

SUMMARY OF COHERE FINLAND'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE TREATMENT OF INSOMNIA BY COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT-I)

The recommendation was approved at the meeting of the Council for Choices in Health Care in Finland (COHERE Finland) on 15 December 2021.

Insomnia has increased in recent decades, and about 12% of the Finnish adult population suffer from long-term insomnia. Insomnia predisposes to, aggravates and sustains many somatic and mental illnesses. If the insomnia is prolonged, it increases the risk of accidents, incapacity for work due to sickness and increases the risk of mortality approximately 1.5-fold. According to recommendations, the treatment of insomnia should primarily be drug-free. Currently, however, there are significant regional differences in the availability, accessibility and quality of drug-free treatment for insomnia in Finland.

CBT-I consists of cognitive and behavioural therapeutic methods, relaxation and psychoeducation. CBT-I can be implemented in individual or group settings either face-to-face, remotely or through digital applications. CBT-I therapy is often of short duration with approximately 4 to 6 sessions.

According to COHERE Finland, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT-I) has been shown to be effective in the treatment of insomnia, with minor and transient adverse reactions. In the longer term, treatment of insomnia with CBT-I may result in cost savings. CBT-I is suitable for all patients meeting the diagnostic criteria for insomnia. Treatment should take into account co-morbidity and treat insomnia alongside other illnesses. The CBT-I methods discussed in the recommendation are suitable for use in primary healthcare. CBT-I may be administered by healthcare professionals who undergo additional training.

CBT-I implemented in many different ways is effective. Digital CBT-I is cost-effective and easily accessible, but CBT-I can also be implemented in other ways, and it is important to

take into account the individual capabilities and preferences of the patient when choosing the method of implementation. Identifying and evaluating insomnia and, if necessary, referring patients to further treatment according to the stair model are part of the good treatment of insomnia. Service providers must have a systematic insomnia treatment and service chain describing the progression of the treatment, also indicating where the patient is to be referred or sent if CBT-I fails to provide sufficient benefit.

The cost of deploying CBT-I consists mainly of staff training costs which, in COHERE Finland's view, are reasonable in relation to the benefits and do not necessitate a large increase in staff. In particular, digital therapies and group-based CBT-I do not create significant additional human resource needs. Implementation of timely and effective methods of treating insomnia leads to greater health benefits and lower overall costs. Treating insomnia in a timely manner using methods that have been found to be effective improves the patient's health, fitness for work and ability to function.

Establishing the use of effective methods requires that the service provider has an adequate range of treatment methods available, that service providers have access to sufficient multi-professional knowledge of treatment methods, and that the drug-free methods for the treatment of insomnia are used. CBT-I is part of healthcare procedures and the treatment is to be recorded in patient records.

This is a summary of a recommendation adopted by the Council for Choices in Health Care in Finland (COHERE Finland). The actual recommendation and the related background material are available in Finnish on the website of COHERE Finland under [Recommendations](#).

The summary of the recommendation is also available in [Swedish](#) and [Finnish](#) on the website.

The Council for Choices in Health Care in Finland (COHERE Finland) works in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and its task is to issue recommendations on services that should be included in the range of public health services. Further information about service choices in healthcare is available on [the COHERE Finland website](#).