



COURSE 1

Module 2

CARELINK for People with Dementia (PwD)



2. Introduction to Dementia Domain

(From the perspective of the Person with Dementia)

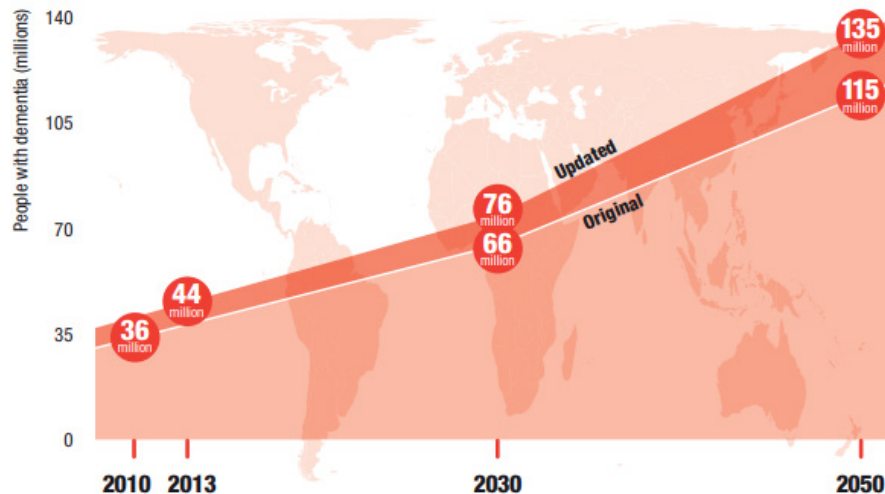
What is Dementia

- The term dementia is used to describe a group of symptoms that occur when brain cells stop working properly.
- In dementia there is deterioration in cognitive function.
- It also affects memory, thinking, orientation, calculation, comprehension, learning capacity, language, and judgement.



The Prevalence of Dementia Worldwide

- Dementia is a global epidemic.
- Many cases have been recorded in the world's richest and most aged countries.
- Already the clear majority of people living with dementia live in low- and middle-income countries.



<https://www.alz.co.uk/research/GlobalImpactDementia2013.pdf>

Diagnosis of Dementia



Variety of approaches and tools can help to diagnose dementia including:

- Obtaining a medical and family history such as, psychiatric history and history of cognitive and behavioral changes;
- Physical examination;
- Tests of mental abilities;
- Taking blood tests and brain image;
- Conducting cognitive, physical, and neurologic examinations;
- Characteristic changes in thinking;
- Laboratory tests.



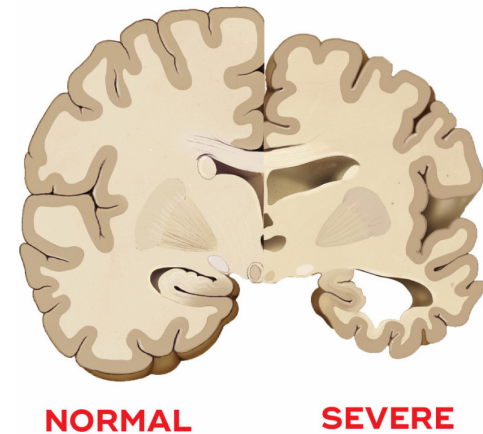
Diagnosis of Dementia

- Doctors can determine that a person has dementia with a high level of certainty. But it's harder to determine the exact type of dementia because the symptoms and brain changes of different dementias can overlap.



What to Expect from Dementia

- Dementia progresses differently in everyone.
- Many people will experience the symptoms associated with the stages of their dementia (mild, moderate, or severe dementia).
- People with dementia will progress through these stages at different speeds and with differing symptoms.



What to Expect from Dementia



Possible complications of dementia, regardless of its cause, include the following:

- Loss of previous ability to function or care for self;
- Loss of previous ability to interact with others;
- Increased infections within the body;
- Reduced lifespan.



What to Expect from Dementia



As the dementia progresses, additional complications may include:

- Difficulty performing more than one task at a time;
- Taking longer to perform more difficult activities;
- Personality changes and loss of social skills;
- Forgetting recent events or conversations;
- Getting lost on familiar routes;
- Difficulty solving problems;
- Language problems;
- Misplacing items;
- Etc.



How to Deal With Your Dementia

- It is very important for you to get enough information about dementia, its affects, your physical and mental condition, plans ahead, possible treatments and available supports, where to get help with these and how to stay well.



How to Deal With Your Dementia



Some supportive cares for improving your life:

- Helping with instrumental activities of daily living;
- Managing behavioral symptoms of the disease;
- Adhering to treatment recommendations;
- Assisting with your activities of daily living;
- Finding and using support services;
- Making arrangements for caring;
- Providing emotional support.



How to Deal With the Loss of Your Abilities



There are four key considerations to inform good practice when you face with loss of ability in dementia:

- You initially need to be aware that loss of abilities is fundamental part of the dementia experience.
- You should develop your knowledge about this issue.
- Recognizing and responding to the loss of ability and providing appropriate responses.
- Think about supportive helps.



How to Deal with the Loss of Your Abilities

There are also some suggestions to better deal with the loss of your abilities:

- Try to focus on activities that you can still do;
- Exposure to new experiences can enrich brain connections;
- Try to keep physically healthy;
- You can take medications;
- Brisk walking, up to five times a week;
- Keeping a balanced and nutritional diet;
- Do not afraid to ask help.



Optimizing Your Environment to Maintain Quality of Life

- In spite of the proliferation of technology in our everyday lives, there is still lack of enough knowledge about how exposure to environment equipped with **assistive technologies** may support better quality of life for people with dementia and enable them to remain living in their own homes.



Optimizing Your Environment to Maintain Quality of Life



Assistive technologies can for example:

- Improve the quality of life;
- Delay entry into institutional care;
- Reduce the burden on caregivers;
- Promote independence and autonomy;
- Help manage potential risks; and
- Facilitate memory and recall.



How to Plan Your Future

Some steps for future planning:

- *Step 1:* An early diagnosis;
- *Step 2:* Educate yourself;
- *Step 3:* Make financial and legal plan;
- *Step 4:* Establish a support system.



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