

# Incidence of dementia in primary care increased in the Netherlands over 23 years

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The incidence of registered dementia cases has increased slightly over a 23-year period (1992 to 2014) in the Netherlands, according to a study published by Emma van Bussel and colleagues from the Academic

Medical Center Amsterdam, The Netherlands, in *PLOS Medicine's* Special Issue on Dementia.

The researchers collected data on [dementia](#) diagnoses for persons aged 60 years and over from general practitioner networks for the years 1992 to 2014, including data on more than 800,000 [older people](#) and 23,186 incident dementia cases. They estimate that the annual growth in dementia incidence rate is 2.1% (95% CI 0.5% to 3.8%), with incidence rates 1.08 (95% CI 1.04 to 1.13) times higher for women compared to men. The authors say that increased awareness of dementia by patients and doctors in more recent years may have influenced [dementia diagnosis](#) by general practitioners in [electronic health records](#), and needs to be taken into account when interpreting the data.

In a linked Perspective, Eric Larson discusses the findings in light of previous cohort studies that have reported a recent decline in dementia incidence rates and highlights that studies on the incidence and prevalence of dementia can provide insights into possible strategies to control dementia.

He says: "We must plan for increasing numbers of predominantly older people with dementia in the decades to come including addressing the growing need for long-term care in the context of a significant decline in the availability of family caregivers."

**More information:** Emma F. van Bussel et al, Dementia incidence trend over 1992-2014 in the Netherlands: Analysis of primary care data, *PLOS Medicine* (2017). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1002235](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002235)

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