

The Brain Trust Podcast | Episode 1 Transcript

Speaker 1: Kate Rowland, MD

Welcome to the Brain Trust, A Physician's Guide to Diagnosing Alzheimer's Disease and Related dementias. Brought to you from the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians. I'm Dr. Kate Rowland, family physician, member of the IAFP and faculty at Rush University. Funding for this podcast series was provided by a grant from the Illinois Department of Public Health. The goal of the Brain trust in this podcast series is to educate and empower the primary care clinician in the early detection, diagnosis and management of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Clinical resources, free CME and other educational materials are available online at the Brain Trust Project.com. CME Credit is available for each podcast. The Illinois Academy of Family Physicians is accredited by the Accreditation Council of Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians. Information on how to receive credit can be found on the Brain Trust Project website.

Thank you for joining us. As we empower each other and provide training on the early detection of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. And now today's episode.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

So, you might be curious about why are you listening to this show called The Brain Trust? And what I like to call it, a.k.a. docs diagnosing dementia and who am I that is speaking to you right now. So, my name is Ron Shore, and I'm a professor and family physician and geriatrician at Rush University Medical Center. I've been part of the IAFP or the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians for many years, and my passion is how do we kind of work to improve our capabilities in the state to help people with Alzheimer's disease get early diagnosis and treatment and are followed throughout their journey so we can avoid loneliness and maintain their capacity for as long as possible. Now, one of the key things I've realized over time is that it's the same thing when bank robbers were asked Why do they go to Rob a bank? And they say that's where the money is. And the same thing is happening. When we think about it from the number of people in the state that are experiencing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, based on our most recent information, we think there's over 230,000 people that have Alzheimer's disease in the state of Illinois, making us in the top ten states in the country of people experiencing this condition.

To put it in perspective, as I'm driving and leaving Naperville, Naperville has a population of about 144,000 people. And the fact that I could fill one and a half Naperville's with the number of people that have Alzheimer's disease in the state of Illinois is always an astounding fact to me. But we know that we can't all treat them with specialty care.

And that's one of the reasons why we have to kind of figure out who is seeing people with symptoms of dementia, including memory loss and who's working with them early. And that's why I'm going to go to the headquarters of the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians in Bolingbrook to spend a little time talking about their organization and what they are trying to do to help physicians, especially in family medicine, to better early detect and diagnose Alzheimer's disease.

Today, I'm meeting to discuss a little bit more about what the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians is about. And I'm glad to be meeting today with Dr. Tabatha Wells, who's the current president of the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians. Thanks for letting me come and spend a little time with you today.

Speaker 3: Tabatha Well, MD

Thanks for having me.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

So, tell me a little bit, Tabatha, about yourself. How long have you been at the program at the Carl Foundation and Champaign-Urbana?

Speaker 3: Tabatha Well, MD

So, I came to Carl in October of 2020 to be the program director of the residency here.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

Oh, wow. That's great. Terrific. And tell me a little bit about your role as president of this organization, the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians, that I am I've been a member of for over 25 years, ever since I was a student. How long has this organization been in the state?

Speaker 3: Tabatha Well, MD

So, the IAFP was established in 1947. We're the largest medical professional association in Illinois. We have about 5000 members.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

That's incredible. When you think about it, you know that 5000 members and these are members all over, right?

Speaker 3: Tabatha Well, MD

Yeah, we're in every city, every county. We're rural and urban. We're on the front lines caring for our patients, in every geographic, ethnic and socioeconomic community throughout Illinois.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

That's really what's needed, because so many of our people are at risk over the 1 million people over age 65. And it's not just older people that develop dementia, but it's something that we're noticing is that they're everywhere and they need to see people in practices that family physicians oversee and manage and help support throughout the state. But, you know, I know family physicians are really busy every day of their lives, right. They're dealing with the entire continuity of care from when babies are delivered and brought into the world all the way to when people end up dying and everything that happens in between. And I know there's so many pressures that go on and the day-to-day activities of family physicians. But, you know, we're dealing with something that's a number five, maybe number six now after COVID cause of death in the United States.

Why does the IFP leadership feel strongly about physicians being involved in the early detection of dementia and Alzheimer's disease?

Speaker 3: Tabatha Well, MD

We feel it is a public health issue. We want all family physicians to be comfortable with diagnosing and managing dementia because there just aren't enough specialists out there. And really we're already doing this. We take care of our patients from birth to death. We do it every day. Like I said, we're the ones on the front line. We need our physicians to be empowered and equipped with the best practices in knowledge and the early detection methods.

We need our physicians to be efficient in clinic procedures and referral procedures, and we need those procedures to be tailored to their communities. We need our physicians to have a network and knowledge and to be able to share their expertise with their peers.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

That's wonderful and I think the IAFP has always had a great reputation with partnering with groups like the Illinois Department of Public Health around workforce development, around offering services for common conditions that cause morbidity and mortality in the state. And this is just another partnership and an opportunity to build on those relationships that are maintained with the IAFP.

Through this grant from the Illinois Department of Public Health. And you know, in the best hopes, what would you hope that would happen with this podcast as far as its impact on family physicians in the state of Illinois?

Speaker 3: Tabatha Well, MD

Well, with our 5000 members, I'm hoping that we can influence the scope and content of educational activities and really implement these interventions on the frontlines of care.

Speaker 2: Raj Shah, MD

That's terrific because we think that's so important already. Primary care doctors are doing this day to day in their everyday lives, and family physicians are leading these efforts. We think they have the skills. They're already working on these things. Maybe we can give a little bit of tips and suggestions about how they fit in the bigger picture in our sessions these 30 minute podcast series that will be hosting across the state. But we really appreciate the leadership of the IFP being so involved and willing to support the continuous training of our workforce in primary care and those teams that support family medicine clinics across the state. So, I wanted to know you're a busy person and are really active with all the things that you're doing, but I appreciate the time you spent with us today.

And really the key here is that the leadership of the IAFP is very supportive of our efforts to kind of continue to work on improving the early detection and intervention of Alzheimer's disease. And Dr. Wells, we'll keep you up to date about all of the efforts and what we're doing and hopefully this is a great representation of the strength the IAFP has in influencing the ecosystem across the state, becoming more dementia capable.

So, thanks so much for joining us for the inaugural session for our Brain Trust series, which I like to affectionately call docs diagnosing dementia. And today we learned a little bit more about the docs involved and the docs and the IAFP representing the family physicians in the state of Illinois. Next time we look forward to the opportunity for me to meet the chair of the Geriatrics member interest group,

Dr. Eukesh Ranjit at SIU, and we'll be touching base on furthering our discussion around docs diagnosing dementia.

Until then, thanks for listening and we welcome you and hope you find belonging in this show and podcast series where we can learn and grow together. Thank you again.

Speaker 1: Kate Rowland, MD

Thank you to our expert faculty and to you, our listeners, for tuning in to this episode. If you have any comments, questions, or ideas for future topics, please contact us at podcast@theBrainTrust.com. For more episodes of the Brain Trust, please visit our website. The Brain Trust Project dot com You'll find transcripts, speaker disclosures, instructions to claim CME Credit and other Alzheimer's resources as well.

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