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[Acute Med.](#) 2025;24(2):98-106. doi: 10.52964/AMJA.1013.

A National Survey of Geriatric Emergency Health Care: Insights into Current Practice

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PMID: 41742386 DOI: [10.52964/AMJA.1013](#)

Abstract

Background: Emergency departments (EDs) are increasingly managing elderly patients who present unique clinical challenges. This study explores the current management practices for patients aged 75 years and older in Belgian EDs.

Methods: An electronic survey was sent to 105 heads of Belgian EDs. The Collected data underwent descriptive analysis.

Results: Geriatric protocols, adapted equipment, availability of geriatricians, and paramedical staff improve the quality of care for older patients in the EDs. However, the limited use of geriatric scores, prolonged stays in the ED, and lack of hospital beds are frequent problems that negatively impact quality of care.

Conclusion: Given the variable level of care provided to the elderly in the EDs, care protocols should be standardized and improved at the national scale.

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