TEMPLATE NEWS STORY FOR PARTNERS’ WEBSITES

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**#WorldSleepDay: People living and working in XX borough get free access to NHS-approved digital medicine for a better night’s sleep**

Sleep deprived [people living in X borough] and those experiencing common mental health problems that affect sleep, such as anxiety, stress or low mood can now help themselves to proven digital self-help tools approved by the NHS by using Good Thinking.

So far around 200,000 Londoners who are looking for personalised new ways to improve their mental wellbeing have used the safe, proactive and early intervention tools offered by Good Thinking, made possible through a partnership of London Borough Councils led by Directors of Public Health, London’s NHS and Public Health England.

Problems with sleep are amongst the most common of mental health conditions. Research suggests around a third of the population have regular difficulty either getting to sleep or staying asleep. Many people having persistent difficulties. This World Sleep Day, for the first time, all Londoners have access to a scalable, evidence-based alternative to prescribing sleeping pills.

Over 100 online resources are accessible through [www.good-thinking.uk](http://www.good-thinking.uk), including wellbeing information sources; guides to sleeping better and improving mental health; courses on and offline; mobile apps and other therapy approaches suitable for London’s modern, highly-mobile population.

**XXX insert name, Title, Your organisations’ name, said:**

[insert quote, suggestion follows…

*“On this World Sleep Day I urge you to think of sleep as an essential part of your personal medicine cabinet. Your health and wellbeing has the best possible advantage when we’ve had a good night sleep. Sleep deprivation puts more pressure on your physical health and you may be causing stress to the people around you too. Fortunately in XXX borough we’ve got Good Thinking with plenty of free NHS-approved tools to help you get those crucial hours of sleep – try Be Mindful or Sleepio for tried and tested techniques you can use to nod off. Everyone will have problems sleeping at one time or another if you are having difficulty do something about it today.”*

**Dr Richard Graham, Consultant Psychiatrist and, and Clinical Lead for Good Thinking, said:**

“Problems sleeping and poor sleep quality are incredibly common, yet most people don’t know what they could do to improve their sleep. Poor sleep is a mental and physical health problem, capable of causing terrible distress and lasting poor health consequences. At Good Thinking we’re aiming to better understand this hidden epidemic and offer Londoners the resources they need, from information to help people understand the causes, to online tools and resources such as Sleepio and Be Mindful, so they can make lasting changes that will improve how they feel every day, and every night."

**Dr Vin Diwakar, Medical Director, NHS England London, said:**

“Mental health problems are common. One in four of us experience problems with our mental well being at some point in our lives. Problems are often hidden, stigma is still widespread and many people are not receiving support from services.

Digital technology gives us an opportunity to make free treatment for poor mental wellbeing available to all without the need to wait. Services can be provided on mobile phones or at home.

1 in 3 Londoners have sleep problems which have a major impact on our physical health, well being and relationships. Clinically proven digital treatments are available free on the NHS in London via the Good Thinking website. It is a great example of the sorts of things we need to see in a modern NHS that places the patient needs at the heart of everything we do, ensuring we design the service around what people need, when they need it”

London is the first region in the UK to offer universal self-help access to digital medicine in a bid to supercharge efforts to tackle unmet mental wellbeing problems endemic among London’s 8m population, and to empower people to help themselves.

Good Thinking’s service fits with the new emphasis on providing safe, early tech-enabled self-care and prevention focused services highlighted in the NHS ten-year plan unveiled by NHS England in January 2019.  It is aimed at an estimated two million Londoners who experience poor mental health each year – disproportionately more per head of the population is affected than anywhere else in the U.K.

Jointly backed by London’s NHS, most borough councils and Public Health England, it follows early trials of the service among staff at key London employers including Imperial College London, UCL, Kings College Hospital NHS Trust and Guys & St Thomas NHS Trust.

Everyone who lives and works in London now has free access to Good Thinking. Visit the homepage [www.good-thinking.uk](http://www.good-thinking.uk) and scroll down for direct links to Be Mindful and Sleepio to sign up for their courses online.

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**Notes to Editors**

**About [insert your organisation]**

Insert description of your organisation

**About Good Thinking**

Good Thinking launched in November 2017 through a partnership of London borough councils led by Directors of Public Health, London’s NHS and Public Health England, supported by the Mayor of London and delivered by Healthy London Partnership. It provides safe, proactive and early intervention tools to Londoners who are experiencing the four most common wellbeing concerns: sleep, depression, stress, and anxiety. It aims to reduce stigma associated with common mental health problems by presenting its information in a non-medical style. So far it has reached over 230,000 Londoners.

**About Sleepio**

[Sleepio](https://www.good-thinking.uk/resources/sleepio-london/) was the most visited destination partner on Good Thinking during the beta phase, with over 12,000 people already benefiting from tailored sleep advice. On average, those using the fully automated Cognitive Behavioural Therapy programme are sleeping for more than an hour longer each night, and have reduced their symptoms of low mood, anxiety and stress by over 50%. Early research by the Good Thinking team highlighted poor sleep as a key unmet issue for Londoners, and an early warning sign for mental ill health. Sleepio was chosen as a pilot partner for 2017/18 as the digital Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) based programme had been rigorously tested in 8 randomised controlled trials. For example, research by the University of Oxford found that Sleepio users significantly improved sleep quality, and reported reductions in symptoms of anxiety and depression (Freeman et al 2018, Lancet Psychiatry). Londoners can sign up to the programme for free at [www.good-thinking.uk/sleepio](http://www.good-thinking.uk/sleepio)

**About Big Health**

Sleepio is provided by Big Health which was co-founded in 2010 by former insomnia sufferer Peter Hames and world-renowned sleep expert Professor Colin Espie. As the world’s first digital medicine company, Big Health creates automated evidence-based behavioural programs using technology, thereby making them accessible to a wider audience. Big Health’s first product, [Sleepio](http://www.sleepio.com/nhs), is a digital sleep improvement program featuring Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques. CBT helps people to re-establish a reliable sleep pattern from night to night and to overcome the problem of a ‘racing mind’ that keeps people with insomnia awake. Sleepio has been clinically proven in eight randomised controlled trials (RCTs) to help people overcome insomnia and comorbid anxiety and depression. The company is based in London and San Francisco. For more information on Big Health and Sleepio please visit[www.bighealth.com](http://www.bighealth.com)

**About Healthy London Partnership**

Healthy London Partnership formed in 2015. It aims to make London the healthiest global city by working with its partners to improve Londoners’ health and wellbeing so everyone can live healthier lives. Its partners include the NHS in London (Clinical Commissioning Groups, Health Education England, NHS England, NHS Digital, NHS Improvement, trusts and providers), the Greater London Authority, the Mayor of London, Public Health England, London Councils.

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