

Therapist treats sleep by focusing on behaviors

Clinical health psychologist joins Banner Health Clinic's sleep medicine team



Monica Foster, PhD

Contact: Sara Quale
sara.quale@bannerhealth.com
(970) 810-6133

GREELEY, Colo. (April 15, 2019) – The National Institutes of Health says the first line of treatment for insomnia is behavioral therapy, and now Banner Health has the prescription to help.

This spring, clinical health psychologist Monica Foster, PhD, joined Banner Health Clinic specializing in pulmonology and sleep medicine. She works with patients on their behaviors and how those affect medical conditions.

“Cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBTI) focuses on what we do or do not do to promote sleep and the anxieties that get caught up when we try to force sleep,” said Dr. Foster. “It’s the preferred treatment even before medication.”

“ With this addition, we are the first and only program in Northern Colorado to offer such comprehensive service. ”

The need for comprehensive care for patients with insomnia prompted Banner Health to add this position to the team. Dr. Kukafka is the medical director for pulmonary and sleep medicine at Banner Health in Northern Colorado.

“Fifty percent of all people will have insomnia at some point in their lives with 10 percent having chronic issues,” Dr. Kukafka said. “With this addition, we are the first and only program in Northern Colorado to offer such comprehensive service.”

Dr. Foster explained how she works with patients by describing a person with insomnia. That person will try to make it better by going to bed earlier, hoping to catch up on sleep. Then they toss and turn, feel tired the next day and may take a nap. Dr. Foster would train that person to sleep “more efficiently” and reduce stimuli that hurt the ability to fall asleep. Patients write down their sleep habits and review the results with Dr. Foster during their office visits.

Behavioral therapy to help patients improve their sleep habits has been around for many years, Dr. Foster said. A lack of access to therapy services and the temptation for a short-term fix by medication are two obstacles for behavior therapy to be used more.

In addition to treating insomnia, Dr. Foster will work with patients who have behavioral concerns related to sleep apnea. Eventually, she will add smoking cessation classes to her offering.

Foster said she enjoys treating sleep issues because of the improvement it can have in people’s lives. “Now we understand the consequences of not sleeping and how it affects so many other health statuses. It’s so rewarding to see someone get good sleep and then notice other health improvements.”

Dr. Foster earned her PhD in psychology from the University of Mississippi. Prior to working for Banner Health, she worked for the Veteran’s Administration and Kaiser Permanente in California.

She will work with patients who are seen by Banner Health sleep medicine specialists in Greeley, Loveland and Fort Collins.

About Banner Health

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 28 acute-care hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner – University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit www.BannerHealth.com.

 [Monica Foster](#)

(3.1 MB)

<http://bannerhealth.mediaroom.com/trending-now-at-banner?item=122815>