

# SERVICE EVALUATION FOR SERVICES FOR YOUNGER PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA IN EAST LOCALITY OF NORTH WALES-BCUHB



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## INTRODUCTION:

The Young onset Services (under 65's) in East Locality of North Wales has changed since 2017, with all the referrals and assessments being done through memory services. Following a confirmed diagnosis, the patients are then referred to the Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) in YOD team.

Delays accessing a diagnostic assessment is common, with numerous accounts of patients and their families moving from 'pillar to post' before accessing the relevant services.

Lack of awareness amongst clinicians of symptoms of stress and depression causing cognitive issues resulted in a high level of inappropriate referrals. Many were identified with mental health diagnoses other than dementia (from previous audit).

A previous service evaluation done over a period of 10 years (2005-2015) which showed some deficiencies hence another evaluation was done to evaluate progress.

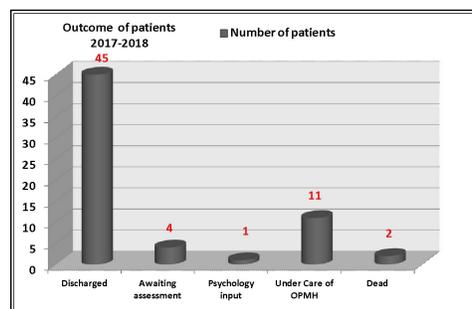
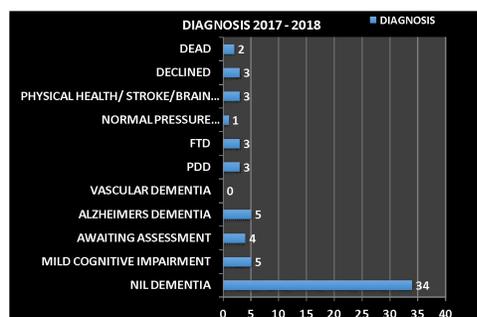
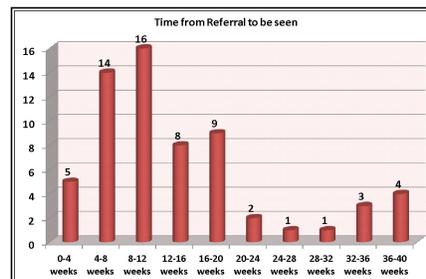
## AIMS & METHODOLOGY:

To evaluate Young onset dementia (YOD) services in terms of referral, its appropriateness, time to diagnosis and other criteria as per protocol that we had adapted.

Case notes of those under 65 referred to Memory service (Wrexham and Flintshire) for cognitive assessment between July 2017 to June 2018 were retrospectively reviewed to look at time to diagnosis, appropriate referrals, post diagnostic support etc.

## RESULTS:

1. Compared to the previous evaluation, the number of patients referred had increased from 47-48/ year earlier to 63/year.
2. Only 1/3<sup>rd</sup> were appropriate referral over the 10 years period whereas between 2017-2018 more than ½ were appropriate referrals
3. More than half of them were seen within 12 weeks of referral (35 / 63 available)
4. Only 132/252 were diagnosed as having some form of Dementia in the previous evaluation which were about 13 cases of YOD a year. In contrast, in our new evaluation 19 patients were diagnosed with some form of dementia.
5. Inappropriate referrals had reduced by more than 50%
6. Appropriateness and timely referral had improved in this time frame



DIAGNOSIS	OLD AUDIT	NEW AUDIT
Early Onset Alzheimer's	44%	26%
Parkinson's Disease Dementia	6%	16%
FTD	23%	16%
Others	14%	21%
Vascular	10%	0
Lewy Body	0	0
Huntington's Dementia	4%	0
MCI	0	21%

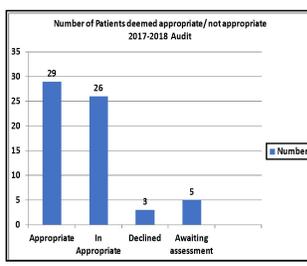
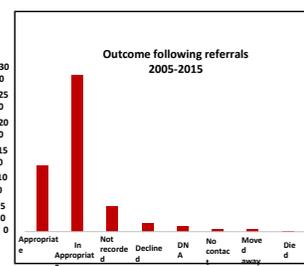
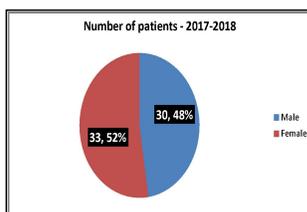
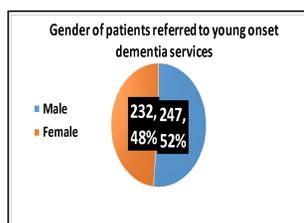
## DISCUSSION:

Dementia is considered 'young onset' when it affects people under 65 years of age. It is also referred to as 'early onset' or 'working age' dementia.

However this is an arbitrary age distinction which is becoming less relevant as increasingly services are realigned to focus on the person and the impact of the condition, **not the age**.

## RECOMMENDATIONS/ CONCLUSION:

- Teaching sessions to educate primary & secondary care clinicians on appropriateness and timely referrals has helped in improving the care for Patients with YOD.
- Services need to be developed further to be able to diagnose & support those with YOD.
- Repeat evaluations every year would help to inform improvement in quality and appropriateness of referrals.



References:  
 1. Royal College of Psychiatrists (2018) Services for Younger People with Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias (CR217). RCPsych.  
 2. Alzheimer's Society (2014) Dementia UK: Update 2nd edition.  
 3. www.alzheimers.org.uk