

Bending the Dementia Growth Curve: A Framework for Prevention, Symptom Deceleration and Reversal at all Levels of Healthcare Systems

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RESEARCH FINDINGS



- 56% of Canadians are concerned about being affected by Alzheimer's disease & 46% of Canadians say they would be embarrassed to admit that they have dementia to family members.¹
- 1 in 4 people think there is nothing we can do to prevent dementia.²
- Almost 62% of healthcare practitioners worldwide incorrectly think that dementia is part of normal ageing.²

- In high income countries, only 20-50% of dementia cases are recognised and documented in primary care, with much higher percentages estimated in low-and middle-income countries. Alzheimer's Disease International estimates that worldwide, approximately three quarters of people with dementia have not received a diagnosis.³

- An article published in the Journal of Biomedical Science in January 2020 indicated that current trends show increased targeting of neuroprotection and anti-neuroinflammation in phase 1 and phase 2 trials, respectively, and a decline in anti-amyloid drug therapy research since 2019.⁴

INSIGHTS



- Awareness, education, and prevention programs may not have been effective in changing understanding and perceptions about dementia.

- Many persons living with dementia, particularly in the early stage of the disease, have no access to treatment, care, and organized support.

- There is an increasing shift in pharma research away from amyloid-clearing/cure drug therapies, towards prevention and protection therapies.
- There is greater openness to clinical trials based on alternative hypotheses and therapies on the causes and potential cures for dementia.⁴

PREVENTION STRATEGIES



Primary Prevention Reduction of Preventable Diagnoses

- Make dementia prevention a national healthcare priority.
- Petition governments to mandate the sending of biennial reminders to persons over 50 years old to have a cognitive assessment test.

Secondary Prevention Deceleration of Risks and Symptoms

- Prioritize early detection and on-going cognitive assessment among at-risk groups (e.g. persons with diabetes, hypertension, smokers, etc.).

Tertiary Prevention Reversal of Symptoms

- Focus research on symptom reversal as a potential pathway to finding a cure for dementia.

SERVICE DELIVERY



Health Promotion & Disease Prevention

- Biennial cognitive assessment tests in routine medical check-ups.
- Public education programs with strong calls to action to mitigate the 12 modifiable risks of dementia.

Health Promotion & Protection

- Deploy on-going cognitive assessment services proven to promote, prevent and decelerate cognitive decline, specifically targeting at-risk groups.
- Formalize partnerships between the healthcare and social services sectors to ensure optimal coordination of services and effective monitoring of persons at risk and proactive treatment in the early stages of dementia.

Disease Protection

- Establish a dedicated public/private sector fund for promising research and clinical trials on symptom deceleration and reversal therapies.
- Encourage private sector and non-government organizations to match government's financial allocations.

FRAMEWORK SOURCES/ REFERENCES

1. Alzheimer Society of Canada 2017 Awareness Survey. Accessed online on 6 March 2024
2. Alzheimer's Disease International Dementia Facts & Figures. Accessed online on 6 March 2024
3. Alzheimer's Disease International Dementia Statistics. Accessed on 6 March 2024
4. Journal of Biomedical Science. Clinical trials of new drugs for Alzheimer disease. Accessed on 6 March 2024

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