The American College of Physicians (ACP) recently published in the Annals of Internal Medicine clinical practice guidelines for the treatment of chronic insomnia in adults. Based on their review of the evidence for both behaviorally-based and pharmacotherapy approaches to insomnia treatment, they recommended cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) as a first-line treatment for insomnia.

As an organization focused on providing evidence-based sleep treatment to patients, the Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine is in agreement with this recommendation. A large body of research has demonstrated that CBT-I is a safe, effective, and durable treatment for chronic insomnia. However, we strongly encourage primary care providers and patients to seek specialized behavioral sleep medicine providers, such as a sleep psychologist, to deliver CBT-I. Our membership is comprised of licensed practitioners who or have extensive training and experience in behavioral sleep medicine and are dedicated to providing empirically-based care. Trained behavioral sleep medicine providers have advanced knowledge of sleep physiology, sleep disorders, and mental health, and can tailor treatment to meet the needs of complex patients, such as those with comorbid medical or mental health conditions.

Caution should be taken in stating that CBT-I can be performed in a primary care setting. While CBT-I can be performed in primary care if the appropriately trained providers are available, behavioral sleep specialists are not yet commonplace in most primary care offices.

CBT-I is safe, effective, and has superior long-term benefits compared to medication use. Primary care providers and patients should seek out specialty-trained, licensed, and certified behavioral sleep medicine providers for CBT-I delivery. The Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine has a list of providers [insert web link], searchable by region, as a starting point to assist patients in finding a local provider.

Sincerely,

The Practice Committee of the Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine

[List committee member names & volunteers who reviewed the guidelines]