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Appropriate prescribing in elderly people: how well can it be measured and optimised?

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Summary

Prescription of medicines is a fundamental component of the care of elderly people, and optimisation of drug prescribing for this group of patients has become an important public-health issue worldwide. Several characteristics of ageing and geriatric medicine affect medication prescribing for elderly people and render the selection of appropriate pharmacotherapy a challenging and complex process. In the first paper in this series we aim to define and categorise appropriate prescribing in elderly people, critically review the instruments that are available to measure it and discuss their predictive validity, critically review recent randomised controlled intervention studies that assessed the effect of optimisation strategies on the appropriateness of prescribing in elderly people, and suggest directions for future research and practice.



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