

Geriatric Day Hospital (GDH) Orientation

A. GDH Role

- The role of the Geriatric Day Hospital is physician and multidisciplinary team assessment, diagnosis, short term problem management and rehabilitation.
- Patients are generally assessed either in their homes by a Geriatric Outreach Team member or in Emergency by a GEM (Geriatric Emergency Management) nurse. There may also be direct referrals.
- Typical geriatric problems (Geriatric Giants) seen in the GDH include dementia, depression, falls, incontinence, concerns about polypharmacy and inappropriate medications, chronic pain, frailty and “failure to thrive”. During your GDH experience, you should try to learn “approaches” to these common problems.

B. Patient Assessment by Nursing/Medicine

- Most patients will have an extensive home assessment by the Geriatric Assessment Outreach team (GAOT) or the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) program nurse. This needs to be reviewed along with any other documentation and results from OACIS by 9:30 am at the latest. Review can be done the day before or the day of the assessment. (If there are teaching rounds from 8 – 9 am that day, time may be inadequate for review the day of the assessment.)
- Patients will be assessed by the Geriatric Day Hospital nurse, their assessment to end at 9:30 am AT THE LATEST. A brief handover will be given to the resident: any new medical issues/assessments/changes in medications/ new complaints/vital signs, etc.
- Please start your assessment by 9:30 am and finish by 11:00 am for discussion with the attending staff. The assessment should be “problem focussed” building on the previous GAOT/GEM assessment.

C. Orders

- Any laboratory orders/ECG/other tests should as much as possible be discussed with the attending staff and given to the nurse at 11:00 am. Routine laboratory investigations are on the order sheets, but please avoid duplication or unnecessary testing.

D. Other Learning Experiences

During your GDH experience, you are expected to arrange with the attending staff the following. These are listed on your schedule.

1. Attend morning multidisciplinary rounds from 8:30 – 9:00 am.
2. Attend a patient assessment by:
 - Physiotherapy (mandatory)
 - Occupational therapy (mandatory)
 - Others (optional) – dietician, pharmacist, social work, speech and language pathologist
3. Family conferences (multidisciplinary and physician)
4. Medical tie ups with family (physician only)

Learning Resources

1. The Resource Centre on Aging has extensive resources.
2. Driving Assessment Guide
3. Retirement Home Relocation Guide
4. RGPEO.ca (Regional Geriatric Program of Eastern Ontario website)
5. Interpretation Guide to Common Cognitive Assessment Tests
6. Your attending physician may have additional resources.