Dementia / Delirium Combined Pathway and Care Bundle for Emergency Department and Acute Medical Assessment Unit

(Follows assessment for delirium using 4AT rapid assessment tool at earliest point of contact- see reverse side)

**Known Diagnosis of Dementia**
- Don’t assume acute presentation is due to dementia.
- Assess for delirium or other acute illness.

**4AT Score 1-3: Cognitive Vulnerability**
- Also Possible Dementia – but many people with 4AT 1-3 don’t have dementia.
- Don’t label patient: need collateral history. (Note: 4AT is a screening tool only).

**4AT Score 4: Probable Delirium and possibly Dementia also**
- **Most delirium occurs in a person with dementia or other cognitive vulnerability**
  (dementia may be mild or not yet diagnosed)

**Inform ED staff / Registrar**
- Inform CNS Dementia, Frailty team, MDT as appropriate/available

**Decision made to Discharge or Admit Patient is made by ED team**

**Discharge:**
- Letter to GP to include:
  - Details of abnormal 4AT result.
  - Need for follow-up as indicated (e.g. with GP or memory assessment service)

**Admission:**
- CNM2 (Shift Leader) informs Bed Manager re. high priority for bed.
- Reassess for delirium using 4AT if any acute change in alertness, cognition, function; or psychosis.

**Dementia / Delirium Care Bundle:**
1. Carer involvement (know the person).
2. Individualized communication.
3. Assess pain.
4. Support nutrition and hydration.
5. Keep environment as calm as possible; use dementia-friendly cubicle or side room if available.

**Note:** Care pathways cannot cover all clinical scenarios. Ultimate responsibility for the interpretation and application of this algorithm and pathway, the use of current information and a patient’s overall care and wellbeing resides with the treating clinician.

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**National guidance document** to support this algorithm and pathway, and more resources for acute hospital delirium/dementia care in Ireland:
- [https://dementiapathways.ie/care-pathways](https://dementiapathways.ie/care-pathways)
- [Sepsis Pathway Link: https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/sepsis/resources/](https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/sepsis/resources/)