

Hollywood, Health & Society Partners With Project Sleep for Accurate TV Depictions of Sleep Disorders

An Estimated 50 to 70 Million Americans Have Chronic Sleep Conditions

Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S), a program of the USC Norman Lear Center, has announced a new partnership with Project Sleep, a nonprofit that aims to improve public health by raising awareness about sleep health, sleep equity, and sleep disorders. The two organizations will work with TV writers and producers to encourage storylines about sleep health and sleep disorders that are accurate, informative and entertaining.

Julie Flygare, JD, President and CEO of Project Sleep, said that too often on TV “sleep disorder portrayals do not reflect current medical knowledge or treatment best practices, and are often inaccurate, unrealistic or exaggerated.”

This poses a risk to audience health, Flygare added, because “we hear over and over from people living with sleep disorders that they were surprised by their diagnosis because their symptoms were not like in the movies.”

To illustrate the overwhelmingly inaccurate depictions of sleep health, Project Sleep tracks cinematic portrayals of sleep conditions via the [Sleep Disorders in Film & TV Database](#) and will soon release an original study reviewing narcolepsy portrayals in media. Project Sleep also aims to connect audiences with support via the [Sleep Helpline™](#), a free national helpline for those facing sleep issues.

For nearly 25 years, HH&S has provided the entertainment industry with research and experts in health, safety and security to ensure accurate TV storytelling. A free resource for writers, the program also provides briefings and consultations, tips sheets on a wide range of health topics, custom on-site research trips, and panel discussions.

Recently, HH&S worked with CDC’s Division of Cancer Prevention to help shape and inform a TV [storyline about breast cancer](#) on The CW’s *Superman & Lois*. HH&S also worked with The SCAN Foundation to change cultural narratives around aging and caregiving. The program worked with the writers of the NBC series *This Is Us* on a major storyline about Alzheimer’s

disease, [studied its impact on audiences](#) and presented a [report on representations of aging, older adults and caregiving](#) on prime time TV shows.

About Hollywood, Health & Society

Hollywood, Health & Society is a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center that provides entertainment industry professionals with free expert information on all aspects of health, safety and security, through expert consultations and briefings, panel discussions, tip sheets and more. Supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and other funders, the program recognizes the profound impact that entertainment has on knowledge, attitudes and behavior. Visit hollywoodhealthandsociety.org.

About Project Sleep

Project Sleep is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about sleep health, sleep equity, and sleep disorders. The organization's programming includes the Rising VoicesSM leadership training, the Sleep HelplineTM, the Sleep Advocacy Program, the Sleep Equity Initiative, Project Sleep's Podcast, the Jack & Julie Narcolepsy Scholarship, the Sleep Apnea Squad series, the Narcolepsy Nerd Alert series, World Narcolepsy Day, and the Sleep In. Follow Project Sleep on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#), or visit their website at project-sleep.com

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