



Francesca Neviani
nata a Carpi (MO) il 27/11/1976 ,
residente in Strada San Faustino n. 99/3, 41124 Modena , Italy
Telefono 059-444111 Cell. 3382572828
NVNFNC76S67B819G
francesca.neviani@tiscali.it
neviani.francesca2@aou.mo.it

FRANCESCA NEVIANI,
MD, PhD

Consultant Geriatrician

Geriatric Unit, Department of General Internal Medicine and Post-Acute Care
Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Modena

Adjunct Lecturer

Department of Biomedical, Metabolic and Neural Sciences
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

ACADEMIC PROFILE

Consultant Geriatrician, PhD and Adjunct Lecturer with more than twenty years of clinical, teaching and research experience in Geriatric Medicine and Psychogeriatrics.

My clinical practice is primarily devoted to the assessment and management of older adults with cognitive disorders, dementia, delirium and frailty in both inpatient and outpatient settings. I currently serve as **Head of the Second-Level Cognitive Disorders and Dementia Centre** at the Department of Geriatrics, Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Modena, where I coordinate specialised multidisciplinary pathways dedicated to patients with complex cognitive and behavioural disorders.

Over the past two decades, my professional activity has progressively integrated clinical care, research and medical education. My principal research interests include dementia, Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD), delirium, non-pharmacological interventions, sensory stimulation, prevention of hospital-associated disability and person-centred care for older adults.

I have been actively involved in the design and implementation of innovative organisational models for dementia care within the acute hospital setting. Together with a multidisciplinary team, I contributed to the development of Italy's first **Dementia Friendly Hospital**, promoting environmental adaptations, non-pharmacological approaches and integrated care pathways aimed at improving the quality of care for people living with dementia.

My research activity includes the role of **Principal Investigator** of the ESSECOA study and participation as **Co-Investigator** in several national and international multicentre research projects, including the European Horizon 2020 RECAGE project and the RAPHAEL randomised controlled trial.

Since the Academic Year 2010–2011, I have been continuously involved in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. My educational activities focus on Geriatric Medicine, Psychogeriatrics, dementia, delirium, frailty, Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment and non-pharmacological interventions for older adults with cognitive impairment.

My academic objective is to integrate evidence-based medicine, clinical practice and person-centred care into both research and teaching, contributing to the education of future

healthcare professionals and to the development of innovative models of care for frail older adults.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

March 2013 – Present

Consultant Geriatrician (Permanent Position)

Head of the Second-Level Cognitive Disorders and Dementia Centre (Specialist Memory Clinic within the Regional Dementia Network), Department of Geriatrics, Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Modena. Responsible for the clinical coordination of specialised dementia services and multidisciplinary pathways dedicated to cognitive disorders, behavioural symptoms and delirium in older adults.

Department of Geriatrics

Sant'Agostino Estense Hospital – Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Modena, Italy

Initially appointed as an Outpatient Geriatric Specialist within the Local Health Authority (AUSL) of Modena. Since **1 March 2020**, employed as a Consultant Geriatrician by the Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Modena.

I currently serve as **Head of the Second-Level Cognitive Disorders and Dementia Centre**, providing specialised assessment and management for patients with complex cognitive disorders, dementia and Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD). My clinical activity combines outpatient, inpatient and multidisciplinary care, integrating diagnostic evaluation, therapeutic management and long-term follow-up.

My main responsibilities include:

- Comprehensive assessment and diagnosis of dementia and cognitive disorders.
- Management of Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD) and delirium.
- Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) of frail older adults.
- Development and coordination of specialised multidisciplinary clinical pathways.
- Coordination of a **provincial Day Service** dedicated to patients with complex cognitive and behavioural disorders.
- Implementation of non-pharmacological interventions aimed at preventing and managing delirium and behavioural disturbances in acute hospital settings.
- Collaboration with neurologists, psychiatrists, rehabilitation specialists, psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists and community services to ensure integrated continuity of care.
- Clinical supervision of multidisciplinary care programmes dedicated to people living with dementia.

A substantial part of my professional activity has focused on promoting innovative models of care for hospitalised older adults with dementia. Since 2015, I have contributed to the development of a dedicated **multisensory (Snoezelen) environment** within the Department of Geriatrics, supporting the implementation of sensory stimulation and person-centred approaches for patients with dementia and delirium admitted to acute care.

Together with colleagues from the University Hospital, the Local Health Authority, the Municipality of Modena and local voluntary organisations, I contributed to the implementation of the **Dementia Friendly Hospital** model. This collaborative project led, in 2025, to the recognition of Baggiovara Hospital as the **first Dementia Friendly Hospital in Italy**, representing a major organisational innovation in acute hospital care for people living with dementia.

April 2011 – February 2013**Outpatient Consultant in Geriatrics (Fixed-Term Appointment)****Local Health Authority (AUSL) of Modena**

Outpatient clinical activity carried out at the First-Level Cognitive Disorders and Dementia Centres located in Modena and Castelfranco Emilia, as well as within the PUAss (Single Access Point Service).

Main activities included:

- Comprehensive geriatric assessment.
- Diagnosis and follow-up of patients with cognitive impairment and dementia.
- Multidisciplinary evaluation of frail older adults.
- Collaboration with primary care physicians and community health services.
- Development of integrated care pathways between hospital and community services.

(20 hours/week)

January 2006 – August 2010**Psychogeriatric Outpatient Specialist (University Research Activity)**

Expert Centre for Cognitive Disorders

Estense Hospital, Modena

Clinical and research activity performed within the University research programme under the supervision of **Prof. Mirco Neri**, Director of the Expert Centre for Cognitive Disorders.

Main activities included:

- Specialist assessment of patients with dementia and cognitive impairment.
- Neuropsychological and psychogeriatric evaluation.
- Participation in clinical research projects.
- Longitudinal follow-up of patients attending the Memory Clinic.
- Collaboration in the validation of cognitive assessment instruments and multicentre clinical studies.

January 2010 – December 2010**Consultant Physician (Freelance)**

Department of Cardiovascular Medicine

NOCSAE Hospital, Baggiovara (Modena)

Clinical management of older adults admitted to the Cardiovascular Medicine Unit, with particular attention to frailty, multimorbidity, cardiovascular risk assessment and Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment.

(35 hours/week)

December 2008 – December 2009**Consultant Geriatrician (Freelance)**

Department of Geriatrics

NOCSAE Hospital, Baggiovara (Modena)

Clinical activity within an acute geriatric ward, including the multidisciplinary management of complex older patients, functional assessment, discharge planning and continuity of care.

(35 hours/week)

June 2007 – August 2008**Consultant Geriatrician**

Municipal Nursing Home "9 Gennaio"

Modena, Italy

Medical care of institutionalised older adults, with particular expertise in dementia, behavioural disorders, chronic disease management and multidisciplinary care planning.
(20 hours/week)

February 2005 – June 2007

Consultant Geriatrician

Villa Bertani Protected Care Facility

Stiolo (Reggio Emilia), Italy

Medical management of residents in long-term care, including assessment and treatment of chronic diseases, dementia, frailty and disability. Close collaboration with nursing staff and rehabilitation professionals to optimise quality of care and functional outcomes.
(6 hours/week)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Lecturer

University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

School of Specialization in Geriatrics

Lecturer in postgraduate medical education for physicians specialising in Geriatric Medicine. Teaching activities focus on the clinical management of frailty, dementia, delirium, Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD), Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA), and person-centred care for older adults. Educational activities include lectures, discussion of clinical cases and integration of evidence-based medicine into everyday clinical practice.

Adjunct Lecturer

Degree Programme in Psychiatric Rehabilitation Techniques

Academic Year 2010–2011 – Present

Teaching Module:

Psychopathology of Older Adults

Teaching commitment:

10 hours per academic year (third-year undergraduate students).

Main teaching topics include:

- Normal and pathological ageing
- Dementia and Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD)
- Delirium
- Late-life depression
- Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment
- Frailty and disability
- Non-pharmacological interventions
- Sensory stimulation
- Person-centred care
- Multidisciplinary management of older adults with cognitive disorders

Teaching is strongly integrated with clinical practice and aims to provide students with practical skills for the multidisciplinary assessment and management of older adults with cognitive impairment.

Adjunct Lecturer**Degree Programme in Medicine and Surgery**

University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Teaching activities within the undergraduate medical curriculum, with particular focus on Geriatric Medicine, dementia, frailty, cognitive disorders and comprehensive care of older adults.

Continuing Medical Education (CME)**Lecturer****"Cognitive Stimulation"**

First Edition (November–December 2005)

AUSL Modena – AgeFor Programme

Educational programme dedicated to non-pharmacological approaches for people living with dementia.

Lecturer**"Psychogeriatrics: The Courage to Change"**

June–December 2008

AUSL Modena – AgeFor Programme

Teaching activities focused on the assessment and management of cognitive disorders, behavioural symptoms and multidisciplinary psychogeriatric care.

Lecturer**On-the-Job Training Programme – Municipal Nursing Home "9 Gennaio"**

AUSL Modena – AgeFor Programme

Training activities for healthcare professionals working in long-term care facilities, with particular focus on dementia care, behavioural symptoms and person-centred approaches.

TEACHING AREAS

- Geriatric Medicine
- Psychogeriatrics
- Dementia
- Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD)
- Delirium
- Late-Life Depression
- Frailty
- Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA)
- Non-pharmacological Interventions
- Sensory Stimulation
- Person-Centred Care
- Multidisciplinary Management of Older Adults

My teaching philosophy is based on the integration of evidence-based medicine, multidisciplinary teamwork and clinical experience, with particular attention to person-centred care and the translation of research evidence into everyday clinical practice.

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

My research activity has focused on Geriatric Medicine and Psychogeriatrics, with particular interest in dementia, delirium, frailty, behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), hospital-associated disability and person-centred models of care.

Throughout my career, I have participated in observational studies, multicentre clinical trials and translational research projects aimed at improving both the quality of care and clinical outcomes for older adults with cognitive disorders. My research has progressively evolved from the validation of cognitive assessment tools and pharmacological studies to the development and evaluation of innovative non-pharmacological interventions in acute hospital settings.

Current research activities mainly focus on behavioural symptoms associated with dementia and delirium, sensory stimulation, prevention of functional decline during hospitalization and the implementation of dementia-friendly hospital care.

My research activity has always been closely integrated with clinical practice, with the aim of translating scientific evidence into everyday care for older adults with frailty and cognitive disorders. This approach has guided both my clinical work and the development of innovative organisational models for dementia care.

Research line: Development and evaluation of innovative non-pharmacological interventions and integrated models of care for older adults with dementia, delirium and frailty in acute hospital settings.

Principal Investigator

ESSECOA Study (2023 – Ongoing)

Principal Investigator

Effectiveness of a Psychosocial Intervention (Sensory Stimulation, Generic Stimulation and Caregiver Education) in Patients with Behavioural Symptoms Associated with Dementia or Delirium Admitted to Acute Care Hospitals: The ESSECOA Longitudinal Study.

The ESSECOA study is a prospective longitudinal clinical study designed to evaluate the effectiveness of non-pharmacological interventions in older adults hospitalised with dementia and/or delirium.

The project investigates the impact of sensory stimulation, structured psychosocial activities and caregiver education on behavioural symptoms, functional outcomes and quality of care during acute hospital admission.

This study reflects my current research interest in developing evidence-based, person-centred interventions aimed at preventing hospital-associated disability and improving the management of behavioural symptoms in frail older adults.

Co-Investigator

RAPHAEL Trial (2025 – Ongoing)

Robotic Technologies for Apathy in Dementia: A Randomised Controlled Trial

Co-Investigator in a multicentre randomised controlled trial evaluating the effectiveness of robotic technologies for the treatment of apathy in people living with dementia.

RECAGE Project

European Horizon 2020 Research Programme

Co-Investigator in the European multicentre RECAGE project evaluating the effectiveness of **Special Care Units for Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (SCU-B)** as an integral component of regional dementia care networks.

Funded by the **European Union Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme** (Grant Agreement No. 779237).

Multicentre Clinical Studies

Participation as Investigator in several national and international multicentre clinical studies, including:

- **Novartis PERSPECTIVE (LCZ696B2320)**: post-marketing safety study evaluating sacubitril/valsartan (Entresto®).
 - **Study on Vitamin K Antagonists in Frail Older Adults (2012–2016)**: multicentre observational study investigating predictors of efficacy and safety of anticoagulant therapy in frail older patients.
 - **PRIER Project (2009–2011)**: multicentre study evaluating the effects of physical exercise and social participation in late-life depression.
 - **Novartis CENA713D2340 (2008–2010)**: multicentre study evaluating rivastigmine transdermal patch in Alzheimer's disease.
 - **Sanofi-Synthélabo EFC2724 (2004–2005)**: multicentre clinical trial evaluating xaliproden in Alzheimer's disease.
 - **Bracco TSP Study (2003–2004)**: evaluation of a novel diagnostic test for the early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.
 - **DEMTECT Study (2003–2004)**: validation of a cognitive screening instrument for dementia.
 - **CAMDEX-R Italian Validation Study**: multicentre validation of the Italian version of the CAMDEX-R assessment instrument.
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

My current research interests include:

- Dementia and cognitive disorders
 - Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD)
 - Delirium in acute care
 - Hospital-associated disability
 - Frailty
 - Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA)
 - Non-pharmacological interventions
 - Sensory stimulation (Snoezelen approach)
 - Person-centred care
 - Dementia Friendly Hospital models
 - Caregiver education
 - Humanisation of care
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SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATIONS

My research activity has been developed through close collaboration with multidisciplinary teams including geriatricians, neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, rehabilitation specialists, nurses, occupational therapists, statisticians and academic researchers.

These collaborations have contributed to the development of integrated models of care, multicentre clinical research and innovative approaches for improving the quality of care for older adults with dementia and frailty.

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

My scientific activity focuses on Geriatric Medicine and Psychogeriatrics, with particular interest in dementia, Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD), delirium, frailty, late-life depression and innovative non-pharmacological interventions for older adults. My publications include original research articles, multicentre clinical studies, systematic reviews and contributions to the validation of cognitive assessment instruments. Research findings have been published in peer-reviewed international journals in the fields of geriatrics, psychogeriatrics, psychiatry and ageing research.

Selected Peer-Reviewed Publications

Belvederi Murri M, Triolo F, Coni A, Nerozzi E, Maietta Latessa P, Fantozzi S, Padula N, Escelsior A, Assirelli B, Ermini G, Bagnoli L, Zocchi D, Cabassi A, Tedeschi S, Toni G, Chattat R, Tripi F, **Neviani F**, Bertolotti M, Cremonini A, Bertakis KD, Amore M, Chiari L, Zanetidou S.

The body of evidence of late-life depression: the complex relationship between depressive symptoms, movement, dyspnea and cognition.

Experimental Aging Research. 2024;50(3):296–311.

Pirani A, Nasreddine Z, **Neviani F**, Fabbo A, Rocchi MB, Bertolotti M, Tulipani C, Galassi M, Belvederi Murri M, Neri M.

MoCA 7.1: Multicenter Validation of the First Italian Version of the Montreal Cognitive Assessment.

Journal of Alzheimer's Disease Reports. 2022;6:509–520.

Belvederi Murri M, Triolo F, Coni A, Tacconi C, Nerozzi E, Escelsior A, Respino M, **Neviani F**, Bertolotti M, Bertakis K, Chiari L, Zanetidou S, Amore M.

Instrumental Assessment of Balance and Gait in Depression: A Systematic Review.

Psychiatry Research. 2020;284:112687.

Neviani F, Belvederi Murri M, Mussi C, Triolo F, Toni G, Simoncini E, Tripi F, Menchetti M, Ferrari S, Ceresini G, Cremonini A, Bertolotti M, Neri M, Squatrito S, Amore M, Zanetidou S.

Physical Exercise for Late-Life Depression: Effects on Cognition and Disability.

International Psychogeriatrics. 2017;29(7):1105–1112.

Belvederi Murri M, Amore M, Menchetti M, Toni G, **Neviani F**, Cerri M, Rocchi MB, Zocchi D, Bagnoli L, Tam E, Buffa A, Ferrara S, Neri M, Alexopoulos GS, Zanetidou S.

Physical Exercise for Late-Life Major Depression.

British Journal of Psychiatry. 2015;207(3):235–242.

Additional Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Physical Exercise for Late-Life Depression: Effects on Symptom Dimensions and Time Course. *Journal of Affective Disorders* (2018).
- The Italian Version of the Carer's Needs Assessment for Dementia (CNA-D): Psychometric Properties and Influence of Patient and Caregiver Characteristics (2010).

- Validation of the Italian Version of the GPCOG (GPCOG-It). *International Psychogeriatrics* (2010).
- A Scale Evaluating the Emotional Well-Being of Older Adults (SVEBA). *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2009).
- Arterial Compliance and Blood Pressure Indices in Hypertensive Older Adults. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2009).
- IGF-1, Cognitive Function and Brain Damage in Hypertensive Older Adults. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2009).
- Physical Activity and Cognitive Stimulation. *I Luoghi della Cura* (2009).
- Evaluation of Cognitive Decline and Disability in Alzheimer's Disease Patients Treated with Acetylcholinesterase Inhibitors. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2007).
- Multidimensional Evaluation of Community-Dwelling Older Adults. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2007).
- Neurocardiovascular Instability and Cognitive, Emotional and Functional Domains. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2007).
- Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD): Long-Term Use of Atypical Antipsychotics. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* (2007).
- New Therapeutic Perspectives in Late-Life Depression: The Geriatrician's Point of View. *Giornale di Gerontologia* (2001).

Book Chapter

Co-author of the chapter:

Francesca Neviani