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BRAIN IMAGING IN CLINICAL PSYCHIATRY: WHY?

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Aims: To explore clinical indications for, and results of, brain imaging in a department of general adult psychiatry.

Method: We reviewed the 100 most recent episodes of brain imaging at the Department of General Adult Psychiatry, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin.

Results: Patients had a mean age of 55.30 years. The most common indications for scans were cognitive impairment (33%) and other neurological concerns (e.g. seizures) (30%). Forty-seven per cent of scans were abnormal. The most common abnormalities were ischaemia (17%) and atrophy (10%). Patients with abnormal scans were older than those with normal scans (61.90 and 48.70 years, respectively; $p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: Brain imaging contributes significantly to diagnosis in general adult psychiatry, especially for older patients.