Author response: Sleep architecture and the risk of incident dementia in the community

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We thank Dr. Kim for the letter regarding our article.1 In this important first step, we demonstrated an association between lower REM sleep percentage and an increased risk of dementia. It is now important for future studies to explore why REM sleep is related to dementia risk. We concur with Dr. Kim that it would be interesting to examine whether the suppression of REM sleep through exposure to antidepressants is associated with dementia incidence. However, as only 11 (3%) of our patients were taking antidepressants, such a study would require a much larger sample. It would also be challenging to overcome indication bias given that depression may also increase risk of dementia.2 Focusing on antidepressants with nonpsychiatric indications is one potential approach to help limit such bias. We agree with the sentiments of Dr. Kim in that the intriguing relationships between sleep and dementia require further study.


Editors' note: The state of academic neurology departments in the United States, 2016: A national survey

In the special editorial “The state of academic neurology departments in the United States, 2016: A national survey,” author Gooch highlighted how most neurology faculty members are not on a tenure track and that almost 40% of academic neurology departments have purely clinical faculty with no educational or research responsibilities. Dr. Meador adds data from other surveys indicating that time spent by academic neurologists on research and education has sharply declined over the last 30 years and questions whether this new balance is appropriate. Author Gooch responds that cuts to research funding and clinical reimbursement will likely make the situation worse and that academic leaders and faculty should engage at the institutional and national levels in order to have input into what the future of academic neurology looks like.

Megan Alcauskas, MD, and Steven Galetta, MD

Reader response: The state of academic neurology departments in the United States, 2016: A national survey

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Dr. Gooch’s review of a 2016 national survey of neurology department chairs revealed that most neurology faculty members are not on tenure track, and 38% of neurology departments have some clinical service faculty with no assigned educational or research duties.2 Further, a separate 2016 survey of US neurologists, conducted by the American Academy of Neurology, showed that the overall effort by academic neurologists toward education and research has markedly dropped, with an average of 16.4% of their time on research and 11.3% on teaching; the