The Care-of-the-Elderly Health Guide

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BACKGROUND

• The Care-of-the-Elderly Health Guide (Triscott J, et al., 2002) is a clinical record with cross-references to care recommendations for the elderly.

• In 2003, the Guide was endorsed by the Health-Care of the Elderly Committee of the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

• Since then, family physicians have used the Health Guide as a checklist and a monitoring tool for care to older persons.

OBJECTIVE

• To update the Health Guide with current published evidence-based recommendations.

METHODS

• Mixed methods with two phases.

• In Phase 1, the investigators, through consensus, created an initial list of topics and chose published recommendations on the topics, with consideration to relevance in family practice.

• This initial list was reviewed by family physicians in two focus groups. The investigators then revised the list based on the feedback.

• In Phase 2, a panel of ten Care of the Elderly physicians and geriatricians, through a modified Delphi technique with two rounds of online surveys, reviewed whether the recommendations represented current Standards of Care.

• Participants: Twelve family physicians and a panel of ten Care of the Elderly physicians and geriatricians.

RESULTS

In Phase 1:

• Initial list of 43 topics and selected recommendations (n=12).

• Two focus groups among family physicians.

• The list of topics and recommendations were reviewed, with overarching themes of user-friendliness, relevance to clinical practice, and quality of evidence.

In Phase 2:

• In the 1st online survey, the panel of physicians was in consensus that 63 of the 66 groups (95%) of recommendations represented current Standards of Care. In the 2nd survey, three more groups of recommendations achieved consensus.

Final List of Topics

Section A. Geriatric Syndromes

Dementia, Mild Cognitive Impairment, Falls, Urinary Incontinence, Polypharmacy

Section B. Geriatric-Specific Concerns

Constipation & Fecal Incontinence, Decubitus Ulcer, Depression, Leg Edema, Insomnia, Severe Nutritional Risk, Chronic Pain, Parkinson’s Disease

Section C. Geriatric Safety & Caregiving Issues

Caregiver Burden, Decision-Making Capacity Assessment, Fitness to Drive, Frailty Scale, Goals of Care, M.A.I.D., Environmental Safety, Elder Abuse

Section D. Primary Prevention for Geriatrics

Hearing, Oral Health, Osteoporosis, Vision

Section E. Secondary Prevention for Geriatrics

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm, Atrial Fibrillation, Breast Cancer, Cervical Cancer, Colorectal Cancer, Coronary Heart Disease, Type II Diabetes, Dyslipidemia, Hypertension, Chronic Kidney Disease, Lung Cancer, Prostate Cancer

Section F. Other Preventative Areas

Diet, Physical Activity, Sexuality, Sun Protection, Tobacco-Alcohol Use, Vaccination (Hepatitis A & B, Herpes Zoster, Influenza, Pneumococcus, Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis.

CONCLUSION

The Care-of-the-Elderly Health Guide is a quick reference to geriatric care, reviewed for relevance by family physicians and a panel of experts. The Guide will be useful in primary care.