

Publication

Assessment of dementia in elderly outpatients : a comparative study of European centers and consensus statement

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Large numbers of elderly patients, suspected of having dementia, need medical evaluation, often in early phases of their illness. A complete outpatient assessment clearly could be advantageous. Thirty-five centers from 15 European countries, known to their scientific gerontological and geriatric societies to have experience in outpatient care for elderly patients with dementia, participated in an effort to develop a consensus statement for the assessment needs of these patients. The comparison of the centers showed that a wide variety of approaches was currently in practice. Differences appeared to be mainly based on local facilities and organization. A consensus for diagnostic outpatient assessment was easily reached. Diagnosis should be based on DSM-IV criteria, which requires a standardized assessment (including neuropsychological, functional and technical evaluation) and should be multidisciplinary. An assessment of dementia of elderly outpatients appears to be very feasible - a consensus approach with minimum diagnostic requirements is presented.

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