



Title Effects of Geriatric Care for Elderly Inpatients
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Aim

To assess whether geriatric evaluation and management of elderly inpatients leads to improved outcomes compared to the provision of ordinary care.

Conclusions and results

This overview includes 13 systematic reviews published between 1993 and 2005. Most of the studies were conducted in the United States, but relatively few in Europe. Most reviews included studies of general multidisciplinary geriatric evaluation and management of elderly patients admitted to hospitals due to acute functional failure, compared to routine care, eg, in a medical department. The results were categorized in two groups:

1. Geriatric evaluation and management in specialized units/departments in the hospital
2. Geriatric consultation services by a team or an individual for departments in the hospital.

Evaluation and management studies in specialized units showed a positive effect on survival and return to the patient's own home versus death or institutionalization. The results were less convincing when mortality was considered alone. Findings were inconsistent for other important outcomes, eg, level of functioning, need for hospitalization, and length of stay. Using multidisciplinary consultation teams in hospitals has not been shown to be effective.

Recommendations

The expected increase in number of elderly citizens indicates that more research is needed to develop and evaluate new, potentially improved, interventions and to identify criteria to identify the elderly patients who are most likely to gain from specialized geriatric management strategies.

Methods

This report is predominantly an overview of reviews, ie, we have searched for, critically appraised, and summarized research from existing systematic reviews of relevant effectiveness studies.