

Development of a Screening Tool for Identification of Vestibular Problems

Vestibular Interdisciplinary Working Group (VIWG)

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INTRODUCTION

- Problems with the vestibular system can often be missed in initial needs assessments and throughout a person's rehabilitation journey.
- Often the person is unaware there is a problem, and therefore they may not raise it during assessments.
- Clinical experience indicates that there is limited understanding of how vestibular dysfunction can impact on a person functionally. This can lead to misdiagnosis.
- Currently, there is limited and inconsistent screening for vestibular problems during routine clinical or case management initial assessments.
- There are various published vestibular screening protocols involving physical assessments ^{1,2}, but they do not consider the wider functional impact and the wide range of symptoms a person may experience.
- Further research is needed to develop a complete, valid, and reliable evidence-based screening battery for clinical use.
- The aim of this project is to help address some of the above identified gaps in the screening process which can be used for INA assessments.

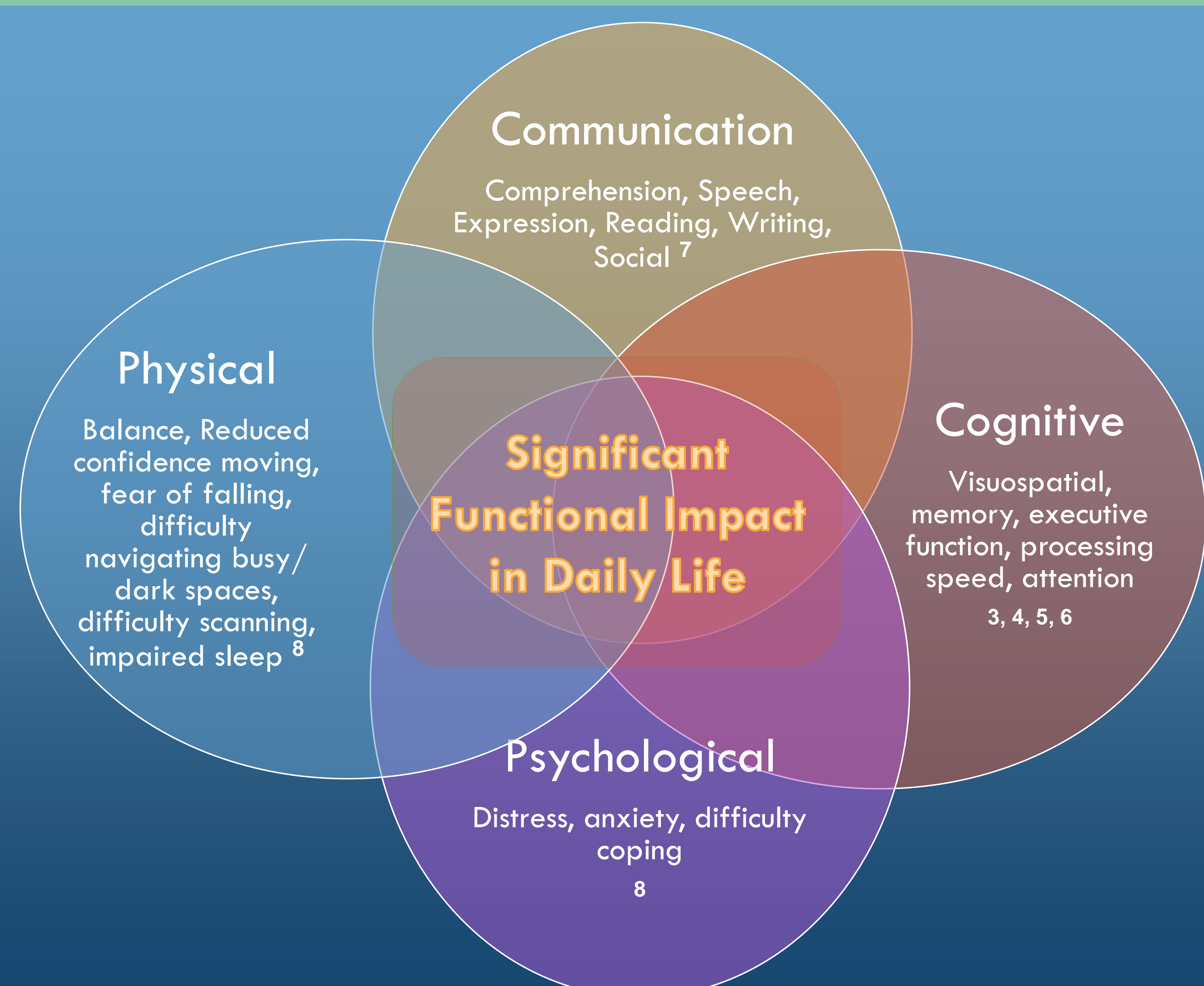
The Vestibular Interdisciplinary Working Group (VIWG): An Inter-disciplinary Approach

- The Vestibular Interdisciplinary Working Group (VIWG) formed organically and includes many different disciplines working together to investigate, research and provide resources for professionals working with people who have a vestibular disorder.
- The group has in excess of 25 professionals from the fields of audiovestibular medicine, behavioural optometry, case management, clinical and neuro psychology, music therapy, neurology, occupational therapy, personal training, physiotherapy, social work and speech and language therapy

THE VESTIBULAR SYSTEM

- Neuroanatomically and functionally divided into peripheral and central systems
- Helps the body maintain balance, posture and spatial orientation.
- **Peripheral system:**
 - Located in the inner ear and has two main components: the body and membranous labyrinths.
 - Also includes the vestibular portion of the vestibulocochlear nerve.
- **Central vestibular system:**
 - A complex network of neural structures located in the brainstem, cerebellum, and cerebral cortex
 - Responsible for processing and integrating sensory information related to cognition, memory, balance, posture, and spatial orientation.

VESTIBULAR DYSFUNCTION: How it can present → focus for rehabilitation



BENEFITS OF A SCREENING TOOL

- IDENTIFY people with vestibular problems who previously may not have been recognised.
- Provide SUPPORT and REHABILITATION for people with vestibular problems, supporting the REFERRAL process.
- More EFFICIENT use of resources – people see the most appropriate clinician at the appropriate time.
- EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT for clinicians working frontline with people who have vestibular problems – more than “dizziness”.
- Quantify a person's experience and symptoms, providing EVIDENCE for rehabilitation/support needs, as well as the litigation process.

PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

- Each discipline met to agree how a vestibular disorder manifests within their work, along with how they may contribute to interdisciplinary vestibular rehabilitation.
- Clear themes emerged demonstrating how vestibular disorders pervaded through a person's overall functioning, with significant overlap (See above)
- Through discussion, it became clear that often the vestibular disorder was missed, particularly considering the multi-symptom nature of a person's presentation.
- The group is currently considering how the screening tool will be designed.
- Planning focus groups of clients: people with vestibular disorders as well as as case managers to provide feedback on the tool.

WHAT WOULD HELP YOU AS A CASE MANAGER IN IDENTIFYING PEOPLE WITH VESTIBULAR DYSFUNCTION?

INTERESTED TO KNOW MORE?

We would welcome your feedback and views to help us make this tool as useful to you and our clients as possible.

- If you are interested in giving feedback, being a part of the development or a focus group, please contact Sandy LeBlanc – sandy@neurorehabworks.co.uk

- Have a look at our website <https://www.viwig.co.uk>
- Scan QR Code for details of authors on VIWG website



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