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A Pain in the Mind, UK

Sleeping with pain: Development and evaluation of a programme for people with insomnia secondary to chronic pain

Introduction: Traditionally, treatment for secondary insomnia has focussed on the condition assumed to initiate sleep disturbance rather than insomnia (Ashworth, Davidson & Espie, 2010), such as providing one session in a pain management programme focussing on sleep. Research suggests those experiencing insomnia as a result of chronic pain have higher levels of dysfunctional beliefs about their sleep than those without chronic pain (Ashworth, Davidson & Espie, 2010; Afolalu *et al*, 2016). Research suggests that Cognitive Behaviour Therapy interventions are effective in improving the quality and quantity of sleep, however, they remain underused (Currie *et al*, 2000).

Method: An intervention combining CBT and mindfulness was developed for chronic pain patients reporting sleep disturbance. The programme aimed to improve understanding of the biopsychosocial model of pain; to provide patients with a way of assessing their sleep problem; to improve their understanding about normal sleep, sleep disorders and their effect and how to use this information to make a difference to how they think and feel; to develop healthy sleep patterns and relaxation skills; to reshape sleep so it meets their own needs and develops a strong pattern; to teach ways of overcoming mental alertness, repetitive thoughts and anxieties that interfere with sleep; to use all this information to develop their own action plan. Quantitative and qualitative feedback was obtained.

Results: Quantitative results show all 40 patients improved aspects of their sleep. Qualitative themes emerged were group support, information, change in thoughts/behaviors, the challenge of implementing new sleep patterns.

Conclusions: Provided evidence that this programme is beneficial. Should the programme become more widely available, it could act as an effective and empowering treatment that relieves some dependence on pharmaceuticals as well as the debilitating effects of chronic pain. To make this programme more accessible, a book *Sleeping with Pain* has been written and an online programme is in development.

Biography

Sue Peacock is a Consultant Health Psychologist, registered with the Health and Care Professions Council and is an Associate Fellow of The British Psychological Society. She has a PhD in pain psychology. She is also an Advanced Hypnotherapy Practitioner, an EMDR practitioner and registered Hypnodontics practitioner. She has her own thriving private practice, providing specialist pain psychological therapy to clients. The focus is on improving people's ability to manage their pain and adjust to the different circumstances and challenges faced so that stress reduces and the quality of their general life can improve. The ultimate aim is to enable clients to live fulfilling lives despite their pain conditions. Research interests include sleep, fatigue, and pain; ethnic and cultural differences in perceptions of pain, and the impact on how people experience living with long-term pain. She is involved in teaching health professionals about the psychological aspects of pain and regularly holds study days in the areas of pain management and health psychology.

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