

Helping Your Patients Sleep Well with Sleep Wellness

Kenna S. Ducey-Clark, DC

Part 2 of a 2 Part Series

Let's face it, the problem of insomnia is at epidemic proportions, affecting your patients each and every day and healthy sleep or steps to such, is relatively unheard of. Sleep wellness is just that, a functional approach to assist your patients help find their way to that much needed deep healing sleep. Implementing sleep wellness into your clinic is not as difficult as you may think and the positive results of doing such will astound you.

It Starts With You

My first step to successfully incorporating sleep wellness into my clinic began with me. Opening my mind to the possibility that there was a need and a place for sleep wellness in my practice was a pivotal shift in consciousness. If I didn't believe in that, then why would anyone else? But, understanding the facts about insomnia, recognizing that there was a lack of a "go to" health professional to aid patients with this problem and knowing I had the tool set and knowledge to become that person to help, motivated me to boldly try something new. I then began to plant the seeds of sleep wellness into my practice with basic education.

On a daily basis, I started talking about the importance of sleep and educating my patients about facts related to sleep. In addition, I asked each patient a sleep wellness-related question that was relative to his or her chief complaint. Quickly, I saw that it was the patients that were asking ME questions - once they recognized that I had answers to many of their questions concerning sleep issues. Most importantly, I made a point to educate each and every patient that poor sleep was not "normal" and solutions to improve their quality of sleep was available through my clinic.

I started to include articles in my patient newsletter about the importance of sleep wellness and addressed sleep specific issues at least once quarterly. These publications informed the patients of helpful at-home protocols, services offered by my clinic to help improve sleep and products that I prescribed (not sold) to better the quality of sleep.

I also added informational wall decor to my office that addressed the importance of sleep wellness and sleep-related issues, pamphlet information about sleep disorders that would raise questions, samples of products that help support sleep, and when appropriate, provided research studies and articles to patients. I assure you personally that delivering such information into your patient's hands carries a lot of positive weight. They will read it and talk about what they read on the next visit with you!

Sleep Wellness Room

I then dedicated a room within my clinic strictly for sleep wellness. In this room, which I call the "Sleep Wellness Room," I have multiple products and materials that support the need and benefits for quality of sleep. It is a peaceful room and many of my patients go in there before and after their

appointments. Some of the products found in the sleep wellness room are pillows and an actual mattress that I prescribe and endorse to improve my patient's quality of sleep. This allows patients to experience what I recommend directly.

I utilize social media to network and promote the concept of sleep wellness, care and the products offered by my clinic. There are many different resources that can be used to market yourself, your clinic, services and products offered by different social media avenues.

I also sought out and found sleep product vendors that I could trust. I identified mattress, pillow and supplement vendors who had proven products, backed by research, that supported the quality, structural, comfort and critical material safety that I could prescribe for my patients to use. This is critical, as I have found with most retail quality products the manufacturers either couldn't or wouldn't provide important material specifications. Such information will provide data of support, cushioning, durability and toxicity specifications. If you aren't able to access this data, I strongly urge you not to recommend those products. Be smart doctors - these companies are not required to disclose anything and if they aren't willing to do so, proceed with caution.

Outcome

There are many ways to incorporate sleep wellness into your clinic. And while doing so doesn't require a dedicated room, it does require dedication to educating your patient base about its importance. It also requires providing ample tools and information to help better their sleep. In doing so, it is a win-win in all areas, including treatment outcome results, patient satisfaction and a noticeable increase in revenue. Since I have added sleep wellness to my practice, I have seen profoundly positive results in resolving issues, especially when it came to the chronic pain.

My patients are truly moved by my passion and enthusiasm for sleep wellness. And I am confident that they are grateful that they now have a trusted source to turn to in this area. Yes, I have seen the patient satisfaction level increase. And yes, it makes my patients feel even more cared for that I am advocating for them in an area of health that many didn't know was related to health!