

Dementia diagnostic panel, 4/13:87

Quest Diagnostics offers a clinical test panel for aiding the diagnosis of suspected dementia due to treatable forms of cognitive impairment. The panel is believed to be the first commercial service from a clinical laboratory to combine several guideline-recommended tests for identifying secondary, treatable causes of dementia as a single blood test and report.

The new panel of tests is modeled on recommendations of the American Academy of Neurology, the American Geriatrics Association, a National Institutes of Health Consensus Panel, and the European Federation of Neurological Societies.

“The evaluation of suspected dementia is a significant medical challenge because many different conditions, from low TSH levels to diabetes, can cause cognitive impairment,” Joseph J. Higgins, MD, medical director of Quest Diagnostics Neurology and Athena Diagnostics, said in a statement. “Our new test panel provides a standard laboratory evaluation to rule out confounders of memory or reversible causes of memory loss. Test results are useful in excluding comorbidities and revealing potential risk factors, origin of confusional states, and, sometimes, in identifying the primary cause of dementia.”

Dementia experts at Athena Diagnostics, which Quest acquired in 2011, helped to define the panel’s tests and report requirements, while Quest Diagnostics’ experts developed and introduced the comprehensive offering at clinical laboratories where the individual tests are performed.

Quest Diagnostics, 800-445-0185