

# The pattern of geriatric admissions in the medical wards at the Kenyatta National Hospital

## Abstract:

In a one year period (March 1990 to March 1991) the pattern of diseases in geriatric patients (over 60 years of age) admitted to the medical wards at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) was studied. In all, there were 1296 patients (M:F = 1.7:1) in this age group forming 11.5% of all admissions during the study period. 1008 (77.8%) of the geriatric patients were between 60 and 79 years of age. Most of the admissions (86.4%) were first admissions. The mean number of diseases per geriatric patient was 1.4. Hypertension and Cardiomyopathy were the commonest single diseases recorded, making up 43.9% of all diseases in this patient population. The commonest neurological diagnosis was stroke, which occurred in a setting of hypertension or cardiomyopathy in all the patients in whom it was diagnosed. The mean duration (+/- 2SD) of stay in the hospital in this patient population was 43 (+/- 19) days. Eighty eight (6.8%) of the patients died, the commonest cause of death being heart failure due to cardiomyopathy or hypertensive heart disease. It is concluded that geriatric patients form a sizeable proportion of our medical admissions and that a large proportion suffer from diseases of the cardiovascular system. It is thus recommended that further studies be carried out on the pattern of diseases in such patients and optimal.