

Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment in hospital and hospital-at-home settings: a mixed-methods study

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Plain English summary

CGA in hospital and hospital-at-home settings

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Plain English summary

The Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) is one way to organise the delivery of health care. It is usually led by a doctor, with expertise in health care for older people, and involves a team of nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists who develop a plan to manage a patient's health problems. It was found that older people who receive the CGA in hospital are more likely to be living at home after their admission to hospital; we are not sure if it is better value than receiving health care without the CGA. The delivery of specialist-led hospital-level care in people's homes (sometimes called hospital at home) was examined, and populations who had received health care in hospital were compared with populations who had received health care from a hospital-at-home team. It was found that the group of patients who received health care in the home was slightly older, had more long-term conditions, may have had an increased chance of dying at 6 months' follow-up and had health-care costs that may be higher. Health-care professionals, patients and caregivers were interviewed to find out about their experiences of delivering or receiving this type of health care. From these interviews, it was found that patients and caregivers wanted their knowledge and priorities to be included in the assessment and care plan and that, at times, the integration of social and personal care needs was unclear. Findings also highlighted a need for plans to be carried over when a person is discharged from a specialist service, including support for their own and their caregivers' ways of coping. The key areas that should be included in a CGA were examined, and it was found that these covered how well people functioned, their physical and mental well-being, medication review and a caregiver's ability to care.

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