

## Use of Antipsychotics among elderly nursing home residents

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### BACKGROUND

Antipsychotic drugs should be used in people with dementia only when there is an identified need and the benefits outweigh the risks. Behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia are common reasons for use of antipsychotic drugs among older individuals with dementia. These drugs are not approved for such use and both the Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency have issued warnings to limit such use.

### PURPOSE

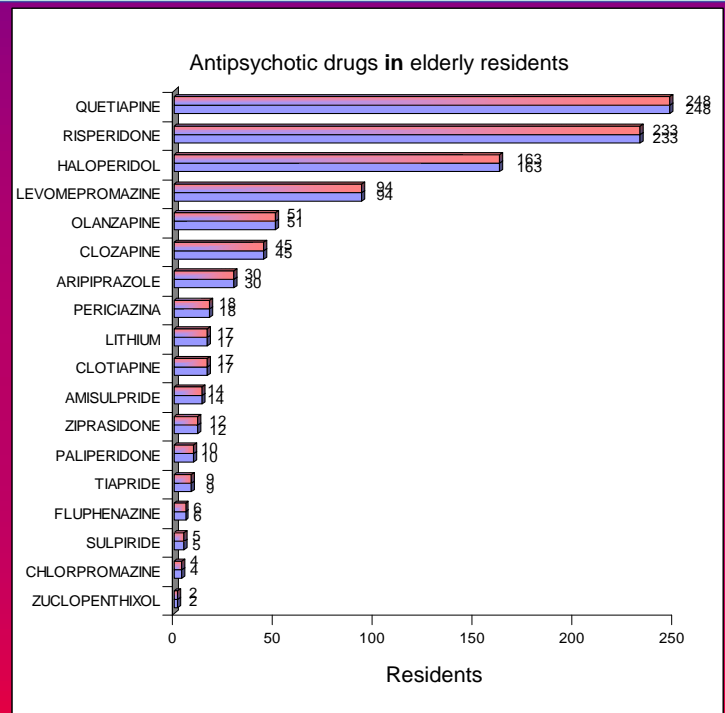
To describe the patterns of antipsychotic drug use in ten nursing homes, whose medicines are provided by the referring hospital's Pharmacy Department.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

This cross-sectional study included 6 nursing homes.

### RESULTS

A total of 770 elderly residents living in 6 nursing homes were investigated. Overall, 28% of patients used antipsychotic drugs. Particular antipsychotics such as lithium, amisulpride, aripiprazole, ziprasidone, tiaprizal, risperidone injectable and paliperidone injectable were monitored by psychiatry although in some cases the last mental health reports found were from the last year. 20% of patients were treated with quetiapine; half were followed by psychiatry and the others had dementia. 22% of patients were treated with risperidone, 78% of them had dementia. 12% of patients were treated with haloperidol and 4% with levomepromazine; all of them with dementia.



### CONCLUSION

Many patients, 60%, were followed by the psychiatry service but despite recommendations to avoid the use of antipsychotic drugs in patients with dementia, a large proportion of residents continued to receive such agents for this condition. Future work should establish the appropriateness of antipsychotic drugs in patients with dementia.

### No conflict of interest to disclose

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