

Geriatric Pharmacology Subcommittee of the Clinical Division of IUPHAR

The geriatric pharmacology subcommittee presented a symposium at WCP 2014 in Cape Town on 'Optimal Prescribing in Older Patients: The Challenge of Multiple Comorbid Conditions and Polypharmacy'. The titles of the talks were:

Multiple Comorbid Conditions and Disease-based Treatment Guidelines: The Therapeutic Dilemma for Older Persons with Geriatric Syndromes (A/Prof Sarah Hilmer, Australia)



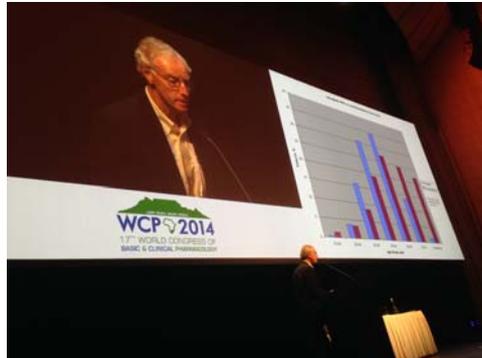
Methods to Assess Drug Burden and Polypharmacy (Prof Petra Thürmann, Germany)



Deprescribing to Limit Polypharmacy: The Evidence Base (Prof David Le Couteur, Australia)



Effects of New Drugs in Older Patients: What is Known at the Time of Drug Approval (Prof Darrell Abernethy, USA)



This symposium highlighted the challenges of optimizing prescribing for complex older patients, who are frequently prescribed multiple medicines for their multiple concurrent medical conditions. Older patients are major users of medicines and are often quite different to patients in clinical trials, particularly those done prior to drug approval. The development, validation and implementation of pharmacological approaches to assessing the cumulative risks of medicines in older people were reviewed. There was lively discussion with the audience about deprescribing (withdrawing) medicines that may cause older people more harm than good.

After the symposium at WCP 2014, members of the geriatric pharmacology subcommittee had the opportunity to meet Dr Joseph Fadare, a clinical pharmacologist from Nigeria who is conducting studies on drug utilization in old age. With the global increase in ageing and non-communicable diseases, there is a need for measures of high risk prescribing and for therapeutic guidance that applies to older people in the developing world.

The geriatric pharmacology subcommittee will present symposium entitled, 'Understanding and optimising the effects of multiple medicines in old age', encompassing clinical, epidemiologic and educational angles, at the Joint ASCEPT-BPS Scientific Meeting to be held at the University of Hong Kong 19-21 May 2015.