

FOREWORD FROM THE SUPPLEMENT EDITOR

Although many older people fear dementia, few realise that much can be done to reduce their risk of developing this fatal disease. Clinicians, GPs and specialists alike can lead the way in raising awareness and this Focus on Dementia supplement will help us to do that. We should no longer accept that many individuals with cognitive disorders remain undiagnosed or are inaccurately diagnosed. We need to identify who is most at risk, including people with diabetes, and ensure they receive the best postdiagnostic care and support.

There is significant overlap between depression and cognitive disorders, and clinicians are responsible for disentangling and managing both conditions. Although current treatment options for dementia have been limited, they are now expanding. Amyloid-targeted therapies are already in extensive use overseas and one, donanemab, has very recently received TGA approval and is now available on private prescription for people with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia due to Alzheimer's disease. Meanwhile, the four symptomatic drugs we have available can be more extensively and effectively used. From the conspiracy of silence to detection, accurate diagnosis and increasingly effective therapies, cognitive disorders are now following the same trajectory seen with cancer diagnosis and treatment 50 years ago. As clinicians, we need to stay informed and engaged in this journey because some 1.5 million Australians with cognitive disorders are relying on us.

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