

Kuwait

Research conducted in

Kuwait manages Alzheimer's disease through its publicly funded healthcare system, which covers diagnostic assessments and medications for citizens. Following the expiration of funding for its National Dementia Plan (2017–2020), the country currently operates without a dedicated network of memory clinics. Instead, specialised care is delivered through general neurology and geriatric departments at tertiary centers like Ibn Sina Hospital. Because state allowances are tied to general disability rather than dementia, family members bear heavy caregiving challenges. To bridge this gap, non-governmental organisations like the Women's Cultural and Social Society provide essential caregiver training and support groups. Meanwhile, local researchers at Kuwait University are advancing the understanding of regional disease risks by studying population-specific genetics, including APOE variants.

Highlights

Health system **Universal, Government-Funded (Mixed Provision)**

ADI member association(s):

National dementia plan: **National Dementia Plan**

Dementia plan funding: **Inadequately funded plan**

Dementia prevalence rate: **347**

Dementia incidence rate: **61**

Population: **5131276**

Median age: **35**

Health expenditure (% of GDP): **4**

Diagnosis

Kuwait has no Alzheimer's-specific diagnostic protocol, with patients following general Ministry of Health pathways from primary care to hospital specialists. Assessment includes clinical history, cognitive examination, blood tests, and selected neuroimaging. MMSE is commonly used, although Kuwait-specific validation is lacking. CT and MRI are accessible, while Alzheimer's-specific PET use remains limited. Genetic sequencing and CSF analysis are available nationally, but routine testing for Alzheimer's-associated genes, amyloid, or tau biomarkers is undocumented. Diagnostic services are predominantly government-funded for Kuwaiti citizens. No reliable national data are available on waiting times for diagnosis, cognitive assessment, imaging, or other dementia investigations.

Diagnosis pathway

Kuwait's public healthcare system follows a defined referral pathway from primary health centres to hospital-based specialist outpatient services and, where necessary, to specialised hospitals, although no Alzheimer's-specific diagnostic protocol or national memory-clinic pathway has been identified. Diagnostic assessment includes clinical and psychiatric history, physical and mental-state examination and cognitive assessment. Additional investigations may include blood tests, EEG and structural or functional neuroimaging, including CT, MRI and SPECT, depending on clinical need.

Kuwait does not have an Alzheimer's disease-specific diagnostic protocol. However, there is a formal Ministry of Health referral and outpatient policy that establishes how patients move from primary care to hospital specialist services. Within the public system, a patient requiring specialist assessment is referred from a primary health centre to the relevant outpatient clinic at a public hospital. If a more specialised service is required, the patient can subsequently be transferred from the general hospital to a specialised hospital. This means that the usual pathway for a person presenting with memory or cognitive problems can be characterised as primary health centre to hospital specialist outpatient clinic and then to further specialised assessment if required, rather than direct access to a national Alzheimer's disease memory clinic.

The diagnostic assessment includes medical and psychiatric history, physical examination, mental-state assessment and cognitive examination. Further investigations can include blood tests and, where clinically indicated, electroencephalogram (EEG) and structural or functional neuroimaging such as computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or single-photon emission computerised tomography (SPECT) as necessary.

References

- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgoenglish/Pages/Services/MOH/ReviewPatientForienClinicsPublicHospitals.aspx>
- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgoenglish/Pages/Services/MOH/ReviewPatientExternalClinicsSpecialistHospitals.aspx>
- <https://hsclibrary.ku.edu.kw/library/psychiatry/disorders/index.asp?page=asesse>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11995643>

Wait times

No reliable national data appear to be publicly available on the actual average waiting time from first presentation with memory symptoms to a confirmed Alzheimer's disease diagnosis, nor on separate waiting times for cognitive testing, neuropsychological assessment, neuroimaging, or other dementia investigations.

Diagnosis cost

Status: Mostly or fully covered

Alzheimer's diagnosis in Kuwait's public healthcare system is largely government-funded. Kuwaiti citizens generally receive primary and specialist services through the eMoH free of charge or at minimal cost, covering the initial assessment, specialist consultations, and investigations required within the public pathway.

Kuwaiti citizens generally receive healthcare, including primary-care and specialist services, through the Ministry of Health (MoH) at no charge or with only minimal charges. Consequently, the clinical pathway for diagnosing Alzheimer's disease — initial assessment, referral to specialists such as neurologists or psychiatrists, and investigations ordered within the public system — is predominantly government-funded rather than paid for by the patient's family.

References

- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/Services/MOH/ReviewPatientForienClinicsPublicHospitals.aspx>
- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/Services/MOH/ReviewPatientExternalClinicsSpecialistHospitals.aspx>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5588520>

Cognitive tests

Status: Available

The Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) appears to be one of the principal cognitive tests used in Kuwait. A study conducted at Ibn Sina Hospital, Kuwait's main tertiary neurology centre, used MMSE longitudinally in people living with mild cognitive impairment and dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. A survey of healthcare professionals in Kuwait similarly found that MMSE was the most commonly used cognitive assessment (41%), while the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) and Loewenstein Occupational Therapy Cognitive Assessment (LOTCA) were each reported by 15.2% of respondents. Arabic versions are available, but Kuwait-specific validation is a significant limitation. A 2025 study of 253 adults aged ≥ 60 attending a geriatric outpatient unit in Kuwait used the validated Arabic MMSE, but the researchers explicitly stated that there was no local validation of the MMSE for Kuwait.

References

- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11995643>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7995295>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26853687/>

Imaging tests

Status: Used in specific cases

Computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) are available and accessible in Kuwait, particularly through secondary and tertiary hospitals. Kuwait University clinical guidance describes CT and MRI among the investigations used when assessing dementia, while CT is specifically described as useful for identifying cerebral atrophy and excluding alternative causes such as tumours or haemorrhage. In practice, patients evaluated for suspected Alzheimer's disease at specialist neurology services such as Ibn Sina Hospital can therefore undergo structural neuroimaging as part of the diagnostic work-up.

Positron emission tomography (PET) technology is available in Kuwait, but evidence for routine Alzheimer's disease-specific PET is much weaker. PET facilities in Kuwait primarily serve nuclear medicine and oncology applications.

References

- <https://hsclibrary.ku.edu.kw/library/psychiatry/disorders/index.asp?page=asess>
- <https://kuwaittimes.com/article/21803/kuwait/other-news/jahra-farwaniya-hospitals-to-provide-mri-pet-imaging/>

Genetic tests

The Kuwait Medical Genetic Center (KMGC) provides clinical genetic diagnosis and counselling through daily outpatient clinics at the centre and weekly clinics in district hospitals. Its molecular laboratory performs polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and sequencing, while its advanced laboratory provides next-generation sequencing (NGS), a neurology panel and whole-exome sequencing. Importantly, NGS that previously required samples to be sent abroad can now be performed within Kuwait.

However, the publicly available KMGC test information does not specifically identify APOE, APP, PSEN1 or PSEN2 testing for Alzheimer's disease among its routinely offered tests.

References

- <https://www.kmgc.gov.kw/ar/services/laboratory/laboratory-services>
- <https://kmgc.gov.kw/en/about-us/clinical-service/>

Biomarker tests

Status: Used in specific cases

Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) sampling and laboratory analysis are available within Kuwait's healthcare system; Kuwait Ministry of Health guidance documents the collection, handling and laboratory transport of CSF specimens. However, no publicly available evidence was identified confirming that Alzheimer's disease-specific CSF biomarkers, including Aβ42/Aβ40, total tau and phosphorylated tau, are routinely offered for clinical diagnosis in Kuwait.

References

- <https://www.moh.gov.kw/UserRefs/PublicHealth/NiphaVirus.pdf>

Treatment & care

Specialist Alzheimer's care in Kuwait is integrated into broader geriatric, neurology, and psychiatry services rather than dedicated memory centres. General day programmes and home-care services support older adults, but specialised dementia community provision remains limited. Although Kuwait has a dedicated Palliative Care Center, specialist services currently serve oncology patients only, leaving people with advanced dementia dependent on general and family care. Public Alzheimer's treatment and eligible medicines are predominantly government-funded for Kuwaiti citizens. Caregivers receive no Alzheimer's-specific allowance or dementia respite entitlement, but disability-based schemes provide financial benefits, employment and retirement protections, and patient-companion leave where eligibility requirements are met. Access depends on officially assessed disability severity rather than diagnosis alone.

Specialized facilities and services

Kuwait provides dementia care through geriatric, neurological, and psychiatric services but has no nationwide network of dedicated memory clinics or Alzheimer's centres. Some hospital units offer cognitive assessment and dementia management within broader specialist care. Day programmes, licensed home-care centres, and private dementia nursing are available, although provision is generally not dementia-specific, and specialised community services remain limited. Kuwait has a dedicated Palliative Care Center, but specialist palliative services currently serve oncology patients only because of staffing and facility constraints. Consequently, people with advanced dementia generally rely on treating hospitals, general medical services, home-based support, and family care for palliative and end-of-life management rather than a dedicated dementia pathway.

Kuwait has specialist geriatric, neurological and psychiatric services that can assess and manage dementia, but there is no nationwide network of dedicated memory clinics or Alzheimer's disease centres. Some hospital geriatric services explicitly provide memory and cognitive assessment and management of dementia and Alzheimer's disease; for example, Dar Al-Shifa Hospital's Geriatric Unit offers comprehensive geriatric and cognitive assessment. Overall, dementia care appears to be delivered mainly within broader specialist medical services rather than through stand-alone Alzheimer's disease centres, with specialist provision concentrated in Kuwait's main hospital system.

Kuwait has formal services for older people, including day care and home-based care, but these are generally not dementia-specific. The government's Elderly Club provides daytime health, social, psychological and recreational services for Kuwaitis aged 65+, with the documented Al-Bir and Al-Barakah club located in Farwaniya. The Ministry of Health also licenses home-care centres to provide healthcare to older people and people living with disabilities in their residences, and private providers offer dementia home nursing. Therefore, home care is available, but there is no evidence of a geographically distributed network of specialised Alzheimer's disease day centres, memory cafés or dementia-specific community centres.

Kuwait has a dedicated Palliative Care Center, established within the Ministry of Health system in 2011, but access is currently much more restricted for dementia than its physical capacity might suggest. The Ministry of Health's

2025 adult terminal-illness policy explicitly states that palliative-care principles apply to both malignant and non-malignant diseases, but that because of shortages of specialised staff and facilities, the specialist palliative medicine team is currently able to provide its services only to oncology. Thus, although advanced Alzheimer's disease could appropriately require palliative care, people living with dementia do not currently have routine access to Kuwait's specialist palliative-care service and would generally depend on their treating hospital, general medical services and home/family care for end-of-life management.

Approved medication

Generic Name	Trade Name	Used for
Donepezil	Aricept, Aricept ODT, Adlarity, Eranz, Memac, Alzepil, Davia, Donecept, Donep, Donepex, Donesyn, Dopezil, Yasnal, Memorit, Pezale, Redumas, Zolpezil, Namzaric*	Donepezil is indicated for the symptomatic treatment of mild to moderately severe Alzheimer's dementia. Official UK medicine details (MHRA SPC) link
Memantine	Namenda, Namenda XR, Ebixa, Memaury, Axura, Akatinol, Maruxa, Nemdatine, Namzaric*	Treatment of adult patients with moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease. Official UK medicine details (MHRA SPC) link

*Namzaric = combination of Donepezil and Memantine

** MHRA: Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency - UK medicines regulator;

SPC: Summary of Product Characteristics - detailed product information

Treatment cost

The Kuwaiti government bears most costs of Alzheimer's disease treatment through the Ministry of Health. Kuwaiti nationals generally receive treatment in public facilities free of charge, while medicines included on the government's approved formulary are fully reimbursed. Consequently, prescribed Alzheimer's medicines supplied through the public healthcare system are generally provided without direct cost to eligible patients.

Alzheimer's disease treatment costs are primarily borne by the government through Kuwait's Ministry of Health (MOH). Treatment delivered in public health facilities is generally free for Kuwaiti nationals, and Kuwaitis are covered by the national health system through government budget allocations. The World Health Organization (WHO)'s review of Kuwait's health-financing system reports that Kuwaitis have an open-ended public benefits package and are fully reimbursed for medicines included in the government medicines list. Thus, where prescribed Alzheimer's disease medicines are included in the MOH formulary and reimbursement list and dispensed through the public system, the government bears the cost rather than the patient.

References

- https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/EMROPUB_2019_EN_22347.pdf

<https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/Kuwait-NCD-IC-v22-eng.pdf>

Caregiver support

Kuwait provides no Alzheimer's-specific caregiver allowance or dementia-specific respite entitlement, but eligible families can access broader disability-based support. A non-working woman caring for someone with a certified severe disability may receive KWD 300 monthly, while care recipients may qualify for social assistance and servant or driver allowances. Designated caregivers can also receive employment, pension, and patient-companion leave protections. Eligibility is determined by formal disability assessment and severity rather than an Alzheimer's diagnosis alone, with no separate dementia care-level system.

Under Kuwait's disability legislation, a non-working woman caring for a person living with a severe disability can receive a monthly allowance of KWD 300. The Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) confirms both the entitlement and the current amount. Consequently, a woman caring for a person living with Alzheimer's disease could potentially qualify if the person's condition is formally certified as a severe disability under Kuwait's disability assessment system; an Alzheimer's disease diagnosis by itself does not automatically establish eligibility.

There are also financial benefits directed to the person requiring care, which can indirectly support the household. PADA reports social assistance of KWD 225 for moderate disability and KWD 277 for severe disability, while people living with moderate or severe disabilities over age 21 can apply for disability-related social assistance. In addition, where the disability assessment establishes a need for a servant or driver, an allowance is available; PADA currently lists KWD 100 for moderate and KWD 150 for severe disability. These benefits are based on the officially assessed severity of disability rather than specifically on Alzheimer's disease.

Kuwait's system also gives employment and pension-related protection to designated caregivers. The government's service portal provides for a formal Caregiver Certificate, and caregivers of people living with moderate or severe disabilities may be eligible for special retirement or salary-settlement arrangements. The government also provides patient-companion leave for designated caregivers when accompanying an eligible person living with a disability for treatment. These measures can be particularly relevant where caring for a person living with advanced Alzheimer's disease interferes with employment.

However, there is no Alzheimer's disease-specific caregiver allowance, dementia-specific respite entitlement, or separate Alzheimer's disease care-level system in the country.

References

- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/Services/GODP/MonthlyAllowanceForSeverelyDisabled.aspx>
- <https://www.pada.gov.kw/en/information-center/faq/>
- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/Services/GODP/SalaryAbove.aspx>
- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/CitizensResidents/InfoSubPages/SpecialNeeds.aspx>
- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/Services/GODP/RetirementOfTheGuardian.aspx>
- <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/Services/GODP/PrivateLeaveWithFullSalary.aspx>

Policy

Kuwait's national dementia plan covered 2017–2020 and sought to establish dementia as a health priority while improving awareness, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, caregiver support, information systems and research. However, dedicated funding has ended and no replacement dementia or Alzheimer's strategy has been formally announced. This creates a significant policy and implementation gap. Existing disability legislation may provide broader protections for some people with dementia, but no dedicated framework has been identified for dementia-related rights, supported decision-making, advance care planning or post-diagnostic support. Reported gaps in professional training, public awareness and caregiver resources further indicate challenges in translating dementia policy into sustained services.

National dementia plan

Kuwait implemented a national dementia plan for 2017–2020, covering awareness, risk reduction, diagnosis and treatment, workforce development, caregiver support, information systems, early detection, and research. Despite its broad objectives, the strategy is not currently funded.

Kuwait did adopt a national dementia plan, covering 2017–2020, but that is not currently funded. In 2017, the Ministry of Health's plan set six main goals: making dementia a national health priority; increasing public awareness and reducing misconceptions; reducing modifiable dementia risk factors and social isolation among older people; strengthening diagnosis, treatment and care through protocols, memory clinics and trained health professionals; supporting and training family and other caregivers; and improving dementia information systems, national databases, early detection and research.

References

- <https://www.alzint.org/u/book-ar-en.pdf>
- <https://www.alanba.com.kw/ar/kuwait-news/health/765298/05-08-2017-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%B1%D9%81/>

Upcoming plans

Kuwait has not formally announced a new or replacement of the national dementia or Alzheimer's disease strategy.

Policy gaps

Legal barriers

Kuwait's national dementia strategy is no longer funded, restricting sustained implementation of dementia-specific objectives and services. Broader disability legislation may protect some people with dementia, but dedicated provisions for decision-making, advance care planning, and post-diagnostic support are lacking. Further challenges

include healthcare professional training deficits and limited caregiver resources and support systems.

Kuwait has previously developed a national dementia strategy, with a period of funding between 2017 and 2020, but the strategy is no longer funded. The discontinuation of dedicated funding represents an important institutional barrier because it limits sustained implementation of dementia-specific objectives and services. Further, there are broader legal protections that could apply to some people living with dementia. Kuwait's Law No. 8 of 2010 concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines disability broadly to include permanent mental impairments that may restrict a person's ability to participate fully and equally in society. However, the legislation is not dementia-specific, and no comparable dementia-specific framework governing issues, such as supported decision-making, advance care planning or post-diagnostic support, were found. Institutional capacity is another concern: a recent Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region review reports substantial dementia-training deficits among Kuwaiti healthcare professionals, while the first Kuwait-specific caregiver study describes limited access to dementia resources and support systems.

References

- <https://www.alzint.org/u/book-ar-en.pdf>
- <https://online.pada.gov.kw/MainLaw.aspx>
- <https://www.nature.com/articles/s44400-025-00009-z>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12295566>

Cultural barriers

Limited dementia education and moderate mental-health awareness remain challenges in Kuwait. Strong cultural expectations of family-based care place substantial responsibility on relatives, with dementia caregivers experiencing greater care challenges and anxiety. Limited awareness, specialised resources, and support systems further intensify these pressures on families.

A study of Kuwait University students found substantial educational gaps: 91% had never attended a dementia-related presentation, workshop or conference, while 60% expressed interest in receiving specialised dementia training. More broadly, a 2026 Gulf mental-health survey—whose sample was 80.5% from Kuwait—found only moderate mental-health knowledge and moderate behavioural willingness to interact with people experiencing mental illness.

A particularly important cultural factor is the strong expectation of family-based caregiving. A 2025 Kuwait study of 278 caregivers found that caregivers of older people living with dementia experienced significantly greater care challenges and anxiety than care partners of older people not living with dementia. The authors specifically identify cultural norms placing substantial responsibility on family carers, limited dementia resources, and lack of awareness and support systems in Kuwait as factors negatively affecting carers.

Research

Dementia-related research capacity in Kuwait includes Kuwait University and Dasman Diabetes Institute, with clinical studies regulated by the Ministry of Health. Global registries provide information on recruiting trials, while local APOE research contributes evidence on genetic susceptibility to Alzheimer's disease.

Selected academic institutions

[Kuwait University](#) [Dasman Diabetes Institute \(DDI\)](#)

Clinical trials and registries

The Ministry of Health, specifically through the Drug and Medical Products Registration and Control Administration, is the primary body responsible for overseeing the authorisation, safety, and regulation of human medicines and clinical research. Kuwait does not maintain a dedicated, public-facing national registry for searching active clinical trials. For any international interventional studies that might establish trial sites in the country, researchers rely on global databases. People living with dementia and families can search ClinicalTrials.gov or the World Health Organization (WHO) International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP) using "Kuwait" as a location filter to find actively recruiting studies.

References

- <https://www.moh.gov.kw/en/Pages/DCC.aspx>

Selected innovative methods

Kuwait University studies identified APOE $\epsilon 4$ frequencies of approximately 6.5–9% among healthy Kuwaiti and Gulf Arab populations, providing population-specific genetic evidence relevant to understanding Alzheimer's disease susceptibility.

Researchers at Kuwait University have investigated the distribution of apolipoprotein E (APOE) variants in Kuwaitis. One Kuwaiti study examined healthy individuals from different population backgrounds and found an $\epsilon 4$ frequency of about 6.5%, while another Kuwait University study found approximately 9% among healthy Gulf Arab blood donors. These studies do not diagnose or treat Alzheimer's disease, but they provide useful population-specific genetic information for understanding Alzheimer's disease susceptibility in Gulf populations.

References

- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16485778/>

Support

Kuwait has no identified dedicated Alzheimer's foundations or dementia-specific media outlets, although MENAAA provides regional advocacy. The Alzheimer's Awareness Project offers public education, caregiver training, conferences, community outreach, and dedicated caregiver support. Alzheimer Kuwait complements these efforts through awareness activities, patient and caregiver education, professional engagement, and a digital educational platform focused on dementia information and support.

Organizations are listed for informational purposes based on publicly available sources. Inclusion does not necessarily indicate affiliation with or endorsement by Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI).

Selected national associations, patient family associations, NGOs:

[MENAAA \(regional NGO\)](#)

Selected initiatives

Kuwait's Alzheimer's Awareness Project promotes public understanding through awareness campaigns, caregiver training, medical conferences, and community outreach. Its dedicated Caregiver Support Group assists families with emotional support, burnout management, practical caregiving guidance, and access to medical resources, strengthening community-based support for Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Awareness Project

The Alzheimer's Awareness Project, launched by the Women's Cultural and Social Society (WCSS) in Kuwait in 2011, is a comprehensive health initiative aimed at improving public understanding of Alzheimer's disease and supporting affected families. The project has grown from early public campaigns into a multi-faceted program that features specialised caregiver training sessions, regional medical conferences in collaboration with Kuwait University, and continuous community outreach. A cornerstone of the initiative is the Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group, which serves as the country's first dedicated platform for caregivers to receive emotional support, manage burnout, and access practical guidance on home care and medical resources.

References

- <https://wcss-kw.org/en/projects/alzheimers-awareness-team>

Dedicated media outlets

Kuwait does not have a dedicated media outlet focused exclusively on Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. The closest example is Alzheimer Kuwait, an awareness and support initiative launched in 2012. Its work focuses on raising public awareness, educating communities about symptoms and patient care, supporting people living with dementia and their care partners, and engaging healthcare professionals through conferences and workshops. Its

website serves as the project's digital educational platform, rather than an independent journalistic publication.

References

- <https://alzheimerkw.org/category/news/>
- <https://alzheimerkw.org/%d9%85%d9%86-%d9%86%d8%ad%d9%86-%d8%9f/>