

Preface

Cognitive symptoms of dementia have been those most widely studied. Recent years have seen the growth of research in functional changes in persons with dementia, including reduced ability to carry out normal activities of daily living. This series of educational modules concentrates on the behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), which have historically been referred to as 'behavioral disturbances'.

BPSD exact a high price from both the person with dementia and the caregiver in terms of the distress and disability they cause if left untreated. This is the key to the development of this Educational Pack. We believe that BPSD are recognizable, understandable and treatable. The recognition and appropriate management of BPSD are important factors in improving our care of dementia patients and their caregivers.

This BPSD Educational Pack originally distributed in 1998 and updated in 2002 draws on material presented at the Consensus Conferences of the International Psychogeriatric Association (IPA) Task Force on Behavioral Disturbances of Dementia (now the IPA Task Force on Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia), held in the Spring of 1996 and the BPSD Update Conference in 1999. Until recently research on the recognition and treatment of BPSD has been sparse. The consensus conferences effectively took the first steps towards recognizing BPSD as a collection of core symptoms of dementia.

Regulatory agencies of several countries recognize BPSD as a legitimate entity for treatment and research purposes. Others have approved research and treatment for specific components, such as psychosis of Alzheimer's disease.

We hope these modules will provide a useful overview of the presentation and causes of BPSD, offering constructive guidance on treatment interventions, both pharmacological and non-pharmacological, coupled with information on caregiver education and support. We suggest that readers make use of the reference and recommended reading lists provided at the end of each module.

Also, we hope the material will contribute to the improved management of dementia patients with BPSD and reduce some of the stresses experienced by the caregiver and families of dementia patients.

Henry Brodaty, Project Editor

*University of New South Wales
Prince of Wales Hospital
Sydney, Australia*

Sanford I Finkel, Project Editor

*Council on Jewish Elderly Geriatric Institute
Chicago, Illinois USA
December 2002*