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Response to the growing dementia burden must be broader

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Response to the growing dementia burden must be broader

An editorial in *The Lancet Neurology*¹ makes a strong case that the response to the growing burden of dementia needs to be faster; however, the response also needs to look beyond dementia to other disorders, particularly stroke.

First, because stroke and dementia share the same risk factors, strategies to decrease stroke incidence are associated with a concomitant decrease in dementia incidence.² Second, anticoagulation in patients with atrial fibrillation has been shown to result in a 48% decrease in the risk of dementia.³

Enough evidence has been accrued about the potential for prevention of dementia that the World Stroke Organization—endorsed by Alzheimer's Disease International, the World Federation of Neurology, the World Heart Federation, the World Hypertension League, and 17 other international, regional, and

national organisations—has issued a proclamation calling for joint prevention of stroke and potentially preventable dementias.⁴ The need for a common effort for prevention of stroke and dementia has also been reiterated by several of these organisations in a statement on implementation of the proclamation.⁵

The World Health Summit in Berlin (Germany; Oct 14–17, 2018) will include a session on preventing dementia by preventing stroke, preceded by a satellite meeting on Oct 13, 2018, to review in-depth the evidence for doing so. Stroke doubles the chances of developing dementia,⁶ but 90% of strokes are potentially preventable⁷ and so are a proportion of dementias.⁸ The World Health Summit will review this and other evidence and produce a publication to serve as a blueprint for greater action to prevent both stroke and some dementias.

We declare no competing interests.

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For more on the World Health Summit see <https://www.worldhealthsummit.org/conference.html>

For the World Health Summit session on Dementia Prevention by Stroke see <https://www.worldhealthsummit.org/satellites/dementia-stroke-prevention.html>