

Research project at the Medical Faculty, Lund University

The Lund Longitudinal Dementia Study. A neuropsychiatric, neuropsychological, neuroimaging, genetic and neuropathological investigation.

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Project: Dementia disease is one of the most important medical and socioeconomical problems in modern society. The prevalence of dementia is rapidly increasing to about 7,5 % in the elderly population. Many individuals, however, present their first symptoms of dementia between 40 and 65 years. Dementia causes severe long-lasting suffering and handicap with a strong impact on the patient's family. Dementia is often misdiagnosed and early clinical recognition and intervention are prerequisites for effective use of pharmacological treatment and other strategies for treatment, care and service for the patient and the carers.

The principal strategy of this project is to recruit patients at an early stage of the dementing illness and to follow these patients with neuropsychiatric, neuropsychological and neurochemical assessments, molecular genetic analysis and finally a post mortem neuropathological examination. Different imaging methods (CT, MRI, PET, SPECT and EEG) are used. The main aims are to study the panorama of dementia diseases and identify new clinico-pathological entities; analyze the association between clinical features and functional and structural brain imaging and neuropathology; study clinical predictors and genetic and other background factors in Alzheimer's disease, Lewy body dementia, frontotemporal dementia and vascular dementia and dementia of metabolic and infectious origin; develop strategies for pharmacological treatment, rehabilitation and care of patients with dementia; diagnostic potentials of biochemical markers.

There is an urgent need for standardized and reliable techniques for diagnosis and evaluation of treatment in dementia. This can only be achieved by an optimal combination of clinical, neuroimaging and neuropathological techniques in a longitudinal prospective study of dementia. The project is based on multi- and interdisciplinary cooperation between research groups with a common interest in clinical neuroscience. The project has so far contributed to the recognition of distribution of brain pathology in different types of dementia.

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Co-workers, postdoc level and above: Christer Nilsson, Ass prof, Jarl Risberg, Prof, Karin Nilsson, Ass prof, Christina Elfgrén, Ass prof, Ingmar Rosén, Prof, Elisabet Englund, Ass prof, Aki Johanson, Ass prof, Lars Gustafson, Prof

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Project homepage: http://www.med.lu.se/klinvetlund/geriatrisk_psykiatri