

Dementia in intellectual disability

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Abstract

Purpose of review: Dementia is emerging as a significant condition in the population with intellectual disability. This review is aimed at clinicians working in the field. We revisit what is known on the subject and expand on this with results from recent research. The emphasis of this review is on the clinical research rather than laboratory or molecular research.

Recent findings: Research has encompassed all aspects of dementia in intellectual disability, from epidemiology, assessment and diagnosis, through to management. There remains a lack of evidence concerning both pharmacological and nonpharmacological treatment of dementia in people with intellectual disability. Recent research has tended to focus on dementia in Down syndrome.

Summary: More research is necessary in order to translate improvements in the understanding of the neuropathology of intellectual disability and dementia into effective treatments. There is also a need to investigate the optimum environment in which to provide holistic care for individuals affected.