

## ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

This 77 year old gentleman presented with increasing forgetfulness over the past year. He was recently found wandering, unsure of where he was or what he had been doing. A collateral history was obtained from his wife. She reported that her husband often repeats questions several times, and must increasingly be prompted to do normal daily tasks. She has noted a subtle but definite change in his personality over the past year; specifically, he has started behaving inappropriately in certain social situations.

He has not complained of any headaches, nausea or vomiting, and denied having had any hallucinations. He has a BMI of 26, and there has been no recent change in his weight or appetite. He has no known allergies, is a non-smoker and drinks around 21 units of alcohol per week.

On examination, he was orientated in person and place, but not time, and scored 20/30 on the Folstein Mini-Mental State Examination. He denied feelings of low mood, lack of enjoyment in usual activities, or fatigue. Neurological and general examination were otherwise unremarkable. My provisional diagnosis is of senile dementia.

Results of full blood count (FBC), liver function tests (LFTs), urea and electrolytes (U&E), serum calcium, vitamin B12 and thyroid function tests (TFTs) were all normal. The patient was referred to the local psychogeriatric services was made.

The prognosis of the condition was discussed with the patient and his wife, including possible pharmacological agents which could slow the cognitive decline. Information was also given on local support agencies.