



Dementia and memory assessment in primary care and aged care

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Demystifying Dementia







Session objectives

Recognise features other than memory loss in people with dementia by applying the **Domains Framework**

Apply the **Inclusion Criteria Framework** in assessing patients for a possible diagnosis of Alzheimer's Dementia

Apply the **Exclusion Criteria Framework** in assessing patients for a possible diagnosis of Alzheimer's Dementia





To begin with the end in mind

1. Dementia is more than a memory problem
2. MMSE and other cognitive screening tests are not diagnostic tests
3. It is often appropriate for a person to have dementia diagnosed and for management to be initiated in general practice (with appropriate support)





Defining Dementia





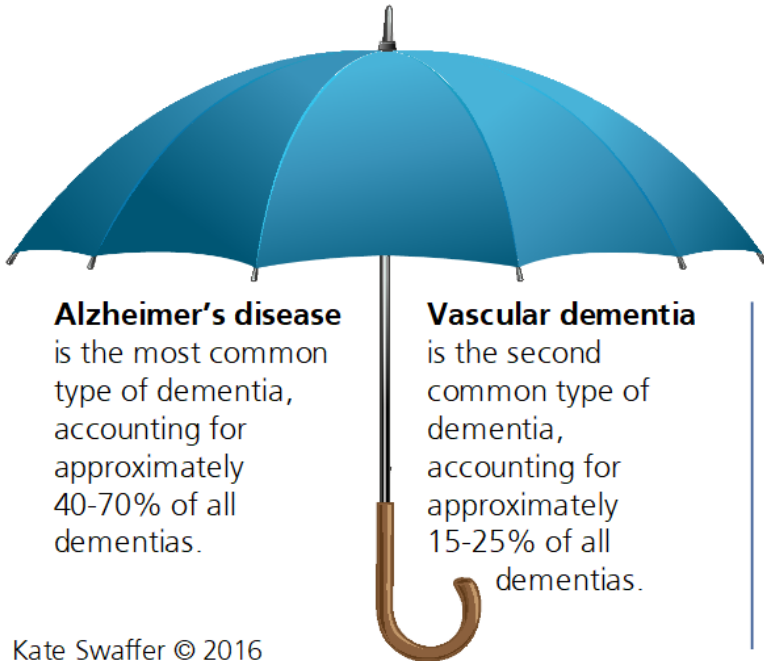
Defining Dementia

Progressive, global, life limiting condition that involves generalised brain degeneration and effects people in different ways and has many different forms.



Defining Dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term that describes a collection of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. It is not one specific disease. Dementia affects thinking, behaviour and the ability to perform every day tasks, and brain function is affected enough to interfere with the person's normal social or working life. The most common type of dementia is Alzheimer's disease.



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Vascular dementia is the second common type of dementia, accounting for approximately 15-25% of all dementias.

Lewy body dementia accounts for approximately 2-20% of all dementias.

Fronto-temporal dementia accounts for approximately 2-4% of all dementias.

Other dementias include dementia associated with Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, head trauma, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), alcohol related dementia, Crutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, corticobasal degeneration and progressive supranuclear palsy.



Domains of Dementia Framework

1. Cognitive decline
2. Functional decline
3. Psychiatric symptoms
4. Behaviour changes
5. Physical decline





Stages of dementia

Stage 1: Still at home

- Short-term memory loss with repetitive questions
- Loss of interest in hobbies and previously enjoyable activities
- Impaired instrumental functions

Stage 2: Escalating care needs, transitioning to 24 hour care

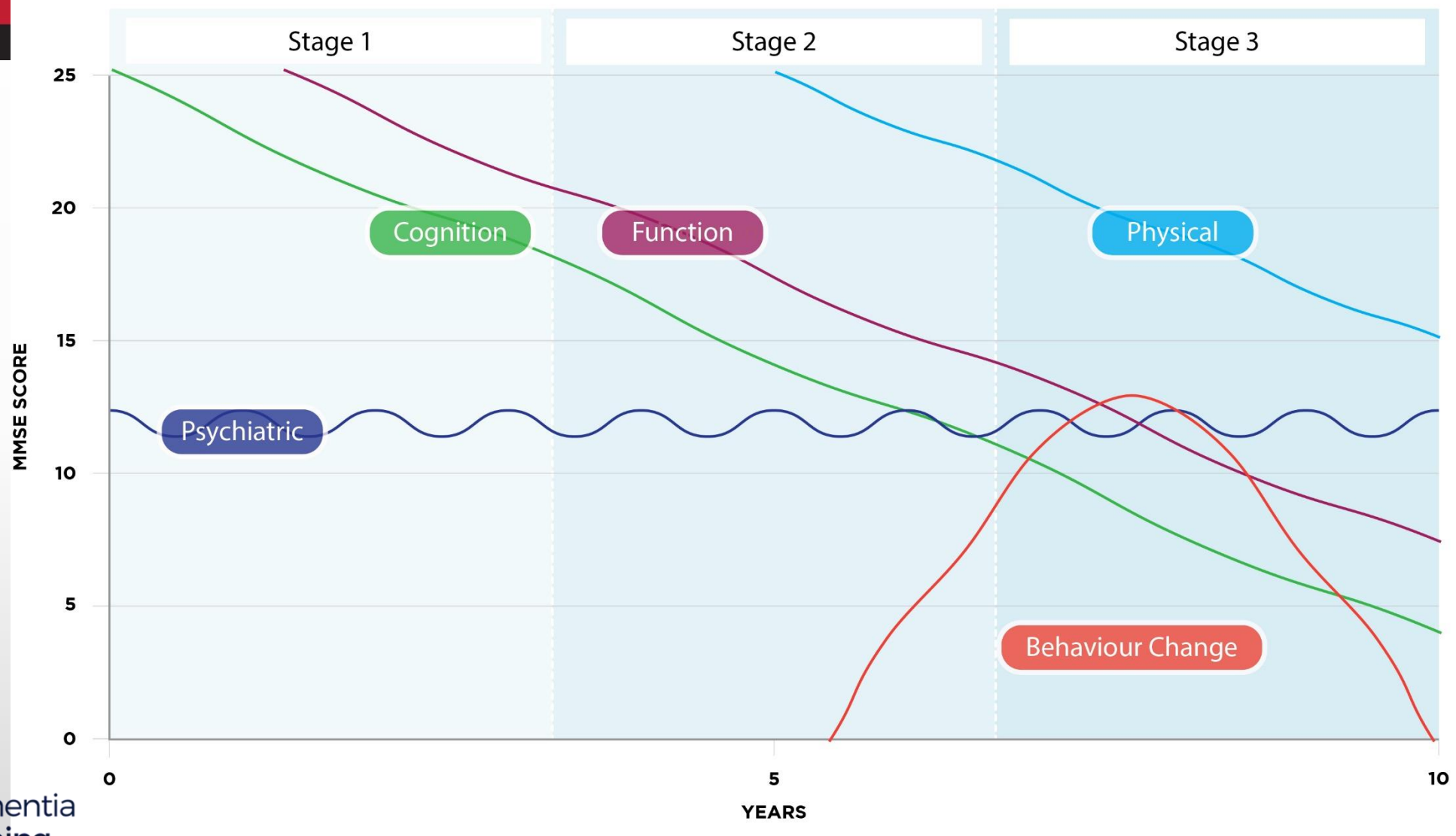
- Progression of cognitive deficits
- Declining function
- Behaviour changes

Stage 3: Diminishing quality of life

- Increasing loss of independence: dressing, feeding, bathing
- Responsive behaviours
- Physical decline



Stages and Domains of Alzheimer's Dementia





Framework for diagnosis of Alzheimer's and Vascular dementia

Four Inclusion Criteria:

1. Gradual onset of poor memory
2. Worsening of memory problem
3. Failure of function
4. Cortical dysfunction – dysphasia, agnosia, dyspraxia
(for vascular dementia, add neuro sign or CT evidence of vascular incidents)





Framework for diagnosis of Alzheimer's and Vascular dementia

Three Exclusion Criteria:

1. Delirium
2. Other organic cause
3. Psychiatric illness
4. Drugs



To end with the beginning in mind

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Homework - Cognitive screening tests

Standardised Mini-Mental Examination (SMMSE)

GPCOG

Kimberly Indigenous Cognitive Assessment (KICA)

Rowland Universal Dementia Assessment Scale (RUDAS)

Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)



GP dementia resource hub

Easy access to dementia courses, resources and links



Includes:

Dementia in Practice podcast episodes

Online courses for GPs – from 40mins to 4hrs

Downloadable GP resources – Management plans and Supervisor teaching plans

GP related events

GP workshops

Links to other helpful websites

Visit dta.com.au/general-practitioners/





Dementia In Practice

A **podcast** made by GPs for GPs and others interested in learning more about dementia



Season One episodes:

Life with dementia: A first-hand account

Healthy ageing and dementia: How to recognise the difference

Diagnosing dementia in general practice: A stepwise approach

A carer's story: When dementia comes home

The healthy brain check: Reducing risk factors for dementia

Dementia and the environment: Small changes that make a difference

Beyond the diagnosis: GP interventions and strategies for care

Dementia and multicultural communities: Dementia doesn't discriminate

Dementia at the end of life: A person centred approach

Dementia and COVID-19: Living with dementia in a pandemic

New episodes released each fortnight

