

# Exploring the Care Experience of a Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment Team in the Management of Debilitating Syndromes in Older People

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**Abstract:** This study was conducted to investigate the clinical effects of applying the integrated geriatric assessment team approach on the care of elderly patients with debilitating syndromes. This study was conducted in Xi'an Jiaotong University hospital from January 2021 to January 2022. Around 50 patients with the geriatric debilitating syndrome were selected and retrospectively were analyzed, and psychiatrists, geriatric nurses, pharmacists, medical specialists, physiotherapists, and dieticians were selected to form a comprehensive geriatric assessment team. The patients were then assessed, a treatment plan was developed, and care was provided according to the actual situation, and the effectiveness of the clinical intervention was analyzed. This study demonstrated that, of the 50 patients in this study, the longest hospital stay was 15 days, while the shortest was 4 days, and the average length of stay was  $10.23 \pm 4.37$  days. Around 40 of the patients were able to eat on their own and consume food as prescribed, with a compliance rate of 80%, showing the effectiveness rate of the geriatric assessment team. In summary, the use of a comprehensive geriatric assessment team to treat and care for patients with debilitating syndromes in the elderly is an effective way, and this can significantly improve the life quality of the patients.

**Keywords:** Integrated geriatric assessment team; Older people; Debilitating syndrome; Care outcomes

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## 1. Introduction

A geriatric debilitating syndrome is a condition in which the body undergoes degenerative changes, where the patient suffers from a variety of chronic illnesses, a syndrome caused by a variety of diseases [1-4]. The disease usually shares the same risk factors as other types of geriatric syndromes, therefore if it is not treated promptly may lead to falls, urinary incontinence, and depression, which can aggravate the patient's condition and even lead to death [5-7]. On this basis, it is important to analyze the patient comprehensively, and subsequently provide targeted treatment and care. This study is conducted based on this theory, to promote the establishment of a comprehensive geriatric assessment team by investigating the impact of the assessment team on patients' recovery.

## 2. Data analysis and methodology

### 2.1. Study population

The study was conducted in Xi'an Jiaotong University hospital between January 2021 to January 2022. Around 50 patients were selected for this study, all the study subjects were patients with senile debilitating syndrome. Around 26 males and 24 females with a maximum and minimum age of 88 years and 61 years,

respectively corresponding to a mean age of  $73.23 \pm 3.22$  years were included in the patient data analysis. The patients were classified by their co-morbidities; The number of patients with co-morbid hypertension was 21; The number of patients with co-morbid diabetes was 10; The number of patients with co-morbid coronary heart disease was 11; and The number of patients with co-morbid cerebral infarction was 8. This study is in accordance with the hospital guideline, and was approved by the hospital.

The inclusion criteria for selecting study subjects this study; (1) All the patients met the diagnostic criteria for patients with senile debilitating syndrome; and (2) The patients understood the process of this study and agreed to participate and cooperate.

The exclusion criteria for selecting study subjects for this study: (1) Patients with other major illnesses; (2) Patients with a history of psychiatric illness or family history; and (3) Patients with incomplete data; patients with poor compliance.

## **2.2. Research methodology**

Treatment: To promote the establishment of a comprehensive geriatric assessment team, a team with key personnel including dieticians, physiotherapists, pharmacists, neurologists and geriatric nurses were developed to proposed a treatment plan based on the patient's condition from a practical point of view, and nursing staff to develop a care plan based on the specific needs of the patients.

The first step of this study, is to give the patients a nutritional support. Nutritional interventions can promote the patient's physical fitness and improve the patient's malnutrition, thereby the nursing staff are required to supplement the patient with protein and essential amino acid mixtures, such as leucine to promote the patient's muscle volume and to improve the patient's debilitating condition, and appropriate amounts of vitamin supplements, mainly vitamin in combination with calcium, to improve muscle function and balance the patient's organism [8,9]. In addition, rehabilitation exercises are particularly important in patients with the frailty syndrome to improve their life quality, to enhance their mobility, to improve their gait stability, to reduce the incidence of falls, to increase their bone density, and lastly to improve their general health. Further, the process requires strengthening the patient's balance training and instructing the patient to perform appropriate exercises, such as tai chi to improve the patient's debilitating condition. Finally, the patient can be given medication to improve the patient's skeletal muscle function, improve the patient's bone structure, delay the patient's muscle volume reduction and increase the patient's motor milk volume, improve the patient's quality of life, enhance the patient's walking speed, and promote the patient's recovery.

## **2.3. Statistical methods**

To analysis the data, SPSS20.0 statistics software were used. In the data statistics process, there are two main indicators are involved, which are the measurement data and the counting data represented as  $x \pm s$  and  $n, \%$ , respectively. After the completion of the calculation, the data is tested, and the test method of  $t$  value and  $\chi^2$  value was used, subsequently the results were analyzed. The validation results with a  $p$  value less than 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ), indicating a statistical significance difference in the comparison.

## **3. Results**

This study shows that, of the 50 patients in this study, the longest length of stay was 15 days, the shortest was 4 days, and the average length of stay was  $10.23 \pm 4.37$  days. Around 40 patients were able to eat on their own and consume food as prescribed during their stay, with a compliance rate of 80%. The efficiency rate was approximately 92.00%, showing a remarkable result.

#### 4. Discussion

From the perspective of actual clinical development, the incidence of debilitating syndrome in elderly patients is relatively high. Due to increasing age of the patients, their physical condition gradually decreases, and the incidence of underlying diseases also gradually increases, indirectly leading to an increase in the incidence of debilitating syndrome in patients <sup>[10,12]</sup>. According to the results of relevant studies, the prevalence of debilitating syndrome can be as high as 30% in the 65-year-old population. Moreover, the disability and mortality rates of patients with the frailty syndrome are relatively high, therefore it is particularly important to provide timely diagnosis and treatment, with effective care, to improve the clinical symptoms of patients <sup>[13-16]</sup>.

In practice, the geriatric debilitating syndrome is a comprehensive disease that presents with a variety of symptoms, rather than a single disease or symptom, therefore it is difficult to achieve therapeutic effects just by giving patients a single treatment as the clinical treatment process <sup>[17,18]</sup>. Therefore, the comprehensive geriatric assessment is a multidisciplinary approach that combines neurology, psychology, and other disciplines to determine the specific physical condition of the frail elderly and to develop appropriate treatments for the patients to facilitate their recovery, thus improving clinical outcomes <sup>[19,20]</sup>.

In this study, after applying the integrated geriatric assessment method, the results showed that the compliance of 50 patients was as high as 80.00%, further 46 patients were discharged from the hospital recovered, with a high efficiency rate of 92.00%. This shows that when patients with senile debilitating syndrome are given treatment work, the integrated geriatric assessment team is grouped together to achieve treatment goals through a joint treatment method, to ensure that effective treatment methods are adopted early, to provide reference advice as the patients' treatment, to ensure that the best treatment time is obtained, and to be able to develop a reasonable care plan according to the specific situation of the patients, with nursing staff giving patients nutritional support, and exercise. Meanwhile, the nursing staff can provide nutritional support, exercise guidance, and medical care to prevent possible adverse reactions, improve the quality of life of patients, ensure the patient's safety, and importantly to promote their recovery.

In conclusion, the use of a comprehensive geriatric assessment team to treat and care for patients with debilitating syndrome in the elderly is an effective way to improve the life quality of the patients, further promote their recovery, which is significant and can be promoted in clinical practice.

#### Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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