

SAND abstract No. 132 from the BEACH program 2008–09

Subject: Prevalence and patterns of multimorbidity

Organisation supporting this study: Australian General Practice Statistics and Classification Centre

Issues: Prevalence of chronic conditions; prevalence of multimorbidity and the patterns of multimorbidity, estimated in three populations: a sample of patients at general practice encounters, people who see a GP at least once in a year (the attending population), and the Australian population.

Sample: 8,677 patients from 289 GPs; data collection period: 15/07/2008 – 04/05/2009.

Method: Morbidity was defined according to the 16 domains of the Cumulative Illness Rating Scale (CIRS). Multimorbidity was defined as the presence of illness in two or more CIRS domains. Methods are as described elsewhere in detail¹ except that in this study all diagnosed problems were recorded and adjustment for those who did not attend general practice was more specifically undertaken by age–sex groups.

Summary of results

The age and sex distributions of patients at these encounters were similar to the total 2007–08 BEACH encounters with 41.8% of patients being male and 28.1% aged 45–64 years of age.

There were no chronic conditions currently under management in 33.3% of the patients sampled, in 40.7% of the attending population and in 49.0% of the Australian population. One-quarter (24.4%) of the sample, 26.4% of the attending population and 21.9% of the Australian population had morbidity(ies) in only one CIRS domain. Two-fifths (42.3%) of the sample, 32.9% of the attending population and 29.1% of the Australian population had multimorbidity. Prevalence of multimorbidity increased with patient age, 6.8% (95% CI: 4.8–8.8) of sampled young adults aged 15–24 years having multimorbidity compared with 89.8% (95% CI: 87.6–92.1) of those aged 75–84 years. The number of CIRS domains also increased with patient age, only 0.3% (95% CI: 0.0–0.6) of sampled young adults aged 15–24 years having diagnoses in five or more CIRS domains compared with 31.4% (95% CI: 24.2–38.7) of sampled patients aged 75–84.

The most common CIRS domains among the patient sample were vascular conditions (33.7%, $n = 2,923$), musculoskeletal conditions (28.0%), psychological problems (21.5%) and endocrine conditions (19.8%). After adjusting for visit frequency, the most common CIRS domains among people who see a GP at least once in a year were vascular conditions (25.0%), then musculoskeletal (21.3%), psychological (19.3%) and endocrine conditions (16.1%). After adjusting for people who do not attend general practice in a year, the most common CIRS domains in the Australian population were vascular (22.4%), musculoskeletal (18.8%), psychological (16.5%) and endocrine conditions (14.1%).

The most common multimorbidity combination was one or more vascular condition(s) + one or more musculoskeletal condition(s) (with or without other CIRS domain conditions), present in 17.1% of patients sampled, 11.4% of people who see a GP at least once in a year and 10.4% of the Australian population.

1. Britt et al. *Prevalence and patterns of multimorbidity in Australia*. 2008 MJA 189 (2): 72–77.
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AIHW Australian GP Statistics and Classification Centre, 2009. SAND abstract No.132 from the BEACH program: Prevalence and patterns of multimorbidity. Sydney: AGPSCC University of Sydney. ISSN 1444-9072

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The shaded section of the following forms asks questions about **PATIENT'S CHRONIC DISEASES / PROBLEMS**.
 You may tear out this page as a guide to completing the following section of forms.

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer these questions for **ALL** of the **next 30 PATIENTS** in the order in which the patients are seen.

Please **DO NOT** select patients to suit the topic being investigated.

Use your own knowledge, patient knowledge and medical records as you see fit, in order to answer these questions.

Abbreviations

- IHD = ischaemic heart disease
- CHF = congestive heart failure
- Periph Vasc Dis = peripheral vascular disease
- CVA = cerebrovascular accident
- COAD = chronic obstructive airways disease
- GORD = gastro-oesophageal reflux disease

Patient chronic diseases/problems

The aim of these questions is to allow us to estimate the **prevalence** and **patterns** of **multimorbidity** in general practice patients. This may assist in the planning for future health service needs.

Please use the tick boxes to indicate whether the patient has **ANY** of the **listed chronic diseases or problems** even if you have managed this problem today. Tick as many as apply.

Most of the conditions listed below require continual management or surveillance and may need consideration in future care.

If the patient has **chronic diseases/problems** that are **not listed**, please tick the box labelled '**other**' in the relevant group and **specify the problem(s)** in the space provided.

Malignant neoplasms are dealt with separately. In the far right hand column please **specify the primary site** of the neoplasm.

If the patient has any **other chronic problems or diseases** that **cannot be grouped by the listed body systems** please specify these in the **other chronic problems group**.

If the patient has **NO chronic problems** please tick the box labelled '**no chronic problems in this patient**', leaving everything else blank.

Does the patient have any of the following chronic diseases/problems? (Tick as many as apply)	Cardiovascular <input type="checkbox"/> Hypertension <input type="checkbox"/> IHD <input type="checkbox"/> CHF <input type="checkbox"/> Periph. Vasc. Dis <input type="checkbox"/> CVA/stroke <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Endocrine / nutritional <input type="checkbox"/> Hyperlipidaemia <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes Type 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes Type 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Obesity (BMI ≥30) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Musculoskeletal <input type="checkbox"/> Osteoarthritis <input type="checkbox"/> Rheumatoid arthritis <input type="checkbox"/> Other arthritis <input type="checkbox"/> Osteoporosis <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic back pain <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Respiratory <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma <input type="checkbox"/> COAD <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Psychological <input type="checkbox"/> Depression <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Gastrointestinal <input type="checkbox"/> GORD <input type="checkbox"/> Inflammatory bowel disease <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Genitourinary <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic renal failure <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Eye <input type="checkbox"/> Glaucoma <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)	Other chronic problems <input type="checkbox"/> Malignant neoplasm Site: _____ (please specify) Other diseases: _____ _____ _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> No chronic problems in this patient								