Convincing the public that time really does matter in brain health

Professor Philip Scheltens

Alzheimer Center Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Medical Centers, Amsterdam, Netherlands

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Additional authors

- **Dr Alastair Noyce,** Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, Queen Mary University of London, London, UK
- **Professor Gavin Giovannoni**, Blizard Institute and Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, Queen Mary University of London, and Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, London, UK
- **Professor Daniela Berg**, Department of Neurology, Christian-Albrechts University of Kiel, Kiel, Germany
- **Professor Laurie Brown**, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra, Canberra, Australia
- **Professor Kris Dierickx**, Centre for Biomedical Ethics and Law, Catholic University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium
- **Professor Giovanni Frisoni**, Centre de la Mémoire, University Hospitals and University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
- **Professor John Hardy**, Department of Neurodegenerative Diseases, University College London, London, UK
- **Dr Karl Heilbron**, 23andMe, Inc., Sunnyvale, CA, USA

Why does time matter?

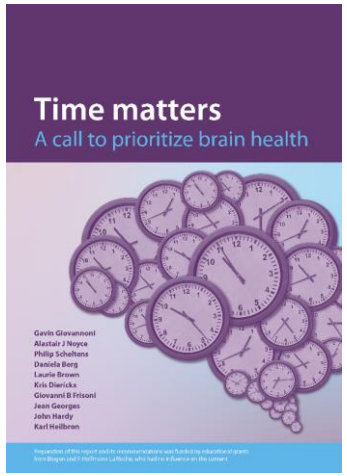
Public awareness
To maximize the potential for early intervention, the general public needs to understand the modifiable risk factors that can affect their brain health

Diagnostic development
Biomarkers in development will help to diagnose the underlying cause of dementia early

Window of opportunity
Adjustment of modifiable lifestyle factors in early- to midlife can significantly help to reduce the risk of developing a neurodegenerative disease

Time matters – report development

An expert group developed **evidence-based recommendations** and a **call to action** encouraging positive behaviour change and policies to promote brain health, working towards the prevention of neurodegenerative diseases



- Health promotion
- Clinical
- Research

Health promotion recommendations

- Policymakers and public health bodies should act on the recommendations:
  - Protect and provide public health budgets
  - Encourage behaviour to improve brain health
  - Support and empower individuals to make lifestyle changes
  - Prepare for (commercial) genetic testing
  - Provide access to available and effective treatments

"What's good for your heart is good for your brain"

Clinical recommendations

- Healthcare professionals and administrators play a key role in the management of people with, or at risk of, a neurodegenerative disease and should act on the two clinical recommendations:
  - Refer to specialist or multidisciplinary services
  - Provide follow-up with ongoing, widely accessible holistic care, including prevention information, treatment options and support

Research recommendations

- Researchers and organizations that fund scientific research, as well as healthcare decision makers should act on the recommendations:
  - Develop treatments for neurodegenerative diseases
  - Validate diagnostic tools to identify people at risk
  - Facilitate earlier disease detection and intervention
  - Additional funding is needed to deliver key research recommendations

- Priority research goals include:
  - Identifying the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions to promote brain health
  - Understanding how people with risk factors for a neurodegenerative disease may be motivated to change their behaviour
  - Assessing the relative weight of different risk factors and their interactions

Society needs to understand and talk more about brain health

- There is a window of opportunity for healthcare intervention!
- But public understanding is generally poor
- Health systems are not yet equipped to manage the large numbers of people who are potentially at high risk of long-term neurodegenerative conditions
- The general public needs to understand risk factors and what can be done to maintain brain health

Dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing

What does the general public need to know about risk factors for neurodegenerative diseases?

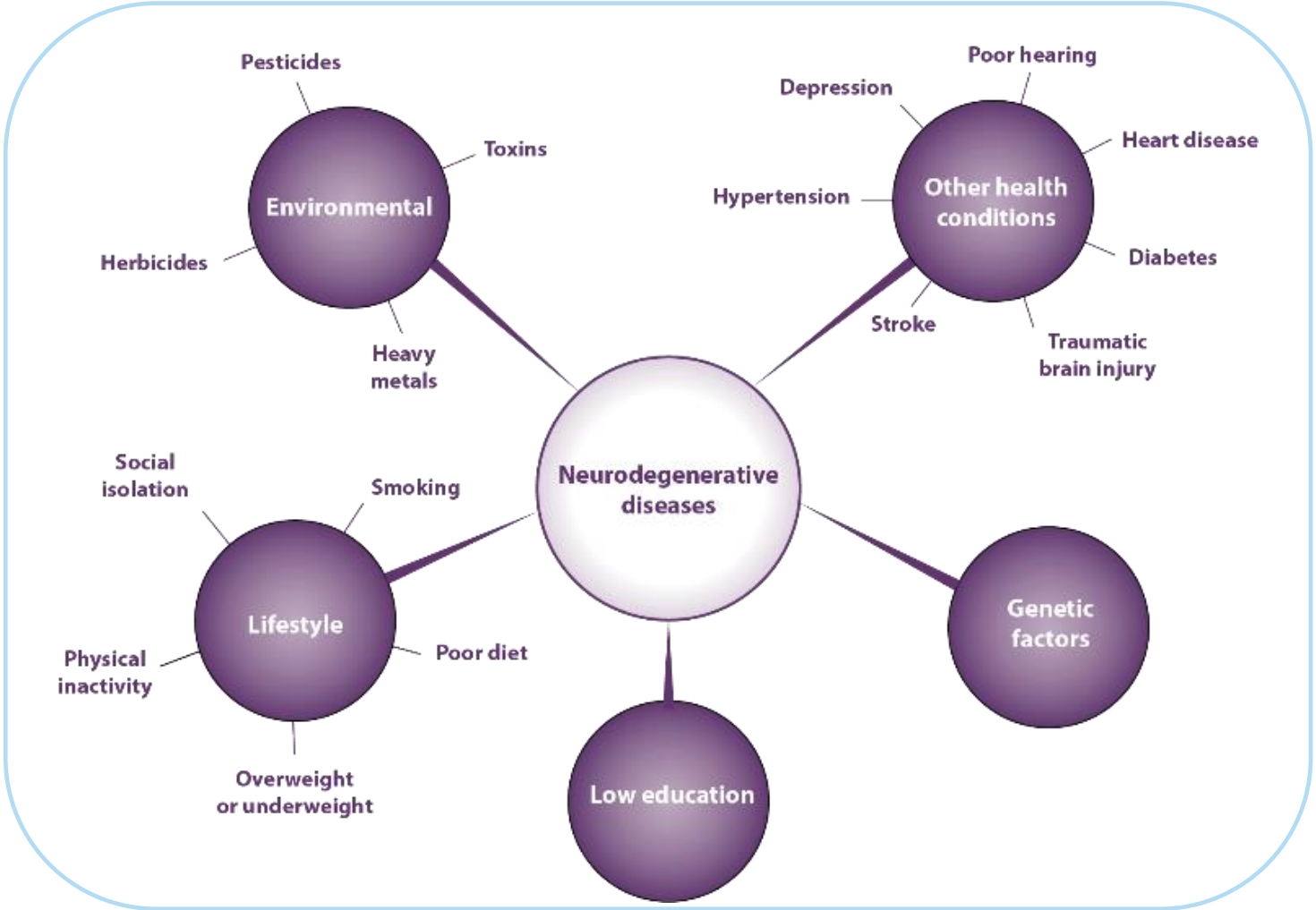
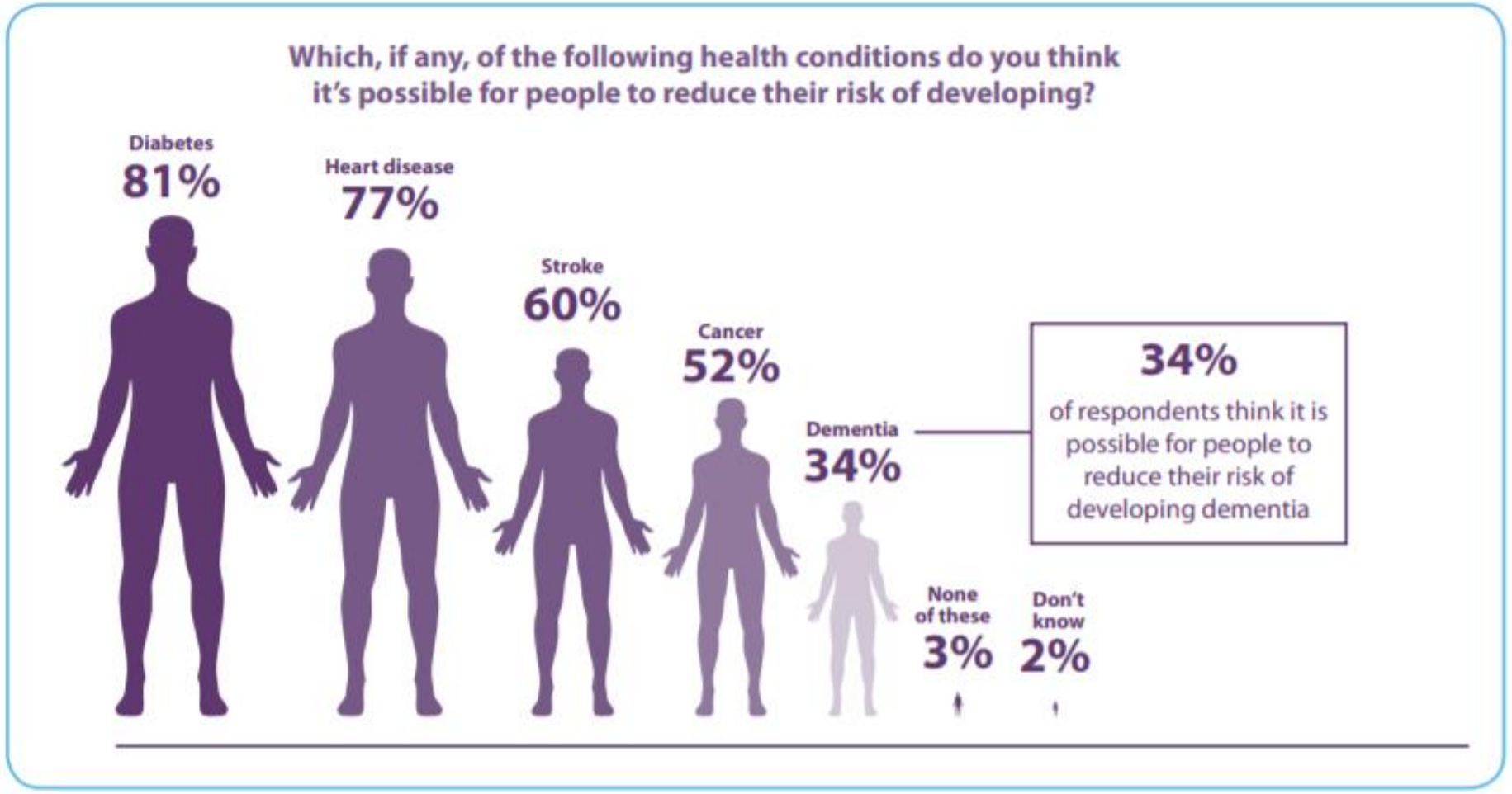


Image taken from *Time matters: a call to prioritize brain health.* Giovanonni G *et al* .2019

Current perceptions of risk reduction



Modified with permission from Alzheimer's Research UK. Alzheimer's Research UK. Dementia Attitudes Monitor - Wave 1 Report 2018. 2019. Available from: https://www.dementiastatistics.org/wp-content/ uploads/2019/02/Dementia-Attitudes-Monitor-Wave-1- Report.pdf

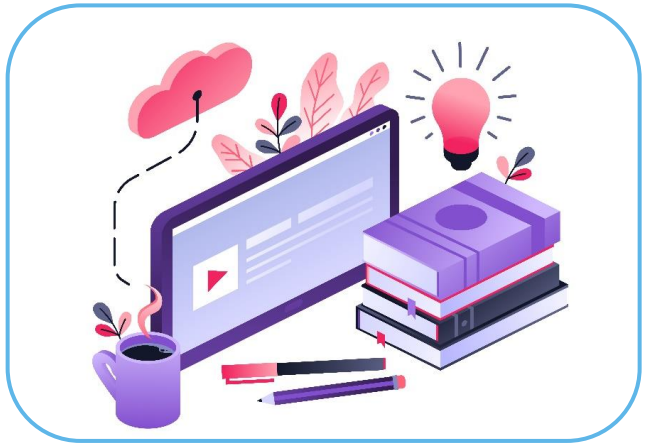
Communicating risk

- More and more individuals are keen to know their risk of brain disease
- Genetic testing is available on a commercial basis
- How best to communicate to individuals the potentially complex results of genetic tests needs to be studied
- Appropriate training for this is needed to help them encourage behavioural changes that reduce individual risk of brain disease

Conclusions

A collaborative effort is needed to achieve our common goals

Behaviour change
The report highlights the need for everyone to prioritize their brain health and to implement behaviours that reduce the risks as they age



Education
Policymakers, public health bodies and health professionals must educate and empower the public

Research
Further work is needed to validate diagnostic tools to identify people at risk and develop effective treatments

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