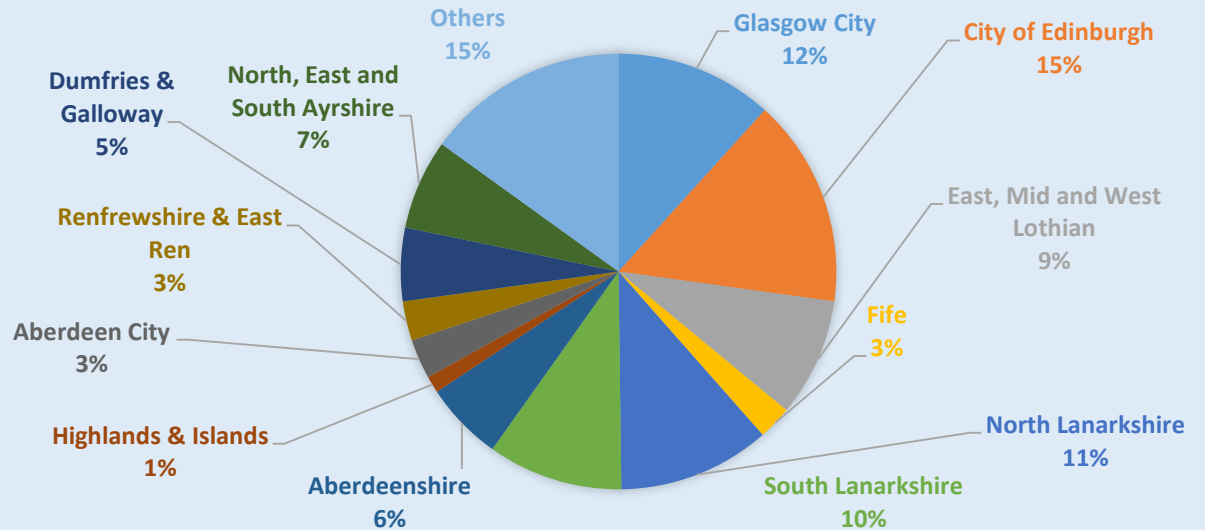


CALLS BY LOCAL AUTHORITY 01.04.19 - 31.10.19

Sleep Scotland's Sleep Support Line provides advice and guidance for parents and carers of children and young people aged 18 months to 18 years living in Scotland. Our trained sleep counsellors work with families to implement a behavioural programme to improve sleep for the whole family.



Background

Case study: 15 year old young man who was struggling with anxiety and depression. He was on a modified timetable at school due to his sleep problem, as he struggled to get up in the morning. It was reported that he had attended school once in the previous month. He would often sleep for only 5-6 hours, usually in the early hours of the morning, which is 3-4 hours less than someone his age would require, on average. He would then be awake for up to 20 hours before being able to get to sleep again. After a few days of this pattern, he would then sleep through the day and mum was unable to wake him. He reported getting very angry at his inability to get to sleep at night. The sleep problem started 4 years previously, when he was on pain killers for Osgood-Schlatter disease.

Anticipated Benefit

The young man's mum approached the service for advice towards the end of the school year, as her son had asked for help in order to be able to attend college properly after the summer break. The aim was to improve both the quality and quantity of his sleep, in order to improve his ability to get up in the morning, leading to improved mood, social interaction, and ability to reach his potential at college. The behavioural programme put in place involved changing the evening routine, as well as looking at diet and exercise during the day. This was designed to help set his circadian rhythm so that his brain released the correct hormones to make him feel sleepy at the right time.

Implementation & Approach

- A full sleep assessment was completed with mum, which included asking questions about the sleep issue, as well as diet, exercise, and discussion of which strategies had already been tried.
- The young man was provided with some information on what happens when we sleep and why, to read himself.
- He was asked to complete sleep diaries for 2 weeks to show the full picture of what was happening.
- The sleep counsellor put together a sleep programme for the young man to use, including a new bed time routine, and recommendations for diet changes and activity during the day.

The sleep counsellor worked with the family for 6 weeks, before closing the case as they were content to carry out the strategies with no further input.

Outcome

Following the intervention, it was reported that the young man's sleep pattern had returned almost to normal. He was now going to bed at a more suitable time, and sleeping through the night until 9am. Mum and the young man were working together on slowly moving his body clock back so he could go to sleep earlier and be able to wake up earlier, ready for the start of college.

He reported that the changes had had a positive impact on his mental wellbeing. He was feeling more positive about his future, and was looking forward to starting college now he felt he would be able to fully participate.

Key Lessons Learned

Where possible, these interventions are always more successful with the person with the sleep problem being actively involved in the process, depending on their cognitive ability.

- While the programme was successful, the sleep counsellor reported that completing the assessment with the young person directly helps with building a relationship and ensuring there is motivation to change.
- There is also the issue that this young person, like many 15 years olds, had not been fully honest with his mum about how bad things were and what he was doing in his room before bed.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to our team of telephone sleep counsellors for providing outcomes of their sleep interventions.

Further information

Please direct any questions relating to this poster to Karen Jenkinson or Alyson O'Brien
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