

# An audit of melatonin prescribing in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

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## Aim

To determine whether clinical prescribing practice of melatonin in Salford CAMHS, Greater Manchester reflects current NICE recommendations. NICE suggest that first-line treatments for children with sleep problems and ADHD include good sleep hygiene and behavioural therapy (including sleep diary). The BNFC states that melatonin therapy should be reviewed every 6 months.

## Background

Disordered sleep is common, affecting 20-30% of children aged 1-5 and often continues later in childhood. Neurodevelopmental and psychiatric comorbidities pose a greater risk, with sleep disorders seen in 50-60% of children with ADHD.

## Method

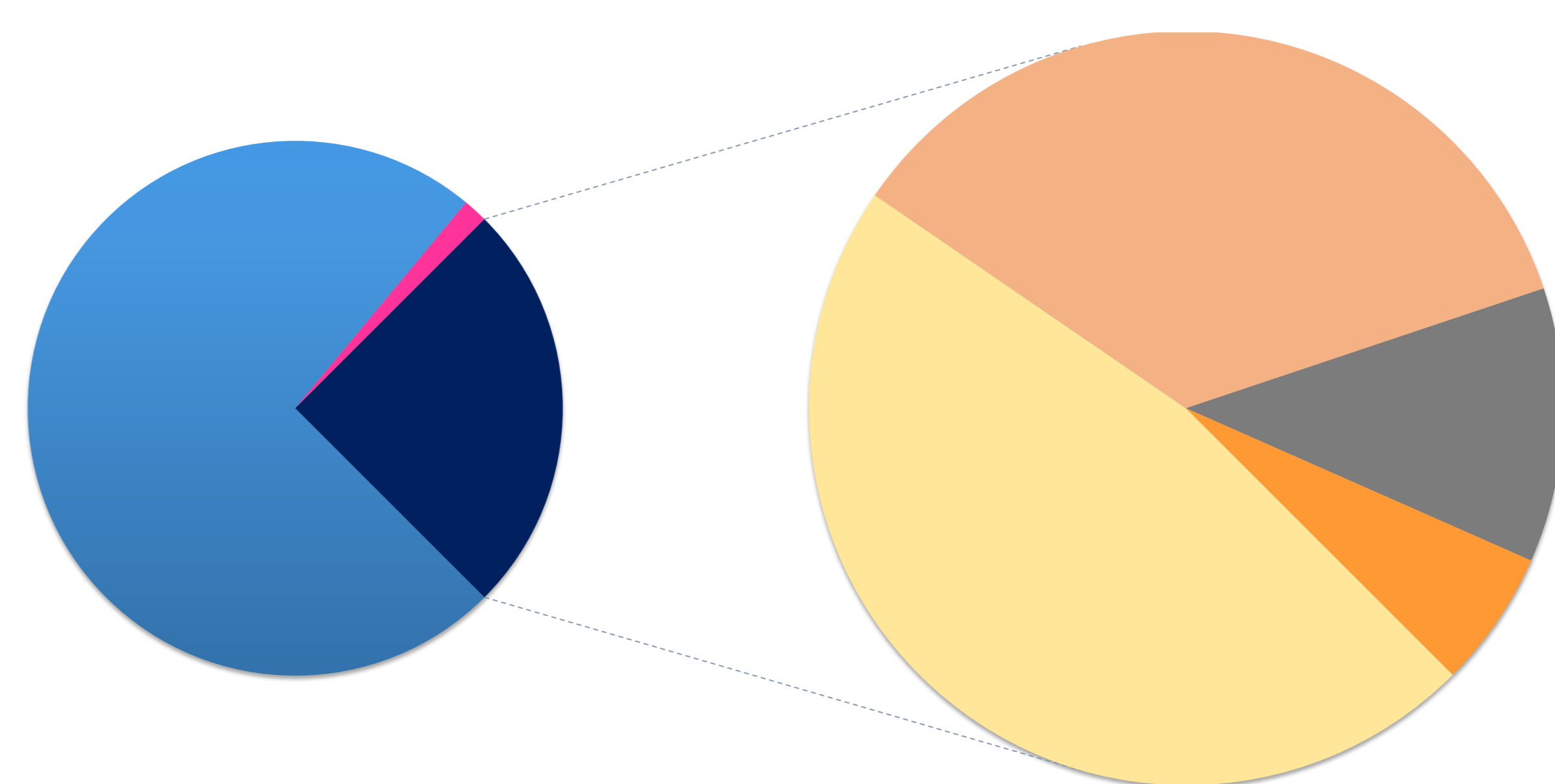
74 young people currently prescribed melatonin met the inclusion criteria. Data was collected retrospectively from clinical case files.

## Results

Age range: 5-17, Primary diagnoses: ADHD (85%) ASD (8%) Other (7%)

- 61% prescribed melatonin with no sleep hygiene advice or sleep diaries as 1<sup>st</sup> line measures for modification of sleep behaviour
- 74% of those initiated on melatonin >6 months ago have had a review within the last 6 months; 1% currently under inpatient services

- Melatonin reviewed
- Current inpatient
- DNA appointment
- No review, no reason stated
- Seen but melatonin not reviewed
- Cancelled appointment



- A further 12% had had a review of melatonin within the previous 12 months.

Of medication reviews occurring in the last 12 months:

- 47% considered efficacy of treatment and experience of side effects
- 2% noted to be non-compliant
- 41% considered efficacy of melatonin alone
- 10% did not review treatment efficiency and therefore the need for continuation

## Conclusion

The initiation of melatonin does not currently meet national recommendations. Timely monitoring (arising in 75% of cases) generally evaluates the need for ongoing therapy.

## References

1. NICE Evidence Summary ESUOM2 'Sleep disorders in children and young people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: melatonin'
2. NICE BNFC 'Melatonin'  
<https://bnfc.nice.org.uk/medicinal-forms/melatonin.html>