

Dementia will explode worldwide

31 October 2006

This year is the centenary of the description by a German psychiatrist Alois Alzheimer of a woman called Auguste D, a 51-year-old patient. The rest is history and the future.

The most up-to-date predictions about the future of dementia globally have been released and it shows that some countries are heading for a 300 per cent increase in prevalence over the next few years.

Prevalence is the number of people living with dementia at any time and an expert panel brought the best available figures together to make estimates of the future prevalence of dementia across the world.

They concluded that the figures will roughly double every 20 years, so there'll be over 80 million people with dementia by 2040, with the majority in poor and middle income countries. So countries like India and China are facing a huge problem.

In Australia, the numbers of people with dementia will reach half a million by 2040 from around 200,000 today. That's still a lot of people and families affected and you wouldn't want to bet there'll be treatment by then.