

SUMMARY: SENIORS SLEEP CAMPAIGN

The Problem:

12-18 million Americans with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) remain untreated. Factors such as the lack of patient awareness and lack of sleep illness screening leave seniors particularly at risk. Untreated OSA can increase seniors' risk of having hypertension, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke. AASM's Seniors Sleep campaign addresses this gap in care through a federal bill and national pledge program.

Our Solution:

The Seniors Sleep bill removes the barriers that prevent new Medicare beneficiaries from receiving adequate sleep screening, improves early detection of a disease that impacts millions of seniors, and supports HHS Healthy People 2020 plan for more individuals to be examined for OSA. Specifically, the bill will:

Expand the “Welcome to Medicare” Benefit

Adopted in 2003, the Welcome to Medicare benefit allows individuals entering the Medicare program to receive an initial preventive physical examination and other screening services without a copayment. Some of the other services included in this benefit are cardiovascular screening blood tests, diabetes screening tests, and an electrocardiogram. Seniors Sleep will expand this benefit to include sleep apnea screening.

Identify Beneficiaries with Moderate-to-Severe OSA

This proposal will include sleep apnea screening to identify individuals with a high pre-test probability of OSA. The screening will be a simple and clinically validated questionnaire, such as STOP-Bang or Berlin. Adding OSA screening to the Welcome to Medicare benefit will promote wellness, identify at-risk patients, and remove barriers for newly enrolled Medicare beneficiaries to receive preventive sleep care.

Reduce Federal Healthcare Costs

Untreated moderate-to-severe OSA in middle-aged adults has been shown to cause \$3.4 billion in additional annual medical costs in the United States. With this proposal, newly enrolled Medicare beneficiaries who suffer from OSA will receive an early diagnosis and care options before their untreated disease causes costly healthcare bills.

Join The Campaign:

Join the campaign by signing the Seniors Sleep Pledge, a national program that helps you to build relationships with legislators and strengthen the awareness of the Seniors Sleep bill. It will be hard for the AASM to continue to advocate for this bill without your Pledge. There are over 10 ways to get involved, including signing template letters to your legislators. Sign the Seniors Sleep Pledge today.