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Criminal behavior in frontotemporal dementia and alzheimer disease

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Neurodegenerative diseases can cause dysfunction of neural structures involved in judgment, executive function, emotional processing, sexual behavior, violence and self-awareness. Such dysfunctions can lead to antisocial and criminal behavior that appears for the first time in the adult or middle-aged individual or even later in life. This study indicated that new criminal behaviors emerge in association with specific neurodegenerative diseases but not with others. These new behaviors were particularly prevalent in associated with fronto-temporal dementia (bvFTD), primary progressive aphasia (PPA), Huntington's disease (HD) and less in Alzheimer's disease (AD). This article also highlights how the qualitative nature differs with different types of pathophysiological diseases types. These disorders affect different and specific areas of the brain. There are differences due to pathophysiology of the diseases and our knowledge in biology supports our understanding of the diseases. Criminal behavior is more common in patients with bvFTD and semantic variant of primary progressive aphasia than in those with AD and is more likely to be an early manifestation of the disorder. Judicial evaluations of criminality in the demented individual might require different criteria than the classic "Insanity Defense" used in the American legal system; these individuals should be treated differently by the law. The appearance of new-onset criminal behavior in an adult should elicit a search for frontal and anterior temporal brain disease and for dementing disorders.

Biography

Julia Temlett has completed a Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) in 2014 from the University of Notre Dame Australia and Bachelor's in Health Science graduating with Honors in 2009 from the University of Adelaide. She is currently working in the Neurology Unit at Royal Perth Hospital as a Basic Physician Trainee. She has published 3 papers in reputed journals most recent in JAMA Neurology 2015. She was a Visiting Scholar at University of San Francisco, Memory and Aging center, San Francisco in 2014.

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