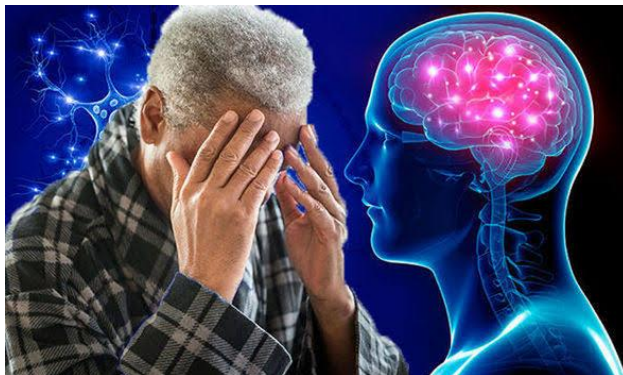


ICMR designed a Neurocognitive Tool Box (NCTB) for Dementia Diagnosis



Dementia among Elderly Population

Dementia is a broad term used for state of diseases and conditions characterized by a decline in memory, language, problem solving and other thinking skills that affect a person's ability to perform everyday activities. About 35.6 million people living in the world currently suffer from dementia, and 7.7 million new cases are added every year which means 1 in 4 cases is projected from South Asian nations such as India and China suffers from dementia.

On one side burden of dementia is increasing in low- and middle-income countries, and on the other side, the lower diagnosis rates added to the burden of the disease. There is dearth of diagnostics and research in such regions which makes diagnosis of dementia a huge challenge. Thus, any small work in this direction is of immense importance. One of the major challenges confronted in dementia diagnosis is the limited availability of standardized diagnostic tools for use in populations with linguistic and educational diversity.

One of the major efforts for dementia diagnosis and cure, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) developed a standardized and comprehensive neurocognitive test battery to diagnose dementia and mild cognitive impairment (MCI) attributed to varied etiologies, across different languages and educational levels in India, and to facilitate research efforts in diverse settings¹. The study was published in one of the renowned scientific journals '*Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*' published online by Cambridge University Press.

The study was carried out by a multidisciplinary ICMR expert group who collaborated towards adapting and validating a neurocognitive test battery, ICMR Neurocognitive Tool Box (ICMR-

NCTB) in five Indian languages (Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam), and for both illiterates and literates.

The output of study was that the ICMR-NCTB has evolved as a valuable tool to address the sociolinguistic diversity of our country. The tool will be systematically validated for establishing cut-off values in a diverse multicentric cohort. Thus, ICMR-NCTB shall serve as a comprehensive diagnostic tool for diagnosis of dementia in diverse Indian socio-demographic settings.

Reference:

1. Iyer, G.K., Paplikar, A., Alladi, S., Dutt, A., Sharma, M., Mekala, S., Kaul, S., Saroja, A.O., Divyaraj, G., Ellajosyula, R. and Ghosh, A., (2019). Standardising Dementia Diagnosis across Linguistic and Educational Diversity: Study Design of the Indian Council of Medical Research-Neurocognitive Tool Box (ICMR-NCTB). *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, 1-15.

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