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Perspectives on treating hypertension in old age : the burden of polypharmacy, risks of treatment and GPs' treatment probability
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Stellingen behorend bij het proefschrift

Perspectives on treating hypertension in old age – The burden of polypharmacy, risks of treatment and GPs' treatment probability

1. In old age, patients with a diagnosis of hypertension have a nine-fold increased risk to have polypharmacy (defined as 5 and more chronic medication) compared to those without hypertension (this thesis).
2. Older patients with a low blood pressure during antihypertensive treatment have an increased risk to die or suffer from cognitive decline, especially when they are frail (this thesis).
3. There is a large variation in treating hypertension in old age, between general practitioners and between countries (this thesis).
4. Frailty, low blood pressure (140mmHg) and absent history of cardiovascular disease (CVD) are strong drivers for GPs not to treat hypertension in old age especially in countries where life-expectancy is longer than the international average (this thesis).
5. How to treat hypertension in old age is a multiple-choice question with more than one correct answer (Wu C et al. JAGS 2018).
6. Results from hypertension trials are not representative for older patients seen in general practice, since of every 100 patients who were contacted in a trial, 12 met the initial study criteria, 3 completed a baseline visit, and only 1 underwent randomization (Messerli F et al, NEJM 2008).
7. Since the current 'lower is better' paradigm does not apply to blood pressure management in all older persons, guidelines need to take into account the variation between older persons.
8. Only deprescribing trials can test the effectiveness of stopping/reducing antihypertensive treatment on patient-centered outcomes in old age.
9. Since uncertainty in medicine is inevitable, general practitioners have to deal with probabilities.
10. The need for new insights and approaches to solve a common problem is the driver for successful research collaboration
11. Old age is strength means survivorship and triumph over all kinds of disappointments and illnesses (adapted from Maggie Kuhn, 1905-1995).
12. I don't want a longer life, but I want to keep my daily life for as long as possible (as said by frail Mrs. S, 90-years old).

Sven Streit, Bern, 25 September 2018