weeks he wanted it back and asked if I had got it with me!! So the next day I went to hand it back in, all the time knowing that I needed something. I was totally gutted, it was like sending me home with a ticking time bomb!!!

For the next few weeks I just thought sod it, I will just not have any treatment. But Kath Hope from hope 2 sleep suggested going back to my GP and maybe seeing someone else. After talking to Roz, who had already been treated, she told me about Mr Oko at Boston. He was 3 hours drive from where I live but it was well worth going to see him. He gave me an APAP machine due to my sleep test results, along with a Respiroics Blue Gel mask. That was 5 weeks ago and since then I have used the APAP every night and I am sleeping for about 7 to 8 hours. As the days go on the happier I am with it.