# Understanding sleep amongst older people

Interview Topic Guide

We are interested in obtaining an in-depth understanding of older people’s meanings and experiences of poor sleep, so we will firstly ask the participant to tell us in a general way about their sleep.

Additionally, the following topics, if not covered above, will be raised:

* What constitutes a good night’s sleep
* What is a poor night’s sleep like
* How does poor sleep make them feel
* How does poor sleep impact on their day to day activities
* How has their sleep changed
* Does their sleep impact on their partners/family members, and if so how
* Do partners/family members impact on their sleep, and if so why?
* Contributing factors for poor sleep, such as stress/worry (eg bereavement, financial concerns) and physical factors (poor health, pain, getting up to the toilet, leg cramps etc)

We are also interested in older peoples’ coping strategies for poor sleep and questions will cover the following topics:

* Sleep medications (prescribed/over the counter/alternative therapy)
* Strategies for dealing with difficulty getting to sleep
* Strategies for coping with waking in the night
* Difficulty getting up in the morning
* Seeking help for difficulty sleeping (eg doctor/chemist)
* Napping
* Routines, such as listening to the radio, having a snack prior to bed
* Questions will be asked about their sleeping environment and whether they have made adjustments to these to help with sleep:
  + - Layout of bedroom
    - Bed
    - Lighting
    - Pillows
    - Windows
    - Side of bed

We will also try and identify whether aspects of daily living such as light exposure, physical activity and food are associated with poor sleep among older people, so will be asking the following questions:

* Questions on daily activity levels, such as going shopping/gardening/housework
* How much time spent outside
* Food consumption – including buying groceries/preparing food/cooking meals and cleaning up
* Alcohol, tobacco and caffeine consumption

Questions will be asked to determine whether the participants have any medical/health conditions or disabilities and how these impact on sleep:

* What medications are routinely taken on a daily basis
* If medication is taken, what they perceive is its impact on their sleep
* What are respondents’ experiences of, and attitudes to, taking sleeping medication .

Finally, to close the interview we will ask them if they have anything else they would like to add about their sleep and why they decided to take part in the study.