

Supporting Dementia in the Workplace

Dr. Arlene Astell | Department of Psychiatry and Department of Occupational Sciences & Occupational Therapy, University of Toronto, Toronto, CA

DEMENTIA IS A:



Progressive and irreversible brain disorder



It is **diagnosed by looking at cognitive ability.**



It is primarily a cognitive disorder which **impacts memory, executive function, perception, attention, language and social cognition**, which is how we interact with the world.



Overall, it **impacts all aspects of a person's life, including work.** As it can **interfere** with the ability to: **concentrate, plan, initiate and monitor tasks, solve problems, recognize objects, and interact with others.**

Dementia can affect people at **DIFFERENT AGES** but **most commonly** in their **40s and 50s.**

The effects of dementia can **begin to manifest as early as 30.**

WHEREAS MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT IS DEFINED AS:



A state **between normal cognition and dementia.**



With MCI there is a **slight but noticeable and measurable decline** in cognition



It impairs cognitive abilities such as **memory or concentration**



And cognitive abilities may **progressively decline or plateau.**

SOME KEY SYMPTOMS THAT MIGHT APPEAR IN THE WORKPLACE ARE:



Forgetfulness



Disorganized



Change in mood



Tiredness



Reduced concentration



Increased errors



Irritability



THE JOB DEMANDS AND ACCOMMODATION PLANNING TOOL

is an **accommodation tool** to **help an employee identify their key job demands** at a **broad level**, without having to discuss **health diagnostic or symptom information.**



Work Wellness Institute
L'institut de bien-être au travail