

Risperidone

Olanzapine

Quetiapine

Haloperidol

This resource is provided by Choice Aged Care, an external clinical pharmacist organisation. The information is designed to support informed decision making by a resident (or representative) for the treatment of dementia related behaviours. It may accompany a formal written consent to commence or continue therapy.

### WHAT DOES THIS DRUG DO ?

Dopamine (a chemical messenger in the brain) is responsible for hallucinations, delusions, psychosis and some behavioural symptoms.

This drug is an antipsychotic and the therapeutic effect works by blocking dopamine.



### WHEN IS IT NEEDED ?

Residents with dementia may exhibit BPSD (Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia). This medication may help to manage some of the more severe symptoms of BPSD such as delusions, paranoia, hallucinations and physical aggression.

Occasionally, less severe symptoms of BPSD (e.g. verbal aggression, calling, agitation, restlessness, sexual disinhibition, social inappropriateness, wandering etc) may still require therapy, especially if the issue is causing distress or a risk of harm to the resident or others.

### WHAT ARE SOME ADVERSE EFFECTS ?

Due to the drug's effect on dopamine, extrapyramidal side effects / parkinsonism (e.g. tremor, rigidity, stooped posture, shuffling gait) can occur in the elderly.

Other adverse effects may include:

- ❖ Sedation or tiredness
- ❖ Anxiety and agitation
- ❖ Falls
- ❖ Weight gain

Antipsychotic use in dementia has also been associated with an increased risk of stroke.

### QUALITY USE OF MEDICINES

The resident's health care team is committed to the principles of 'QUM' for this treatment:



#### JUDICIOUSLY

- ✓ Non-drug approaches including care based approaches have been trialled and continue to be maximised.
- ✓ Medical causes have been investigated and treated e.g. UTIs, constipation, pain, depression, dehydration...

#### APPROPRIATELY

- ✓ Trial dose reductions may be attempted to ensure that the lowest effective dose is being used.
- ✓ The most appropriate antipsychotic option has been selected.

#### SAFELY

- ✓ Frequent monitoring for adverse effects are conducted.

#### EFFECTIVELY

- ✓ Regular assessment is attended to ensure therapy is managing symptoms.

