

7.02 Managing Sleep Apnoea in the face of an Obesity Epidemic

¹Benita Joseph, ¹Ronan Donnelly, ¹Shea McNeill, ¹Charlene Kearney, ¹Margo Carberry, ¹Paul Minnis
¹Antrim Area Hospital, Antrim, Ireland

Background: OSA affects an estimated 1.5 million adults in the UK, 85% of whom are undiagnosed. In the Northern Trust demand for diagnostic services is outstripping capacity, resulting in diagnostic and treatment delays. We aimed to review referral pathways to optimise management. **Methods:** We evaluated 876 Overnight Oximetry reports between 1st June 2021 and 31st May 2023, collecting baseline demographics, BMI, Epworth score, number of desaturations per hour and collar size. Sleep disordered breathing was stratified into normal, mild, moderate and severe. The relationship of classifications were interrogated with regards to age, gender, Epworth score and BMI. **Results:** Referrals increased by 124% from 2022 to the mid-point of 2024. Urgent referrals increased from 6% in 2019, to 28% in 2023. Review of referrals indicate a lack of understanding of urgent criteria and a need for addressing comorbidities in primary care. We found that Epworth scales were not a sensitive, reliable markers of severity as higher Epworth scores trend with more severe disease, however 10% of this population were normal.

Conclusion: A strong dose response was found between increasing BMI and OSA severity, suggesting a “straight to testing” approach may be beneficial with BMI > 40. Based on this evidence we have formulated an action plan that could reduce current waiting times by 1.5 years. **Disclosures: Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.