



Consumer and clinician questions about quality use of medicines in people living with dementia: what are the priorities for future research?

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With so many possible avenues for research, where do we start?

What is Quality Use of Medicines?

Using medicines safely and effectively, and selecting the best treatment for the individual (including not using medicines) to obtain optimal health outcomes

What are the challenges to achieving quality use of medicines in people living with dementia?

- Exclusion of people living with dementia in drug trials = unknown benefits and harms
- Polypharmacy, multimorbidity, and underuse of medicines are common
- Issues with communication between healthcare professionals and at transitions of care
- Continually changing goals of care which changes the benefit:risk ratio

Aim

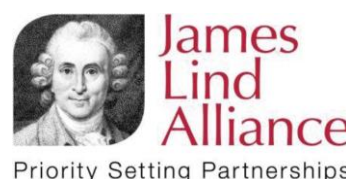
To identify the top 10 unanswered questions in the field of quality use of medicines in people with dementia according to Australians living with dementia, their carers, family and friends and health care providers.

Purpose: To inform health research funders, advocacy groups and policy makers about the unanswered questions, with the aim of directing future research funding, research efforts, and policy and practice change.

Methods

Following the James Lind Alliance (JLA) method to identify and prioritise the Top 10 unanswered questions.

- JLA is a non-profit making initiative.
- Brings people with experience of the condition, carers and clinicians together in Priority Setting Partnerships (PSPs).



Steps completed:

- 1 • Create a Steering Group and recruit Partner Organisations
- 2 • Gather evidence uncertainties (survey)
- 3 • Summarise the responses gathered

Future steps:

- 4 • Evidence checking
- 5 • Interim priority setting (survey)
- 6 • Workshop
- 7 • Publish and promote the Top 10 research priorities

Results

What questions and/or concerns have you had about medicine use in people living with dementia?

- 151 Consumer Responses
 - People living with dementia (14)
 - Carers (38)
 - Family, friend or other (103)
- 77 Clinician Responses
 - GPs (6)
 - Geriatricians (8)
 - Other specialists (6)
 - Pharmacist (11)
 - Nurse (29)
 - Assistant in nursing/care worker (4)
 - Allied Health and other (13)
- 8 Key Informant Interviews

Themes (number of questions in theme)
Awareness and education (3)
Changed behaviours (3)
Healthcare system and person-centred care (7)
Residential aged care facilities (2)
Medication management (6)
Polypharmacy, multimorbidity and deprescribing (8)
Treatment of dementia (9)
Specific co-morbidities (11)
Adverse drug reactions and harms (12)
Monitoring for harms and benefits (1)
Pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic changes (1)
Influences on prescribing (2)
COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions (2)

Example quotes and summary questions:

- How can I make it easier for my mother to remember to take her medication? → Summary question: How can people living with dementia and their carers be supported to manage medicines safely at home? (Medication management theme)
- How can I avoid transfer to residential care simply for reasons of medication mismanagement? → Summary question: When, how and in who should medicines be used to treat depression and anxiety in people living with dementia? (Specific co-morbidities theme)
- Do his medications lessen his anxiety?
- Is there an antidepressant that is preferred for use in dementia patients?

Partner organisations: Leading Age Services Australia, Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy, Consumers Health Forum of Australia, Speech Pathology Australia, The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, Australian College of Nurse Practitioners, Australian Association of Gerontology, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association