

# WHO report of Dementia

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**In news**– The World Health Organization(WHO) released the Global status report on the public health response to dementia recently.

## Key highlights of the report

- The report takes stock of progress made to date towards the 2025 global targets for dementia laid out in the WHO's 'Global Dementia Action Plan' published in 2017.
- It **uses data from WHO's Global Health Estimates 2019 and the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019** as well as from WHO's Global Dementia Observatory (GDO).
- As per the report, **only a quarter of countries have a national policy**, strategy or plan for supporting people with dementia and their families.
- The report says that the **number of people living with dementia is growing**.
- WHO estimates that more than **55 million people (8.1% of women and 5.4% of men over 65 years) are living with dementia**.
- WHO's **Western Pacific Region has the highest number of people with dementia** (20.1 million), followed by the European Region (14.1 million).

## WHO's Global Dementia Observatory (GDO)

- **The GDO is the monitoring and accountability mechanism for the Global action plan on the public response to dementia 2017-25**.
- It collates data from WHO Member States on 35 key dementia indicators to strengthen countries' ability to respond to the needs of people with dementia, their carers and families.

## About Dementia-

- Dementia is **a syndrome – usually of a chronic or progressive nature – that leads to deterioration in cognitive function (i.e. the ability to process thought)** beyond what might be expected from the usual consequences of biological ageing.
- **It affects memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation,** learning capacity, language, and judgement.
- Consciousness is not affected.
- The impairment in cognitive function is commonly accompanied, and occasionally preceded, by **changes in mood, emotional control, behaviour, or motivation.**
- Although dementia mainly affects older people, it is not an inevitable consequence of ageing.
  - It results from a variety of diseases and injuries that primarily or secondarily affect the brain.
- **Alzheimer's disease** is the most common form of dementia and may contribute to 60-70% of cases.

It is currently the **seventh leading cause of death among all diseases** and one of the major causes of disability and dependency among older people globally.

# DEMENTIA



A public health priority

## What are the symptoms?



## Who is affected?

Nearly 49 million new cases every year  
One every 3 seconds

49 million people worldwide  
Set to triple by 2030



Majority of people who will develop dementia will live in low- and middle-income countries

## What is the cause?

Conditions that affect the brain, such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke or head injury



## What does it cost?

2015: 128.8 billion estimated costs to society in 2015  
2030: 125.6 billion



Families and friends provide most of the care  
Care costs include physical, emotional and financial stress