

The Impact of GP Attitudes on Dementia Detection

**AAG Conference, Hobart
November 2010**

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Background

- 2009 – 69,600 new cases of dementia in Australia (1,338 new cases per week)
- 2050 – 385,200 new cases of dementia in Australia (7,407 new cases per week) (Access Economics 2009)



GPs role in dementia detection

- GPs play a key role in detection of dementia
- Older people visit their GP 8-9 times a year on average (AIHW 2007)
- Evidence suggests that dementia is often not recognised by GPs.
- Reported rates of overlooked dementia are between 35% and 90% (Valcour et al, 2000).



GP attitude & dementia

- GP attitudes toward dementia impact on patient care and management
- Positive attitudes are associated with active case finding, increased use of cognitive tests and early detection (Blair 1998)

GP Aged Care study

- Tri-state multi-centre randomised controlled trial – intervention GPs receive training on detection & management of dementia
- 190 GPs recruited
- 1,930 of their patients aged 75+ recruited

GP data

- Month 1 GPs conduct baseline audit
- CAMCOG administered with patients – score <81 patient has dementia
- 12 months GPs complete attitude & confidence questionnaire
- Complete data set for 80 GPs
- Matched to CAMCOG data from 1,403 patients

Results

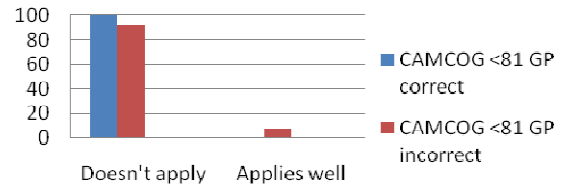
- 106 patients with dementia (8%)

GP audit results for the 106 patients with dementia			
Yes	Probable	Possible	No
30%	6%	16%	48%

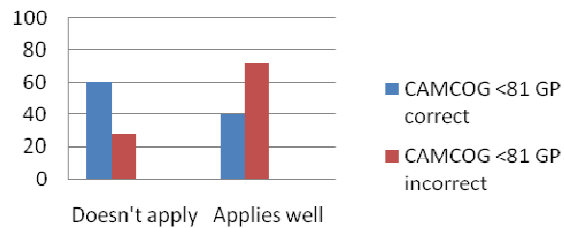
- Attitude & Confidence questionnaire:
1-3= doesn't apply;
4-6= applies well

Attitude results

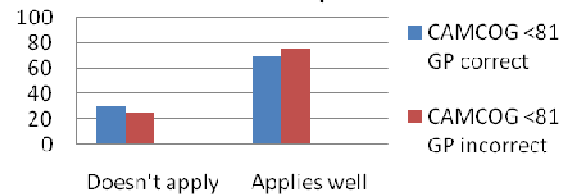
As a GP I cannot do anything to improve the quality of life of patients with dementia



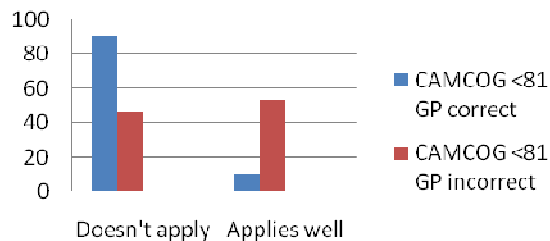
Caring for patients with dementia is a rewarding task for me as a GP



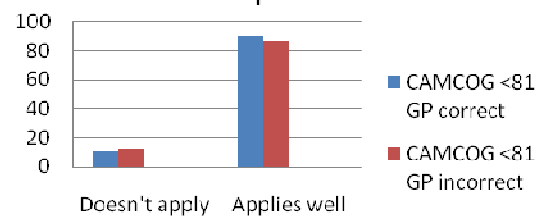
Early detection of dementia benefits the patient

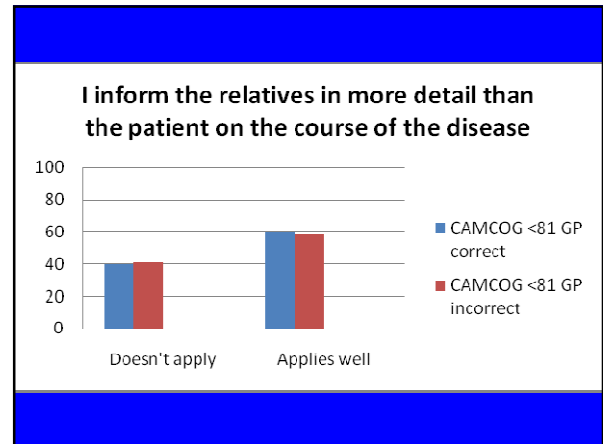
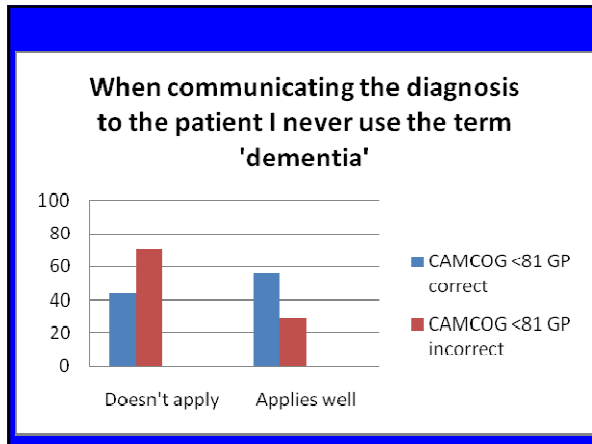


I actively search for dementia in all patients over 65 years of age



Guidelines for the diagnosis & treatment of dementia would help me





- ### Summary
- The majority of GPs have a positive attitude & believe that they can improve the quality of life of patients with dementia
 - Although most GPs believe that caring for patients with dementia is rewarding, 60% of those who correctly diagnosed dementia don't
 - The majority of GPs believe that early detection benefits patients
 - 90% of GPs who correctly diagnosed dementia don't actively search for it in all patients aged >65
 - Majority of GPs believe that guidelines on diagnosis & treatment would help them
 - GPs who correctly diagnose dementia are least likely to use the term 'dementia'
 - Majority of GPs inform relatives about the course of dementia more than the patient