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DESCRIPTION OF THE ELDERLY PSYCHIATRIC ADMISSIONS IN RECENT YEARS

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Aims: To analyze the characteristics of the admissions of elderly patients in an acute psychiatric unit in recent years, to see if there have been any changes in the number, the average stay or in their referral from the hospital.

Method: Details of all admissions in a psychiatric unit for acute patients aged over 65 since 1999 are collected by means of a computer system. The number of admissions, the average length of stay and where they go when discharged are taken into account.

Results: In recent years the number of patients over 65 entering our unit has remained relatively stable. The average stay time remains high over all the studied years. It is proved that a large number of patients need to be moved to residences or other assistive devices when discharged.

Conclusions: Despite the increase in elderly population, the number of patients over 65 who enter this unit has not significantly increased. Their average stay remains always high over the years. It is striking the number of patients who can no longer go home when discharged, once they have been admitted.