



Listening to Beyoncé: factors associated with non-attendance at an outpatient sleep clinic

Lau H¹, O'Brien D¹, Hundloe J¹, Samaratunga D¹

¹Department of Thoracic Medicine, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Queensland, Australia

Introduction:

Patient non-attendance at outpatient sleep clinics is common and costly.¹ Little is known about the factors associated with sleep clinic non-attendance, especially in an Australian context. The goal of our audit was to identify the patient, referral, and appointment factors that may affect attendance at an outpatient sleep clinic.

Methods:

A case-control study was performed in 171 patients (57 cases / non-attenders and 114 controls / attenders) who had a sleep clinic appointment between September 20th, 2020 and March 21st, 2021. Statistical analysis was performed using the two-sided chi-square test with a 5% significance level.

	Non-attenders	Attenders	P-value
Sex			
Female	34 (59.6%)	47 (41.6%)	0.026
Male	23 (40.4%)	66 (58.4%)	
Age (Years)			
≤40	13 (22.8%)	27 (23.9%)	0.004
41 - 64	37 (64.9%)	47 (41.6%)	
≥65	7 (12.3%)	39 (34.5%)	
Country of birth			
Australia	44 (77.2%)	71 (65.7%)	NS
Other	13 (22.8%)	37 (34.3%)	
Primary language			
English	57 (100%)	108 (98.2%)	NS
Other		2 (0.8%)	
Marital status			
Single	41 (73.2%)	56 (52.3%)	0.010
Married or Defacto	15 (26.8%)	51 (47.7%)	
Table: Patient factors associated with non-attendance at an outpatient sleep clinic			

Results:

The overall rate of non-attendance was 10.8%. The rates of non-attendance for new and review cases were similar. Being single (odds ratio [OR]: 2.49; $p = 0.010$), middle-aged (OR: 4.39; $p < 0.001$ vs. older-aged), or female (OR: 2.08; $p = 0.026$) was associated with a higher rate of non-attendance. Contrary to expectations, a higher proportion of non-attenders than attenders were born in Australia. Likewise, English was listed as the primary language for all non-attenders. For new cases, the source of referral, reason for referral, and triage category did not affect attendance rates. While for review cases, the patient's primary sleep disorder and treatment status did not affect attendance rates.

Conclusion:

Factors associated with non-attendance at an outpatient sleep clinic include being single, middle-aged, or female. By identifying patients who are at a higher risk for non-attendance, a more tailored approach can be developed to mitigate this issue.

References:

¹Cheung DL, Sahrman J, Nzewuihe A, & Espiritu JR. No-show rates to a sleep clinic: drivers and determinants. *J Clin Sleep Med*. 2020 Sep 15;16(9):1517-1521.