LAUNEX LTD

Coaching & Training

Empowering with Clarity & Confidence

# Research Horizon

## What Does the Science Say

**Important Note:**
*This information reflects global research progress and is provided for educational purposes only. Always seek professional advice from your GP or specialist before making medical decisions.*

# Mapping Cognition: Rethinking Dementia through Neural Flow

*Professional Insight Edition – Launex Insight Series*

## Exploring the Cognitive and Emotional Drivers Behind Wandering Behaviour

Wandering is often described as a challenge, yet through a neurological and psychological lens it represents an *expression of retained function* rather than loss. Within the Launex Dementia Brain Map™, this movement aligns with an interaction between spatial orientation, limbic emotion, and executive control decline. Understanding how these systems compete or compensate allows professionals to interpret wandering not as "aimless walking," but as an active form of cognitive communication.

## Neurological Translation in Daily Practice

Wandering frequently emerges when hippocampal degradation interrupts memory sequencing, while the parietal lobe continues to process habitual motion patterns. A person may therefore move towards what feels familiar, even if visual or contextual anchors no longer match their intent. Recognising this distinction prevents misinterpretation of "restlessness" as a behavioural symptom requiring control, and instead directs care strategies toward *navigational reassurance and environmental familiarity*.

## Applied Understanding for the Dementia Carer Specialist (DCS)

For DCSs, the task lies in reading physical motion as a form of emotional data. A resident who repeatedly returns to a corridor may not be "wandering" but re-enacting procedural memory — often associated with former roles, such as going to work, attending to family duties, or participating in structured community routines. When care teams identify these personal anchors, they can design route-based engagement or simulated "completion tasks" that reduce distress and maintain autonomy.

## Integrating Observation and Brain-Based Reasoning

The Launex Dementia Brain Map™ provides professionals with a framework to trace behavioural expression to likely neurological correlates. By combining observation (the *what*) with neural interpretation (the *why*), carers translate movement into meaning. This dual perspective forms the foundation of training within Launex's dementia care programmes, which teach dementia carer specialists to recognise when motion is seeking safety, connection, or familiarity.

## Professional Reflection

True dementia expertise extends beyond routine management into cognitive empathy — seeing motion as a narrative. Wandering may therefore be an *attempt to relocate identity*, not merely location. Embedding this interpretation into staff culture elevates the practice from containment to comprehension, supporting more ethically aligned, person-centred environments.

As dementia research advances, the integration of cognitive mapping and emotional regulation models will shape how professional carers, clinicians, and educators interpret behaviour. By aligning practice with neuroscientific evidence, professionals can create adaptive environments that stimulate executive function while preserving emotional safety. This balanced approach ensures care evolves alongside both the person's needs and the emerging science guiding tomorrow's dementia standards.

## Launex Compliance Statement

This article aligns with the standards and frameworks of the World Health Organization (WHO), International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF), Care Quality Commission (CQC), and International Coaching Federation (ICF).