

We declare no competing interests.

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Assessing the French Alzheimer plan

Assessment of funding use and scientific academic output is crucial to provide an objective basis to formulate further research strategies at regional, national, and international level.

The 2008–12 French Alzheimer plan had three major objectives: to understand, to cure, and to care.¹ For this plan, €115.1 million of public funds were used. €27.6 million were provided by the Ministry of Health and the French National Research Agency to 58 clinical research projects, €31.2 million were provided from the French National Research Agency to 58 basic or technological research projects, and €56.3 million were provided by the Alzheimer Foundation Plan. The Alzheimer Foundation Plan had a coordinating role and launched different types of initiatives: calls for

research projects in social sciences, experimental models and imaging (€8.5 million); education and training facilities (€18.8 million); and national infrastructure (€29 million), mainly in genetics, through the European Alzheimer's Disease Initiative,² cohort studies (the Three Cities and MEMENTO cohorts); and a research neuroimaging platform. The Ministry of Health added €3 million to support the Centres for Early-Onset Alzheimer Disease (in Rouen, Lille, and Paris). This national network recruited 225 families who met the criteria of one confirmed case of Alzheimer disease in the family with early onset (before 65 years old).³ The Ministry of Health also provided €17.4 million to support the National Alzheimer Data Bank, based in Nice, which by 2012 had collected standardised information on 403 458 consultations nationwide.⁴

In an attempt to assess measures impact, we did a bibliometric evaluation of the potential effect of the plan on scientific research, 1 year after its end, in 2013. We searched the Web of Science Core Collection for articles on Alzheimer's disease (Alzheimer in the title, abstract, or keywords), identified the top 10% most-cited original articles in the field worldwide, and analysed the contribution of France and 13 other countries on publications on Alzheimer's disease (appendix).

Between 2007 and 2012, the number of articles in the top most-cited articles increased from 726 to 1117—a 54% increase—globally. The largest participation in the top 10% came from authors in the USA (71%), the UK (17%), and Germany (15%). The participation of French authors in the top 10% most-cited articles increased from 4.8% to 8.4% (a 75% increase)—third largest increase after China (208%) and Spain (188% increase).

We also assessed, through a MeSH query, original articles about dementia in the Système d'Interrogation, de Gestion et d'Analyse des Publications Scientifiques (SIGAPS), which collects all French university hospital

publications from PubMed. Between two 5 year periods, 2003–07 and 2008–12, the proportion of articles attributed to a French university hospital decreased by 6% (from 2.18% to 2.04%), whereas the proportion of articles on dementia increased by 10% (from 3.53% to 3.89%).

Whether or not there is a direct relation between national funding and scientific output on Alzheimer's disease requires further analysis and follow-up. Monitoring and benchmarking of production of original articles will help to assess the effect of international collaboration encouraged by the 2013 London G8 Dementia Summit.⁵

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The Blackfriars Consensus on brain health and dementia

Dementia prevalence has remained stable despite ageing of the population because of a reduction in prevalence in the age group in which most dementia



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See Online for appendix



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Supplementary appendix

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Table: Publications of original articles on Alzheimer disease by country, for 2007 and 2012

	2007			2012			Change in share of top 10% most-cited (%)
	Articles (n)	Top 10% most-cited articles (n)	Proportion in top 10% most-cited articles (%)	Articles (n)	Top 10% most-cited articles (n)	Proportion in top 10% most-cited articles (%)	
USA	3076	511	70.4	4110	793	71.0	0.9
UK	686	101	13.9	1034	190	17.0	22.3
Germany	586	85	11.7	912	170	15.2	30.0
Japan	529	39	5.4	711	77	6.9	28.3
Italy	495	51	7.0	690	105	9.4	33.8
Canada	470	59	8.1	601	105	9.4	15.7
France	329	35	4.8	562	94	8.4	74.6
China	306	23	3.2	1139	109	9.8	208.0
Sweden	255	45	6.2	401	71	6.4	2.5
Netherlands	249	37	5.1	423	87	7.8	52.8
Spain	248	16	2.2	528	71	6.4	188.4
Australia	241	37	5.1	485	58	5.2	1.9
South Korea	185	13	1.8	406	34	3.0	70.0
Switzerland	153	26	3.6	243	59	5.3	47.5
World	7265	726	10	11176	1117	10	

The top 10% most-cited articles on Alzheimer disease were identified by searching the Web of Science Core Collection for articles with 'Alzheimer' in the title, abstract or key words. Each article was assigned in full to each of the countries listed in the authors' addresses.