

### **NSW's Sleepy State Impacting on Public Health**

Many adults in NSW are suffering from chronic sleep restriction and this could be having a major impact on the state of public health, according to a paper due to be presented today at the Australian Society of Medical Research Conference in Sydney.

The research paper provides the first state-wide estimate of normal sleep duration, sleep satisfaction and prevalence of chronic sleepiness in community dwelling Australian adults.

Conducted by the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research in Sydney, the study surveyed the sleeping habits of 3,300 people aged between 18-64 years randomly selected from the electoral roll. The results showed 11.7% of the population suffer from chronic daytime sleepiness, 32% report insomnia or disorders initiating or maintaining sleep, and almost 18% of adults sleep less than 6.5 hours per night.

The study also found that risk factors for suffering from chronic daytime sleepiness included being older, sleeping less than 6.5 hours a night during the week, insomnia and depression.

Dr Nat Marshall, a Post Doctoral Fellow at the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research and co-author of the paper, said the findings of the study were alarming.

Medical research studies on sleep restriction show that it impacts on everything from work safety to productivity and is even thought to promote obesity and diabetes.

To discover that about 18% of NSW's adult population is chronically sleep restricted is worrisome, particularly as overseas studies show that sleep restriction is increasing, he said.

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