



J. Wesson Ashford, M.D., Ph.D. graduated from the University of California, Berkeley in 1970. At UCLA (1970 – 1985) he attained an M.D. (1974) and Ph.D. (1984). His Ph.D. dissertation was a finalist for the Lindsley Prize, for the best in Behavioral Neuroscience for the Society for Neuroscience, in 1984. At UCLA, Dr. Ashford trained in psychiatry (1975 - 1979) and was the first Chief Resident and Associate Director (1978 - 1980) on the Geriatric Psychiatry In-Patient Unit. In 1978 he conducted the first double-blind study of an anti-cholinesterase drug (physostigmine) to treat Alzheimer patients (published in 1981), a therapy which is now standard treatment for Alzheimer patients. Between 1980 and 1985, Dr. Ashford directed the Geriatric Psychiatry Out-patient Clinic at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute and was an initiator of the UCLA/Alzheimer PET scan study. He subsequently served as an assistant professor, associate professor, and researcher at Alzheimer Centers at Southern Illinois University, the University of California, Davis, and the University of Kentucky, where he was also vice-chair for research in psychiatry.

Dr. Ashford's works in Alzheimer's disease and neuroscience have led to water-shed observations regarding the neuroplastic memory mechanisms of the brain that are specifically affected by Alzheimer pathology as well as to pinpointing where Alzheimer's disease disrupts memory. He has also been a pioneer in approaches to evaluating and screening for memory problems, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease.

Currently, Dr. Ashford is a Senior Research Scientist at the Stanford / VA Aging Clinical Research Center and the Director of the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center the VA Palo Alto Health Care System and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University (affiliated). He is Chair of the Memory Screening Advisory Board of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, Clinical Editor of the Journal of Alzheimer's disease, and a member of the Medical Scientific Advisory Council for the Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

Dr. Ashford has been the primary developer of a computerized memory game that is useful as a screening test for memory problems, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease:

The free MemTrax memory test is at. [www.Memtrax.com](http://www.Memtrax.com)

The Alzheimer's Global Initiative is: [www.alzgloblinitiative.com](http://www.alzgloblinitiative.com)

Dr. Ashford's website is: [www.medafile.com](http://www.medafile.com)

**Presentation title:** The World-Wide Problem of Recognizing Neurocognitive Disorder (DMS-V), dementia, and Alzheimer’s Disease – The Way Forward with MemTrax.com and the Alzheimer’s Global Initiative

**Abstract:**

Neurocognitive disorder (NCD), as recently defined by DSM-V (the Fifth Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, 2013), which includes dementia, is caused by a wide variety of conditions, most commonly Alzheimer’s disease, that affect the brain, particularly memory mechanisms. The incidence of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease doubles with every 5 years of age, accumulating to affect approximately 15% of the population over the age of 60 years old. As life expectancy increases globally, the number of individuals living with dementia is rapidly increasing worldwide. There are many psychosocial justifications for early recognition of NCD. It is difficult to detect conditions which will cause dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease, when the problem is “mild NCD”, which includes impairment of thinking, particularly memory, but there is no loss of independence in daily function. In the United States, the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America instituted National Memory Screening Day, recommending standard paper and pencil tests to help identify individuals with early signs of dementia. To improve the efficiency and precision of memory testing, MemTrax.com was developed for the World Wide Web, employing internet technology and the latest advances in memory research to recognize early NCD as well as decrease the discomfort and anxiety associated with mental testing. The Alzheimer’s Global Initiative (AGI) has the vision of bringing the growing worldwide Alzheimer’s crisis to the attention of government leaders and health policy makers as part of an effort to significantly reduce the global burden of Alzheimer’s disease. As part of that effort, AGI is seeking to increase the awareness of memory problems and recommends that the MemTrax test be taken at least monthly by individuals over 65 years of age or at increased risk for developing dementia. As individuals take responsibility for monitoring their own cognitive function and improving their own health, there can be a substantial improvement in the international awareness of NCDs and encouragement of nations to work together to prevent the severe diseases which cause NCD and affect the elderly so disastrously.

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