

Good sleep plus therapy works better than therapy alone

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A recent study has monitored how the use of a sleep app alongside NHS therapy services has helped improve participants' sleep.

The study shows that people seeking treatment for anxiety or depression who slept badly improved if they used an app alongside NHS [therapy](#) services, instead of relying on therapy alone.

The research involved more than 1000 patients in Buckinghamshire, half of which used both NHS therapy services and a sleep app, Sleepio, and half of which relied on therapy alone. The research showed an improvement in mood, anxiety and social functioning in 65% of those who combined the app and therapy, compared to 58% for those relying only on therapy.

Addressing sleep in mental health services

Sleepio was developed by leading digital therapeutics company, Big Health. The study was funded by a UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) grant, delivered with the Oxford Academic Health Science Network. It was hosted through Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust's service Healthy Minds Bucks, a talking therapies (IAPT) offer for adults in Buckinghamshire.

Poor sleep is rarely specifically addressed in [primary care](#) or [mental health services](#), but clinical evidence shows that insomnia significantly impacts comorbid mental [health](#) conditions including depression and anxiety. Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) is recommended as the first line treatment for insomnia. However, most patients are given medication or a long waiting list for therapy.

Access to digital treatment

Big Health's Sleepio delivers CBT in a digital format, providing 24-hour access to treatment regardless of clinical setting.

Through the study, the Healthy Minds Bucks IAPT service looked at how integrating Sleepio into a therapies model would impact mental health outcomes within the [service](#).

Professor Colin Espie, Big Health co-founder and chief scientist and professor of sleep medicine at Oxford University, says that "this study represents Big Health's unique ability to reach users across the clinical care pathway. By supplementing existing clinical care with access to personalized and evidenced-based digital therapeutics, we can reach people with the right approach and at the right time to maximize outcomes."

More information: Sleepio: www.sleepio.com/

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