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Dementia

INTRODUCTION

Dementia is a “political Hot Topic” with a renewed focus on early diagnosis and support, and reducing the use of anti-psychotics¹. Primary Care teams help people with dementia with various issues including:

- At diagnosis
- Signposting to support
- Issues linked to decrease in functioning, such as driving
- Management of difficult behaviour (also called “stress and distress in dementia”)
- Providing support to carers
- End of life care.

This module aims to address:

- **Diagnosis of dementia** - how to diagnose, and the benefits of early diagnosis
- **Living well with dementia** - aspects to consider post diagnosis, including driving and advance care planning
- **Living well with increasing help and support** - responding to stress and distress, risks and benefits of using psychoactive medication, and medication compliance
- **Resources for carers.**

This module will not address the following aspects in detail, as these are covered by existing PBSGL modules. Reference to these other modules will be made in the text, where relevant.

- Mild Cognitive Impairment: see “Hot Topics – Geriatrics” module
- Power of Attorney and other issues related to Capacity: see “Adults with Incapacity” module
- Palliative issues such as DNACPR: see “End of Life Care” module.

There was not enough space to discuss all issues related to dementia, and the issue of covert medications has not been covered, though there is a link to advice on this from the Mental Welfare Commission.