

Press Release on behalf of the British Sleep Society

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Strategy to improve sleep health in the UK

Sleep is a much-neglected aspect of public health, contributing to physical and mental wellbeing. It is also increasingly clear that the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown has had a detrimental impact on sleep health for many.

Access to sleep-related healthcare was already challenging in some areas prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, however, sleep specialists have also had to adapt ways of working to cope with the many challenges posed by COVID-19, as many sleep laboratories had to close during the lockdown.

To address pandemic-related, as well as other long-term challenges in relation to the nation's sleep health, the British Sleep Society (BSS) has developed a new strategic plan with an overarching ambition to support and promote **'Healthy Sleep for All'**. The Society is calling for access to the best clinical care across the nation for those suffering from sleep disorders, for standardisation in education and clinical practice, and for improved research capacities.

The BSS Strategy, launched on Friday 4th December, will guide the development and activity of the Society for the next five years. Developed in consultation with members and key stakeholders, it prioritises improved communication between specialists, greater inclusivity, and more involvement of members of the public.

BSS President Professor Joerg Steier commented:

"We need to foster a vibrant sleep-health community that involves researchers, clinicians, members of the public, and decision makers"

"We hope that this inclusive strategy will help support innovation and improve standards for sleep science and medicine in the UK"

Service user representative Matt Baker said:

"I'm looking forward to the BSS taking a strong lead in the UK to better understand sleep and its associated disorders"

The strategy has been reviewed in a public consultation and was endorsed by other UK organisations, including the Association for Respiratory Technology & Physiology.

The full strategic plan can be accessed here: <https://www.sleepsociety.org.uk/bss-strategy/>

About the British Sleep Society

The British Sleep Society is the UK Learned Society for multidisciplinary professions working in the field of Sleep/Sleep Medicine, including medical, scientific and healthcare workers.

<https://www.sleepsociety.org.uk/>

The BSS is a registered charity (no. 1009880), founded in 1989 and now has over 500 members, encompassing physicians, healthcare scientists, neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, paediatricians, nurses, dentists, physiologists and others.

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