

Launch Release

The National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices (NTG), in concert with the Lumind IDSC Foundation, is pleased to announce the release of a comprehensive report on the barriers to and recommendations for examining neuroatypical adults for possible mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or dementia. The report was undertaken by the Neuroatypical Conditions Expert Consultative Panel composed of numerous clinical and academic experts in a variety of neuroatypical conditions. Such neuroatypical conditions include those that affect normative *intellectual development and function* (such as intellectual disability and intellectual disability with conjoint psychiatric conditions), *thought, moods, and cognition* (such as severe mental illness), *communication functions* (such as the autism spectrum and hearing/vision impairments), and *brain and motor function* (such as cerebral palsy and acquired or traumatic brain injury).

The Panel concluded that current federal guidance for the assessment of cognitive impairment for MCI or dementia does not sufficiently include information as to how to assess such adults. Also, that adults with these conditions (a) pose various challenges for clinicians when discriminating current behavior and function from that which was pre-existing; (b) often have inherent comprehension, oral communication difficulties, motor task performance impediments, and difficulty with visuals; and (c) pose difficulties with being assessed when standardized dementia measures are used and benefit from specialized instruments.

The panel recommended that federal guidance should be broadened to include adaptations of assessment practices to accommodate neuroatypical conditions; education be developed for clinicians about such conditions and how to detect and diagnose MCI or dementia; and research be expanded to produce more evidence-based information on assessing adults with neuroatypical conditions for later-life adult cognitive diseases/disorders and for planning post-diagnostic care.

The report, '*Examining Adults with Neuroatypical Conditions for MCI/Dementia During Cognitive Impairment Assessments: Report of the Neuroatypical Conditions Expert Consultative Panel*', can be accessed and downloaded on the NTG's website – <https://www.the-ntg.org/screening-assessment>.