

## **GOOD SLEEP GUIDE**

### **During the evening:**

- **Put the day to rest. Think it through. Tie up “loose ends” in your mind and plan ahead. A notebook may help.**
- **Take some light exercise early in the evening. Generally try to keep yourself fit.**
- **Wind down during the course of the evening. Do not do anything that is mentally demanding within 90 minutes of bedtime.**
- **Do not sleep or doze in the armchair. Keep your sleep for bedtime.**
- **Do not drink too much tea or coffee and only have a light snack for supper. Do not drink alcohol to aid your sleep-it usually upsets sleep.**
- **Make sure your bed and bedroom are comfortable – not too cold and not too warm.**

### **At bedtime:**

- **Go to bed when you are “sleepy tired” and not before.**
- **Do not read or watch TV in bed. Keep these activities for another room.**
- **Set the alarm for the same time every day, seven days a week, at least until your sleep pattern settles down.**
- **Put the light out when you get into bed.**
- **Let yourself relax and tell yourself that “sleep will come when its ready”. Enjoy relaxing even if you don’t fall asleep at first.**
- **Do not try to fall asleep. Sleep is not something that you can switch on deliberately!**

### **If you have problems getting to sleep:**

- **Remember that sleep problems are quite common and they are not as damaging as you might think. Try not to get upset or frustrated.**
- **If you are awake in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up and go into another room.**
- **Do something relaxing for a while and don't worry about tomorrow. People usually cope quite well even after a sleepless night.**
- **Go back to bed when you feel "sleepy tired".**
- **Remember these tips above and use them again**



Prepared by: EHSSB Prescribing Team and Belfast and South East Trusts Community Addiction Teams.

Dec 2008