

7.03 Strategies to Address Increasing Demand for Sleep Clinic Appointments

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Background: Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) is estimated to affect up to 1 billion people globally and sleep centres are dealing with ever increasing numbers of patients. High demand for outpatient clinic appointments in Peamount Healthcare was further impacted by a 2023 initiative using home sleep studies and virtual consultations to fast-track treatment. Additionally, there was no clear discharge route for patients on continuous positive airway pressure treatment (CPAP) for their OSA.

Methods: The last clinic letters for all patients booked between August 2023 and September 2024 were reviewed by a sleep physiologist or respiratory cANP in advance of their appointments. Patients on CPAP treatment for >2 years who were compliant with treatment were discharged with department contact details given for future patient initiated follow up if required. Patients who did not specifically require a face to face appointment were moved to a new virtual follow-up clinic. **Results:** Out of 1,374 patients, 297 were discharged, 117 were moved to the virtual CPAP clinic, 28 to a respiratory clinic, and 8 admitted for review. This totalled 450 patients, representing 32.75% of all bookings for this time period.

Conclusions: Effective discharge routes from the sleep clinic and the introduction of a virtual clinic reduced the number of face to face follow-up appointments by a third, freeing up clinic capacity for patients needing more critical review. **Keywords:** OSA, CPAP, Sleep clinic **Disclosures:** **Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest