



Recommendation 1 of National Clinical Guideline No. 21: Prior to considering any psychotropic medication in a person with dementia, a comprehensive assessment should be performed, by an appropriately trained healthcare professional.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY IS A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT IMPORTANT?

A comprehensive assessment helps to understand the symptom a person has and how that's manifesting in a behaviour and what are the things that might be driving that symptom and behaviour.

WHAT SHOULD A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INCLUDE?

A comprehensive assessment should include: a review of medical history and mental health history (including depression) and medication history; physical examination, including consideration of possible delirium, or undetected pain or discomfort (with an appropriate assessment of same); assessment of the severity, type, frequency, pattern and timing of symptoms, and other potentially contributory or comorbid factors.

WHAT TOOLS CAN HELP ME COLLECT INFORMATION AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT?

RAGSTER R ULE OUT DELIRIUM, PAIN AND DEPRESSION A GREE AND DECIDE ON WHICH BEHAVIOURS TO TARGET G ATHER INFORMATION S ELECT INTERVENTIONS/SOLUTIONS T RIAL OF INTERVENTIONS OR SOLUTIONS E VALUATE R EVIEW	ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY UK TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM: GREEN: NO SYMPTOMS AMBER: MILD OR MODERATE SYMPTOMS RED: SEVERE SYMPTOMS
THE PIECES TOOL: P HYSICAL I NTELLECTUAL E MOTIONAL C APABILITIES E NVIRONMENT S OCIAL	THE ABC TOOL: A NTECEDENT B EHAVIOUR C ONSEQUENCE

WHERE SHOULD A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT BE PERFORMED?

This assessment should be performed in an appropriate environment that optimises the person's comfort and ability and includes any support that the person may require.

WHO SHOULD PERFORM A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT?

The recommendation is clear that the assessment needs to be performed by a nurse or doctor who is competent in assessing a person with dementia who may be distressed, but all members of the team caring for the person can give really useful information to support this. The multidisciplinary team has a huge role to play in an assessment of a person and members can be really important sources of information.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/dementia-pathways/resources-for-practice/implementation-of-national-clinical-guideline-no-21/>