

Trends in Dementia Care

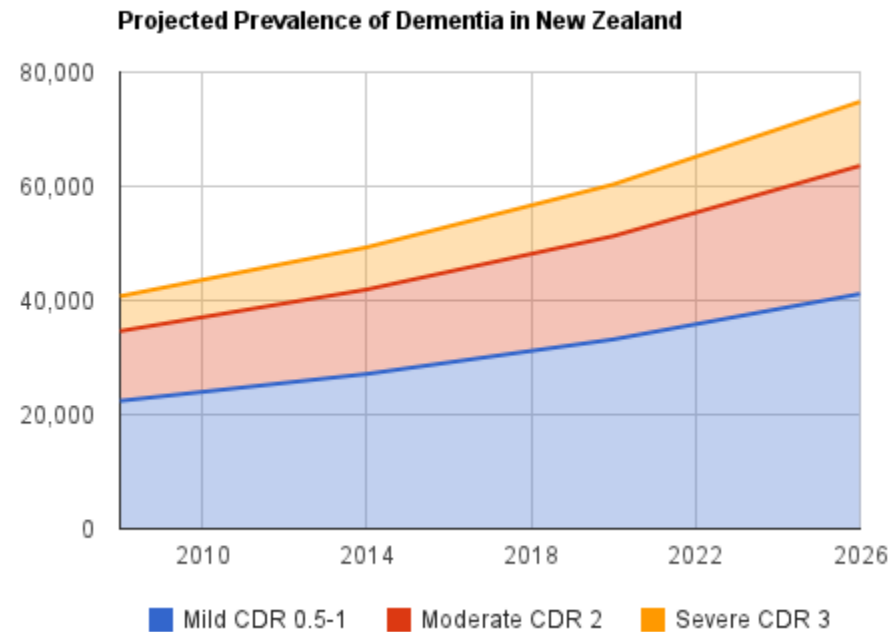
Base demand for dementia services in New Zealand

The prevalence of dementia has received some research attention. In the absence of a significant disruptor, we can expect the prevalence of dementia to increase through

- Population increase
- Aging of the population
- Earlier diagnosis

The chart below shows the projected prevalence of Dementia with data sourced from the Dementia Economic Impact Report 2008¹

	Mild CDR 0.5-1	Moderate CDR 2	Severe CDR 3
2008	22,410	12,224	6,112
2014	27,123	14,795	7,397
2020	33,183	18,100	9,050
2026	41,152	22,446	11,223



This picture of future demand was used in a study by Grant Thornton² into the Residential Care Service capabilities. One conclusion of that report was that “Sector bed numbers need to increase by 78% to 110% by 2026 to accommodate the projected increase in extra residents and to replace aging facilities”, if the sector continues to operate within its current parameters. Among other recommendations, the report noted that the shortfall in residential care beds should be addressed starting in 2010-11. Since then, the Christchurch earthquakes have worsened the situation. Looking at dementia in particular, the report noted that “Dementia has

¹ http://www.alzheimers.org.nz/assets/Reports/AnnualReports/Dementia_Economic_Impact_Report2008.pdf retrieved 14 Sep 2011

² <http://www.grantthornton.co.nz/Assets/documents/home/Aged-Residential-Care-Service-Review.pdf> - retrieved 7 Oct 2011

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the highest rate of demand but an unsustainable rate of return, therefore it is unlikely to attract any future investment. As such, early priority needs to be given to address this”.

Despite extensive searching, I have not seen any research material that suggests the demand estimates should be reduced or, that they will be addressed by an increase in supply of facilities of services.

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Changes in approach to dementia care

There is a body of practice data that emphasises person-centred aspects of dementia care to follow the work of Tom Kitwood³. This is directed at

- better life quality for the individuals with dementia
- easier management of the individuals with dementia with consequential benefits of lower cost
- lower loads on care-givers, whether family or institutional.

We can expect this to require an increase in the use of professional interventions directly with the persons living with dementia and to train carers. For example, Developmental Transformations⁴ has been adapted specifically for Alzheimer's patients⁵.

³ "Person-Centered Care" is In, One-Size-Fits-All is Out, Sylvia Nissenboim <http://www.caregivershome.com/professional/professional.cfm?UID=18>

⁴ Developmental Transformations: Towards the body as a presence, David Read Johnson PhD <http://creativealternatives.squarespace.com/storage/Chapter%206%20Johnson%20final.pdf> retrieved 19 Sep 2011

⁵ Parkinson Emily, Developmental transformations with Alzheimer's patients in a residential care facility, The Arts in Psychotherapy, Volume 35, Issue 3, 2008, Pages 209-216. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197455608000245>