

New research agenda provides roadmap to improve care for hospitalized older adults

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Older adults with complex medical needs are occupying an increasing number of beds in acute care hospitals, and these patients are commonly cared for by hospitalists with limited formal geriatrics training. These clinicians are also hindered by a lack of research that addresses the needs of the older adult population. A new paper published today in the *Journal of Hospital Medicine* outlines a research agenda to address these issues.

To help support hospitalists in providing acute inpatient geriatric care, the Society of Hospital Medicine has developed a research agenda to identify questions that deserve the highest priority in directing future research efforts to improve care for older hospitalized patients. In their paper, Heidi Wald, MD, MSPH, of the University of Colorado School of Medicine, and her colleagues describe this agenda and outline 10 unanswered questions in the following broad topic areas: advanced care planning, care transitions, delirium, dementia, depression, medications, models of care, physical function, surgery, and training.

"Research agendas are typically defined by researchers who review the scientific literature and try to identify gaps and new directions based on what is already known and their understanding of the field. In contrast, we engaged patients, family caregivers, patient advocates, and a wide variety of providers of care to determine the research agenda through a rigorous and transparent process of convening, consulting, collating, and prioritizing to arrive at the final agenda," explained Dr. Wald.

She noted that the research agenda can be used by hospitalist researchers, other scientists, and funders to guide decisions about what areas of investigation will yield information most valuable to older patients, their [family caregivers](#), and their providers during periods of acute illness requiring hospitalization. The authors anticipate that by demonstrating the use of a patient-centered approach to research agenda-setting, others will be encouraged to use this methodology in setting research priorities in additional areas of medicine.

Provided by Wiley

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