

# Dementia and Intellectual and Developmental Disability

## Early Evaluation of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease

**Presented by Julie A. Moran, DO**

Geriatrician, Aging and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Specialist

Consultant, Tewksbury Hospital and Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services

Clinical Instructor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School



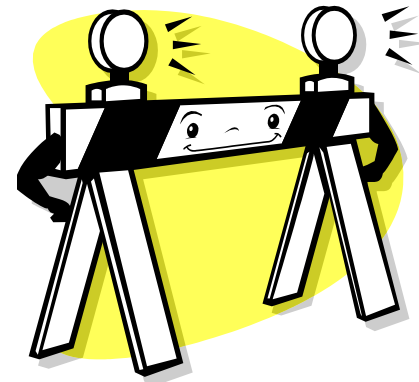
Massachusetts Dept.  
of Developmental  
Services (DDS)

Produced on behalf of DDS by the Center for Developmental Disabilities  
Evaluation and Research (CDDER)



# Barriers to Recognition of Early Alzheimer's Disease

- ❑ Early changes can be quite subtle or atypical
- ❑ Assessment is **highly** caregiver- and provider-dependent
- ❑ An informant who knows the patient well is worth their weight in gold!
  - ❑ Family?
  - ❑ Established group home manager?
  - ❑ Newly hired support staff?



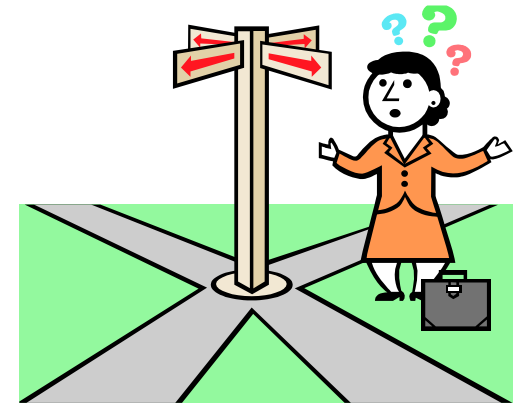
# Importance of Early Evaluation

- ❑ Early identification of treatable or improve-able conditions: i.e.; depression, hypothyroidism, etc.
- ❑ Allows for more thoughtful and thorough explanation to concerned caregivers
- ❑ Stimulates discussion about future planning, setting realistic expectations, adequate support, appropriate workshop/day program accommodations

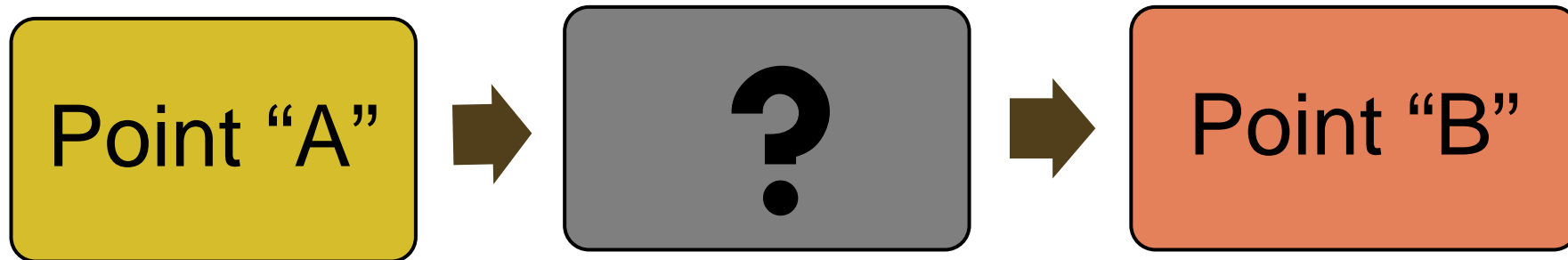


# Importance of Early Evaluation

- Initiation of appropriate psychiatric treatment, consideration of anti-dementia therapy, psychotherapy
- Opportunity for caregiver support, education, anticipatory guidance
- Think about screening starting at age 40



# A Return to Point A and Point B



For more information on assessing change over time from Point “A” to Point “B”, see the webinar “Understanding Age-Related Changes”.



# Making the Diagnosis

- ❑ Diagnosis of inclusion AND exclusion
- ❑ Identify coexisting conditions and endeavor to treat/improve all as feasible
- ❑ Recall the list of potential coexisting conditions in adults with DS:
  - ❑ Hypothyroidism
  - ❑ Sensory deficits
    - ❑ Early/aggressive cataracts
    - ❑ Hearing loss
  - ❑ Early menopause
  - ❑ Atlantoaxial Instability and cervical spine disease
  - ❑ Obstructive sleep apnea
  - ❑ Osteoarthritis
  - ❑ Decrease in functional ability
  - ❑ Osteoporosis
  - ❑ Celiac disease



# Making the Diagnosis

- ❑ Consider overshadowing features of new or worsening/concurrent psychiatric illness
- ❑ **Review** all supporting data
- ❑ **Keep careful records** to follow performance over time
- ❑ Diagnosis doesn't have to be given at the first visit



# Additional Webinars on Aging with IDD

## General Aging in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- ❑ Understanding Age Related Changes
- ❑ The Role of Polypharmacy
- ❑ Identifying and Assessing Pain
- ❑ Behavior Related Changes and Aging in Adults with IDD
- ❑ Health Promotion and Aging in Adults with IDD
- ❑ Mobility and Aging in Adults with IDD
- ❑ Aging with Down Syndrome
- ❑ Aging and Cerebral Palsy

## Dementia and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- ❑ Introduction to Dementia and Aging with IDD
- ❑ Early Evaluation of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease
- ❑ Stages of Alzheimer's Disease
- ❑ Applying the Knowledge to Dementia Caregiving and Caregiver Support
- ❑ Caregiving in Action: Case Studies and Practical Tips





# Additional Aging with IDD Resources

*Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS)*  
*[www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dds/aging-with-id.html](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dds/aging-with-id.html)*

*Center for Developmental Disabilities Evaluation & Research*  
*[http://shriver.umassmed.edu/cdder/aging\\_idd\\_education](http://shriver.umassmed.edu/cdder/aging_idd_education)*



***Training produced by the  
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Evaluation & Research (CDDER) on behalf of the  
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(DDS)***

***cdder@umassmed.edu***

