

Sleep doctor plans to tackle Derry's snorers

Plans are underway to open a specialist clinic in Derry to help locals get a better night's sleep.

Health provider 3fivetwo sleep plan to help people tackle their night-time demons from insomnia to snoring and, what they describe as a 'silent killer' which could be affecting more than 110,000 people across Northern Ireland.

Dr Nick Magee, a Consultant in Respiratory Medicine who works with 3fivetwo said cases of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) are on the increase and the condition can be associated with many deadly medical conditions including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and atrial fibrillation - a condition which causes irregular and rapid heartbeats.

Typically this can lead to palpitations, breathlessness, angina and the development of blood clots meaning sufferers are at a significantly increased risk of stroke, frequently with a fatal outcome.

Dr Magee warns there is a higher incidence of both fatal and non-fatal heart attacks in patients with severe OSA and a higher incidence of stroke, sudden death and

atrial fibrillation in patients with moderate to severe OSA.

There is also a strong association between obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) and high blood pressure. It's estimated that 40% of people with OSA have high blood pressure and at least half of people with uncontrolled BP have OSA.

Nick treats many patients from across Northern Ireland in the specialist clinics run by local company, 3fivetwo Healthcare, which is planning several new Sleep Clinics, including the one in Derry. The clinic will see patients undergo sleep analysis, whereby the quantity and quality of their slumber will be monitored. This is the easiest way to identify whether someone has sleep apnoea and how severe it may be.

"Sleep Apnoea is where a person actually stops breathing for short periods of time, often up to 10 seconds or more throughout the night. When this happens the level of oxygen falls in the blood and the brain, having detected this, wakes the sleeper to take a breath. This causes sleep deprivation which in itself can be dangerous, but goes

on to have an effect on the heart and cause long-term health problems."

Dr Magee said he believes that between two and four per cent of the populations suffer from some degree of sleep apnoea. Those most likely to develop the condition would be people who are overweight, male, who consume alcohol, smoke or are getting older.

"A 'one size fits all' solution does not work," he said. "The first step in management is to address life style issues, particularly weight. We also look at smoking and alcohol usage and only after thorough examination of each individual decide whether or not surgery is a viable option."

"Whatever the most suitable solution, the effects of sleep apnoea are heavily underestimated in Northern Ireland, but with careful assessment most of these problems can be greatly improved or eliminated," he said.

The Derry Sleep Clinic will be opened in early 2011.

For more information visit www.3fivetwo.com



The Deputy Mayor of Derry Alderman Drew Thompson pictured when he opened the 'Working Together, From Prison to Peace Project' two day conference at the City Hotel this week with, from left, Lesley McAvoey, Queen's University, Colin Halliday, Charter Regional, Avila Kilmurray, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland director, and Brenda Hegarty SEUPB. (0511PG02)

Search continues for missing fisherman

The search will resume today to find the body of missing Inishowen fisherman Robert McLaughlin.

Mr McLaughlin and his uncle Eddie Doherty 'Liza' went out fishing on Monday morning off the north Inishowen coast, but their boat, The Jennifer, which belonged to Mr Doherty, hit rocks and got in to difficulty.

The men left Portmore Pier in the 26ft vessel shortly after 7am and the alarm was raised at 10.45am when another fisherman spotted Mr Doherty's body floating amidst debris close to the coast. Since then the search has continued for Robert

McLaughlin.

Sadly this isn't the first time tragedy has struck both the Doherty and McLaughlin families.

Experienced fisherman Eddie lost three nephews when the Carrickatine was lost in 1995 while another of Robert's brother's, Shaun, was drowned in a fishing tragedy in the south of the country in 1974.

At Mr Doherty's funeral in St Patrick's Church in Aughaclay on Thursday mourners heard how Mr Doherty was a much-loved, well-liked community man.

His daughter, Nuala spoke about how he was a 'hero' to her

brothers and sisters.

She said her father meant everything to her family and their lives would never be the same again without him.

Parish priest Father Peter Devlin who celebrated Requiem Mass with Fr Michael Sweeney and Fr Tom Mullan said: "Today is a very sad day for the entire parish; we're all in great shock at the tragedy among these rapid events."

"I am sure Eddie's family and Robert's family are still in a state of disbelief with what began as a routine trip on Monday has ended in great pain, great loss and great grief."

Derry companies revealed at top 'eco-giants'

Derry's Port and Harbour and local firm, Seagate Technology (Ireland) Ltd have both been presented with a prestigious 'Environmental Benchmarking' award

The prizes were handed out after a survey conducted by Business in the Community's, ARENA Network and sponsored by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Belfast Harbour, found them to be among the top businesses in Northern Ireland for environmen-

tal management, performance and assurance.

Seagate Technology and Co. Derry firm, Henry Brothers (Magherafelt) Ltd came top in the survey of corporate environmental management and performance, achieving a scoring of over 90% while the Port and Harbour and Dupont (UK) Industrial Ltd both scored highly with scores of over 80%

Presenting their awards Environment Minister Edwin Poots congratulated all those businesses

and organisations who were chosen to participate in this year's survey.

It is now firmly established that businesses who keep environmental issues on their agenda will see this translate into their economic bottom line," the Minister added.

ARENA Network is convening a working group to look at the best way for organisations to measure their performance, particularly looking at effective data collection and defining useful performance indicators.



Bernie McDermott of Seagate Technology (Ireland) Ltd receives the Environmental Benchmarking award from Trevor Anderson, Operations Director, Belfast Harbour; John McMillen, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Chair of ARENA Network Northern Ireland, Peter Dixon. 2410lm12