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Reasons for encounter and existing medical and psychosocial problems of geriatric patients in a general practice.

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Objective of the study was To determine the reason/s for encounter (RFE) and existing medical and psychosocial problems of geriatric patients in a general practice. All the geriatric patients (65 years and above) who consulted the investigator during a period of two months were included in the study. The RFE was recorded at every consultation but with regard to other information data was collected only once. The Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE) was used to determine cognitive impairment while assessment of depression was based on DSM-4 criteria. RFE s were coded using the International Classification of Primary Care -2 (ICPC- 2) Multiple medical and psychosocial problems were identified in geriatric patients. It is unlikely that all these problems could be detected during routine consultations. Therefore geriatric screening programmes have to be introduced through the primary health care system. Postgraduate and undergraduate curricula should include geriatric medicine to make future doctors competent to address the multiple and complex problems of this vulnerable age group.