

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



New UTAS research calls for insomniacs to help convert sleeplessness into slumber

Tasmania's insomniacs have something to think about in the dark hours of the night, with an invitation to participate in a new UTAS research project which aims to find a treatment for the condition.

The School of Psychology is about to conduct confidential interviews for people suffering from sleep deprivation or depression in the next few weeks.

Project supervisor, Dr Frances Martin, said the results of the one-hour interviews could help determine if sufferers are being treated for their primary condition.

"There is increasing evidence that the onset of depression, mood disorders and subsequent depressive episodes, are predicted by insomnia," Dr Martin said.

"With one of the key symptoms of depression being sleep disturbance, this project aims to determine which comes first.

"It's important that sufferers of insomnia are being treated for the right condition, either the insomnia or the depression."

Dr Martin said between 10 and 14 per cent of adults suffered from insomnia, and 15% from chronic insomnia. Women are twice as likely as men to suffer from sleep deprivation.

She said the three types of insomnia are difficulty falling asleep, waking for long periods in the middle of the night, or rising early in the morning.

"As a result, people are suffering from daytime impairment with fatigue, concentration difficulties, disrupted mood and productivity losses," Dr Martin said.

Project participants should be aged between 25 and 55-years-old, and are required for a one-hour interview about insomnia and/or depression experiences.

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