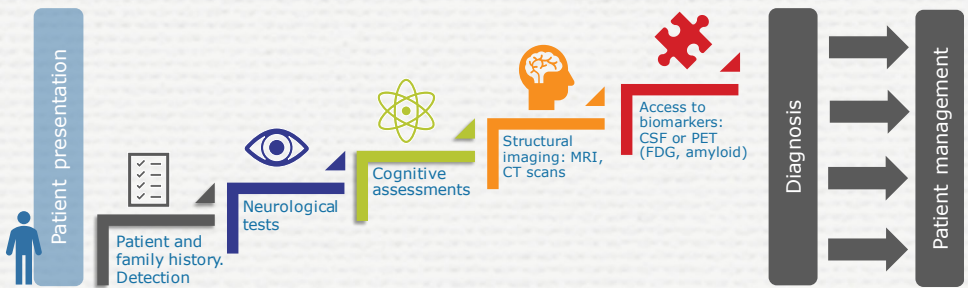


The Early Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease: It's About Time

The Patient diagnostic journey



CSF, cerebrospinal fluid; CT, computed tomography; FDG, fluorodeoxyglucose; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging; PET, positron emission tomography

Alzheimer's Disease in Italy

- In Italy, there are over 12 million people age 65 years and over, accounting for 21.5% of the total population¹
- The prevalence of dementia in Italy is approximately 2.09% of the total population²
- One million people are estimated to have dementia, an estimated 60% of which have Alzheimer's disease (AD)¹
- There are an estimated 3 million family carers¹

Addressing AD in Italy

As part of 'Progetto CRONOS' in 2000, Italy was the first country to introduce specialized centers for the diagnosis and management of AD and other dementias.^{3,4} Italy now has approximately 500 Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Units, or 'Unità Valutativa Alzheimer' (UVA), which, in coordination with general practitioners, form the core system of care for individuals affected by dementia.^{3,4}

The Italian Dementia National Plan was formulated in October 2014 by the Italian Ministry of Health.^{3,4} The plan aims to provide directive indications for promoting and improving interventions in the dementia field. The four main objectives are to:

1. Promote health- and social-care interventions and policies
2. Create/strengthen the integrated network of services for dementia, based on an integrated approach
3. Implement strategies for promoting appropriateness and quality of care
4. Improve the quality of life of persons with dementia and their families by supporting empowerment and stigma reduction

Other Italian dementia initiatives include:

- SIN-DEM, under the Italian Society of Neurology (SIN), an association devoted to promote research and share knowledge on dementia disorders, organizing yearly national and regional meetings, including a special program for young researchers ('SIN-DEM for Juniors')
- The Italian Net for Alzheimer's Disease, funded by the Italian Ministry of Health and coordinated by Istituto Neurologico Carlo Besta in Milan (Dr Fabrizio Tagliavini), with the implementation of early diagnosis, by means of biomarker use and their harmonization, as a core goal

References

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