

Sleep Check Before Shift Work:

A sleep education, screening and management approach to prevent road trauma in Australia's young adults

Why Sleep Check?



1 in 5 young adults

Live with a clinically significant sleep disorder

>80% are undiagnosed and unmanaged



Young adults are also at risk

22% of road user fatalities involving a driver, passenger or motorcyclist in 2022 were in young adults (17-25 years)



There's a big gap...

Young shift workers rarely know they have a sleep disorder, and if they do, they don't seek help. It's expensive and can be hard to access!



So we asked:

Can we support young adults to access clinical sleep care before they transition to shift work and improve their road safety?

What we did:

1

Provided **sleep disorder education**, and **screened** healthcare students for sleep disorders

2

Participants spent time in the sleep laboratory for a **simulated transition to night work**. They did simulated drives to assess performance

3

Sleep clinicians reviewed results, and provided a **formal sleep disorder diagnosis**, and offered access to free sleep disorder care

4

Provided **12 months of checkins**, asking about sleep help seeking, sleep symptoms and road safety, and offering **access to care** if needed

What we found:

The 'triple threat' of an unmanaged sleep disorder, insufficient sleep and a night of shift work have a major impact on simulated road safety

Young adults with a sleep disorder are considerably more impaired on road simulators than healthy sleepers

Many did not realise their sleep problems were diagnosable and treatable, or impacting their performance. **When offered, >75% sought help for sleep**

Young adults told us they want to see barriers to sleep care addressed

These findings are crucial for informing **policy for health, road and workplace safety**.

Sleep disorders are a modifiable risk factor, and we can **start early for safety**.

What now?

Our clinical research team is

- **Advocating** for young adults to have free sleep care
- **Collaborating** with employers to support sleep disorder care during the transition to shift work
- **Educating** our future shift workers about sleep disorders early; in Universities, TAFE settings, and in the community
- **Co-designing** new health services with young adults that actually encourage them to seek sleep care to keep them safe on the road
- **Translating** our findings into free infographics, education resources and videos to raise awareness and support more young adults working shift work
- **Launching** a Shift Work Clinic for sleep

Want to learn more?
Contact our Chief Investigator



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We'd love to hear from you!