1. **Purpose/Aim**

   1. Discuss unique cultural implications of caring for military Veterans versus civilian populations.
   2. Describe innovative academic-practice partnerships/collaborations with Veteran Administration resources and rural community resources.
   3. Describe ways insomnia and sleep disturbances impact global health.

2. **Sleep Disturbances/Insomnia Background**

   **Insomnia is:**
   - defined as dissatisfaction with sleep quantity or quality; associated with difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep and early-morning waking with inability returning to sleep.
   - a transnational health problem associated with major disruptions to a high quality of life—such as fatigue, poor cognitive function, and personal functioning.
   - linked with increased morbidity and mortality, depression and suicidal thoughts/behaviors; increased risk of obesity, hypertension, diabetes, strokes and heart
   - present in approximately 6% to 10% of adults.
   - affecting approximately 25% of general population; approximately 84% with a history of TBI.
   - highly correlated with sleep difficulties associated with tinnitus.

3. **Methods**

   The setting for the study are Veterans in attendance at the mid-Winter Convention of The Alabama Chapter of The American Legion. As a whole, the American Legion Department of Alabama is 19,000 members strong, actively engaged in their communities and growing.

   - The survey instrument, the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI), has 7 questions; has established psychometric properties across adult lifespan in Veteran (preliminary results) and non-Veteran populations.
   - There are 20 additional standard questions regarding demographics, military service roles, diagnoses, and medications.
   - Questions regarding acceptability and preference to insomnia treatments, such as relaxation therapy, pharmacotherapy, sleep hygiene education, sleep restriction therapy, and mindfulness strategies.

4. **Results**

   - **Total Score**
     - N: 33
     - M: 13.15
     - SD: 6.355
   - **No Clinical Significance**
     - N: 7
     - M: 3.57
     - SD: 2.507
   - **Mild Insomnia**
     - N: 12
     - M: 12.7
     - SD: 1.528
   - **Moderate Insomnia**
     - N: 12
     - M: 17.92
     - SD: 2.314
   - **Severe Insomnia**
     - N: 2
     - M: 24.00
     - SD: 6.355

   - 79% of study respondents reported some degree of sleep disturbances.
   - There is a reported receptivity to using holistic complementary methods – relaxation therapy and sleep hygiene.
   - Respondents had high stress, noise intensive occupations.

5. **Future Plans for the Study**

   - Repeat this pilot study to a larger group of American Legion members.
   - Deliver a sleep health and wellness intervention at American Legion Retreat to PTSD and TBI members.
   - Publish professional competencies to communicate best practice evidence in caring for patients with sleep disturbances.
   - Continue long-term relationship with American Legion (Alabama Chapter and National level) to identify healthcare needs and interests.
   - Include related conditions, such as tinnitus management with sleep hygiene.

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