

# Recognizing and Managing Shift Work Disorder, an Underdiagnosed Condition: *Improving Quality of Life*

## Practice Management Tips



### Screening Questions for Shift Work Disorder

- Do you often feel tired or sleepy at work?
- Do you have trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep?
- Do you do shift work?
- What are your work hours?
- What are your sleep times on work days? On days off?
- Do you often struggle to stay awake, or have you ever fallen asleep while driving to or from work?
- Does your tiredness cause difficulty with your concentration, memory, or ability to pay attention?

### Increase Recognition of Shift Work Disorder

#### *For you:*

- Keep the above screening questions in mind
- Incorporate at least two sleep/wake questions when doing systems review
- Ask about occupation at comprehensive visits
- Consider having the Epworth Sleepiness Scale or a sleep/wake log in exam rooms and use them when appropriate

#### *For your patients:*

- Hang a poster in reception area and/or exam rooms to remind patients about the effect of shift work disorder on quality of life
- Explain diagnosis, and importance of management, of shift work disorder

### Motivate Your Patients

Explain to patients that managing shift work disorder symptoms can result in improved health and reduced risks for:

- Excessive sleepiness
- Insomnia
- Mood disturbance<sup>1</sup>
- Impaired work performance<sup>2</sup>
- Poor concentration
- Low energy level
- Strained personal relationships
- Safety issues—drowsy driving, accidents, errors<sup>1,3,4</sup>

Effective management should help improve their **quality of life**, including their health, functioning, and safety—at work, at home, and on the road.

### Diagnostic Codes for Billing

- Organic Circadian Sleep Disorder, shift work type: **327.36**
- Sleep/wake schedule disorder, frequently changing: **307.45**
- Mismatch of sleep/wake schedule with lifestyle needs: **780.55**

### When to Refer for Sleep Consultation

- If you need to rule out other sleep/wake disorders
- If your treatments do not resolve sleep-related issues

### References

1. Drake CL, et al. *Sleep*. 2004;27:1453-1462.
2. Smith MR, et al. *Sleep*. 2009;32:1481-1489.
3. Folkard S, et al. *Occup Med*. 2003;53(2):95-101.
4. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration/National Center on Sleep Disorders Research (NHTSA/NCSDR) [http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/drowsy\\_driving1/drowsy.html#Figure 3](http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/drowsy_driving1/drowsy.html#Figure%203).