

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Medical technologies evaluation programme

Equality impact assessment: Guidance development

MT443 Sleepio to treat insomnia symptoms

The impact on equality has been assessed during this evaluation according to the principles of the [NICE Equality scheme](#).

Medical technology consultation document

1. Have the potential equality issues identified during the scoping process been addressed by the committee, and, if so, how?

Yes, the committee accepted that Sleepio may be harder to use for some people. This includes people who may find it difficult to use a computer, people with a visual, hearing or cognitive impairment and limited dexterity. People with a physical or mental impairment could be considered as disabled, dependent on severity of symptoms and the impact on daily life, such as using a computer. Disability is a protected characteristic under the 2010 Equalities Act. Sleepio may also be difficult to use for people who have limited language skills. Internet access is also required to use the Sleepio website. These groups are referred to in section 4.8 of the medical technology consultation document.

2. Have any other potential equality issues been highlighted in the sponsor's submission, or patient organisation questionnaires, and, if so, how has the committee addressed these?

The patient survey and the patient expert highlighted that the sleep restriction component of the Sleepio programme is particularly challenging for some people. Also sleep restriction may not be suitable for people working in some professions because it could pose a health and safety risk. The committee discussed this issue and understood that the programme makes clear the potential risks of using sleep restriction. It was reassured by the company that support is available to people from the Sleepio community and from a psychologist if required. This issue is referred to in section 4.7 of the medical technology consultation document.

3. Have any other potential equality issues been identified by the committee and, if so, how has the committee addressed these?

No.

4. Do the preliminary recommendations make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access the technology compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to or difficulties with access for the specific group?

Yes. It will be more difficult for people without direct access to the internet to access the technology because internet is required to use the Sleepio website. The committee heard from the patient expert that it was possible to use Sleepio by accessing the internet occasionally (for example, at a public library) and keeping a paper sleep diary. These difficulties are referred to in section 4.8 of the medical technology consultation document.

5. Is there potential for the preliminary recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

No.

6. Are there any recommendations or explanations that the committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with access identified in questions 4 or 5, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligations to promote equality?

No.

7. Have the committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the medical technology consultation document, and, if so, where?

Yes, in Section 4.7 and 4.8.

Approved by Associate Director: Anastasia Chalkidou

Date: 29/10/2021