TOOLS OF THE TRADE: ASSESSING FOR POSTERIOR CORTICAL ATROPHY ON THE FRONT LINES

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Abstract

Posterior Cortical Atrophy (PCA) is a complex neurocognitive syndrome that typically first presents with visual impairments. The development of targeted treatments has been hindered by a lack of a standardized approach to diagnosis and monitoring of illness progression, an issue that is a common theme in today's literature on the topic. Despite the growing volume of literature on PCA, there remains a deficit in information aimed at primary care providers; though specialist intervention is the ultimate goal of care, most patients will initially present to their primary provider. It is therefore imperative that providers are aware of the syndrome so they can direct the appropriate next steps in care. This project aims to accomplish two goals: (1) to create a simplified overview of PCA to help primary care providers identify the syndrome, and (2) to identify the most commonly used diagnostic tools to better inform development of outcome measures in future clinical trials. A PCA battery created from a standard set of measures agreed upon by consensus from specialists in the field would be an effective tool for informing primary care providers and assessing these changes.

Methods: *Part 1 - Literature Review*: A comprehensive literature review was carried out using major online databases. *Part 2 - Survey:* A 23 question survey was sent out to members of the Alzheimer's disease Professional Interest Area. The survey responses were then analyzed to determine which testing modalities were used by 30% or more of the clinicians who participated in the survey.

Results. *Part 1 - Literature Review*: The review yielded 30 unique and relevant publications on the topic. *Part 2 - Survey:* Of the survey responders, 39 were clinicians. There were 23 "most-used" testing tools for 9 most tested PCA features.

Conclusion. This project attempted to organize the existing literature into a more streamlined product aimed at primary care providers. The survey portion of the paper illustrated that, although no clear consensus was identified, there is a preference for some tools over others, providing a starting point to create and distribute comprehensive materials that clinicians around the world can use to standardize their diagnostic screening of patients with suspected PCA.