

Center for Brain/Mind Medicine - Rapid Diagnostic Clinic

What is the Rapid Diagnostic Clinic?

The Rapid Diagnostic Clinic (RDC), is part of the Center for Brain/Mind Medicine (CBMM) at Brigham and Women's Hospital. It is designed to improve access to earlier diagnosis of cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's disease for patients interested in research participation at the Center for Alzheimer Research and Treatment (CART). This clinic is staffed by a behavioral neurology physician assistant and supported by several behavioral neurologists. Referrals can be sent via email to: BWHBehavioralNeurology@bwh.harvard.edu or by a request for an RDC evaluation under a Neurology referral on Epic, if you're within the MGB system.

- Patients who need follow-up care beyond the initial diagnosis.
- Patients who are not interested in research participation.
- Patients who have other medical issues for which a cognitive evaluation and assessment are not required.

Where can I get my questions answered about follow-up care for complicated patients?

Contact the RDC via email at: BWHBehavioralNeurology@bwh.harvard.edu or submit a request for an E-consult with Neurology through Epic if you are within the MGB system. RDC staff will follow up with you within a week of your inquiry.

Who can be seen in this clinic?

Patients in need of a diagnosis of a cognitive disorder who wish to participate in research.

What is required to be seen in this clinic?

Patients must be referred by a clinician partner, CBMM, or go through the research pre-screening process at CART.

Which Patients are not Appropriate for This Clinic?

- Patients who already have a diagnosis and are being treated for cognitive problems.

What is the cost of the RDC?

The cost of this clinic is that of a standard neurology new patient visit covered by health insurance. Should your patient have concerns about coverage, let us know so we can help navigate this issue. If your patient enrolls in a research study, there are no financial costs associated with their participation in the research study.

How else can a patient be evaluated?

Patients with cognitive concerns can be seen at CBMM in the Behavioral Neurology Clinic.

Who works at the RDC?

Alison C. Pietras, PA-C will see patients and review cases with support from rotating behavioral neurologists on our team.

What happens when a referral is made?

After a referral is made via email: BWHBehavioralNeurology@bwh.harvard.edu or Epic, a recruitment specialist will reach out to you to obtain contact and medical record information for your patient.

- The recruitment specialist will contact the patient and get a signed medical release of records.
- Once medical records are received, they are reviewed by the behavioral neurology physician assistant.
- The behavioral neurology physician assistant determines if the patient is eligible to be scheduled for the RDC based on medical record review.
- The patient will be contacted to schedule an appointment by a scheduling team member and sent information on next steps in the appointment process.
- There are limited spots available. We recommend that patients take available slots as to not experience a longer delay in availability in the RDC clinic.
- Should your patient cancel, we will provide you with this information.
- We ask that you educate your patient on the limited availability of appointment slots.

What happens when my patient is scheduled to visit the RDC?

They will be asked to fill out some brief paperwork and be given directions on where to report for their clinic appointment. They will receive a reminder call the week before their appointment.

What happens at the visit?

Your patient will see a behavioral neurology physician assistant for a one-hour appointment. They will receive cognitive testing and a medical and neurological evaluation. The patient and family member will then meet with the covering behavioral neurology physician assistant. Lab work and an MRI may be done.

What is the follow-up plan?

A report will be sent to you within two weeks of the patient visit. If an additional scan or work-up is needed, the behavioral neurology physician assistant will help with this follow-up. Information will be sent to you for review and follow-up with the patient. Once received, you may schedule a time to talk directly with the behavioral neurology physician assistant. We let the patient know they should follow up with you after the visit. The RDC is a medical consult to support the referring clinician. We do not follow up with patients outside of the RDC clinic appointment. Should the patient want to be seen by the behavioral neurology physician assistant and/or a behavioral neurologist for follow up, the patient will need to schedule an appointment in the CBMM.