



# The Critical Overlook: Addressing Sleep Disorders and Obstructive Sleep Apnea in Schizophrenia Care.

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## Letter to the Editor

### ■ Dear editor

The aspect of schizophrenia that we're focusing on is its impact on sleep disorders in individuals battling this complex mental health condition. Sleep disturbances have long been associated with schizophrenia, yet the significance of addressing and treating these issues remains underemphasized in mental health practices. Also drawing the attention to a concerning yet often underestimated issue within the mental health care, the relationship between Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) and schizophrenia. While much attention has been focused on the symptoms and treatment of schizophrenia itself, the co-occurrence of OSA in individuals with schizophrenia presents a unique challenge that warrants urgent consideration and intervention. Research indicates that sleep disorders are highly prevalent among individuals with schizophrenia, with up to 80% experiencing various sleep disturbances.

The erratic sleep patterns not only exacerbate the symptoms of schizophrenia but also significantly impact the overall quality of life and functioning of these individuals. Studies have shown a significantly higher prevalence of OSA among individuals with schizophrenia around 48% compared to the general population. The recurrent episodes

of interrupted breathing during sleep not only disrupt the sleep architecture but also contribute to adverse health outcomes, ranging from cardiovascular complications to cognitive impairment. The presence of OSA in individuals already associated with the multiple manifestations of schizophrenia adds another layer of complexity to their overall well-being and management. Addressing OSA in such a vulnerable population is crucial not only for improving their sleep quality and daily functioning but also for potentially ameliorating the psychiatric symptoms associated with schizophrenia.

Integrating routine screening and comprehensive assessment for OSA in individuals with schizophrenia should be a standard practice in mental health and sleep medicine settings. By identifying and treating OSA promptly, healthcare professionals can optimize the therapeutic outcomes for individuals with schizophrenia and enhance their quality of life. Furthermore, raising awareness about the importance of addressing sleep issues in schizophrenia within the medical community and society at large is paramount. Advocating for more research, resources, and support for individuals with schizophrenia struggling with sleep disturbances is essential to enhance their overall mental health care. The collaborative efforts of mental health practitioners, sleep specialists, and researchers are essential to better understand the underlying

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mechanisms linking OSA and schizophrenia and to develop tailored interventions that address the unique needs of this population.

Urging the medical community and healthcare policymakers to prioritize the recognition and management of obstructive sleep apnoea in individuals with schizophrenia. By fostering greater awareness, research initiatives, and interdisciplinary collaboration in this area, we can pave the way for enhanced holistic care and improved outcomes for those navigating the challenging intersection of schizophrenia and sleep disorders. In conclusion, we acknowledge and address the impact of sleep disorders especially OSA on individuals with schizophrenia. By taking proactive

steps to improve our assessment, the usage of polysomnography and provide tailored interventions, we can make significant steps in enhancing the holistic care and management of this challenging mental health condition. By prioritizing healthy sleep habits and addressing underlying sleep disorders, we can potentially improve the well-being and outcomes for those living with schizophrenia.

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