

MEMORY CLINIC

A programme of

**The Albertina and Walter Sisulu
The Institute of Ageing in Africa**

Incorporating the

**Division of Geriatric Medicine
Old Age Psychiatry Programme
Neuropsychology Programme
Neurosciences Programme
Gerontology Programme**

Why a Memory Clinic?

World-wide, populations are ageing and people are growing older than previously. Increases in longevity mean an increase in the number of older persons manifesting physical and cognitive symptoms which may be attributable to illness or to the ageing process. Some individuals may experience mild memory loss, while others may have a memory disorder that interferes with daily functioning.

Memory loss can occur with normal ageing and forgetfulness is common in older people. Persons with a memory disorder will gradually become more forgetful, and as the memory loss increases, changes may appear in their judgement, concentration, behaviour and personality. Memory disorders occur in several forms. Alzheimer's disease is one type of memory disorder.

A Memory Clinic offers a site for the diagnosis of a memory disorder. Each person suspected of having a memory disorder who is referred to a Memory Clinic by a medical practitioner is given a thorough clinical evaluation. A memory disorder must be differentiated from the forgetfulness that occurs during normal ageing and from depression which may affect memory. The presence of brain tumours, infections and other abnormalities also needs to be eliminated.

What does the UCT/GSH Memory Clinic offer?

The University of Cape Town/Groote Schuur Hospital Memory Clinic is a programme of the Institute of Ageing in Africa and was established in 1999.

The multidisciplinary clinic offers focused, holistic assessment and treatment to an older person suspected of having, or diagnosed with a memory disorder. Support and counselling are offered to the carer.

The services of different disciplines are integrated at the Memory Clinic to provide efficiencies of cost and time. Specialists and professionals, among whom are geriatricians, psychiatrists and social workers, assess a patient in a single consultation. If indicated, an appointment will be made for a patient to revisit the Memory Clinic at a later point for follow-up assessment and treatment.



What else does the Memory Clinic do?

Apart from a clinical diagnostic focus and service, the Memory Clinic is an important site for teaching and research on various memory disorders.

Career and rotational registrars in Geriatric Medicine, Internal Medicine, Psychiatry and Psychogeriatrics receive on-site **training** in the Memory Clinic.

Researchers in the Institute of Ageing in Africa, which incorporates the subdisciplines of Geriatric Medicine, Old Age Psychiatry, Psychology, Neurology and Gerontology, conduct **research** to yield knowledge to strengthen the Memory Clinic's programmes.

In addition, the Memory Clinic works in partnership with the Alzheimer's South Africa (ASA), the National office and Dementia South Africa (DSA) in its teaching, research and public awareness programmes on memory and dementia. Patients and their carers who are interested are referred to one of the several **support** groups in the Western Cape. At present, Alzheimer's South Africa have support groups in Bellville/Panorama, Fish Hoek, George, Hermanus, Knysna, Langebaan, Milnerton, Montagu, Mossel Bay, Riversdale, Stilbaai; and Dementia South Africa: Atlantic/City Bowl, Bellville, Bergvliet, Fish Hoek, Hanover Park, Hermanus, Kuils' River, Langebaan, Melkbosstrand, Milnerton, Mitchell's Plain, Ottery, Paarl, Plumstead, Rondebosch, Silvertown (Athlone), Somerset West, Stellenbosch, Stikland Hospital, Strand, Table View

How to use the services of the Memory Clinic

Older persons must be referred to the Memory Clinic for assessment by a private doctor or a doctor at a public health care service facility.

Memory Clinic sessions are held at Groote Schuur Hospital on Wednesday mornings. A family member or a carer must accompany the person to be assessed.

An appointment is required, and either the referring doctor, an assistant, the person him/herself, or the carer or a family member of the person to be assessed may make an appointment.

Contact information:

Location

Department of Psychiatry
J2 Groote Schuur Hospital
Observatory, Cape Town

Clinicians

Dr Sebastiana Kalula
Dr Kevin Thomas
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Appointments

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