

When you need a Geriatrician, Geriatric Medicine as specialty and Postgraduate Training in the UK



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## Old age

MK1

Old age has always been with us—average lifespan is increasing but maximum lifespan is the same

### Old age in classical Greece

Name	Dates	Age at the time of death	
Sophocles	496-406	91	
Euripides	484-406	78	
Plato	428-347	81	
Isocrates	436-338	98	

**Slide 2**

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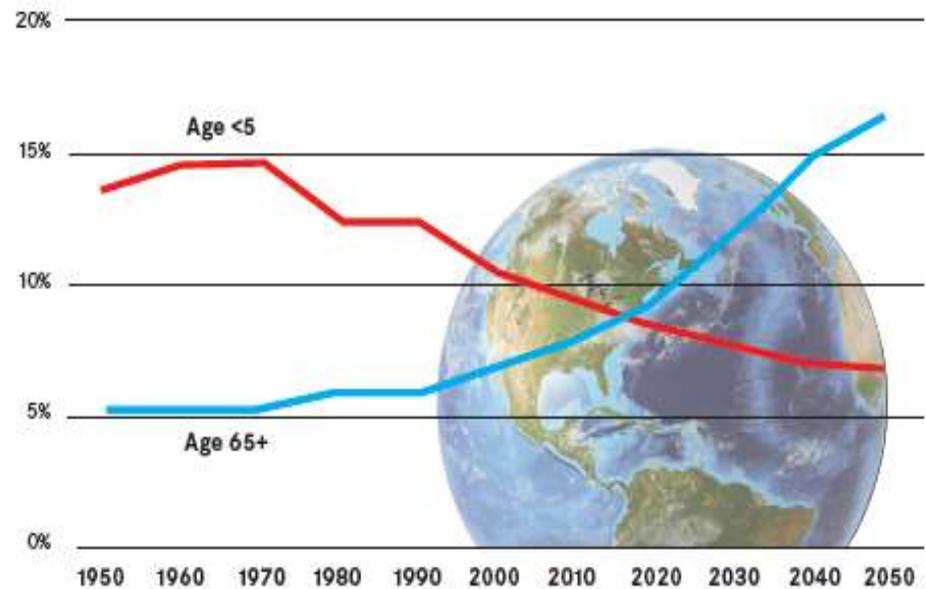
**MK1**

Mohammad Khan, 11/26/2019

Traditionally, the “elderly” is considered to be those persons age 65 and older

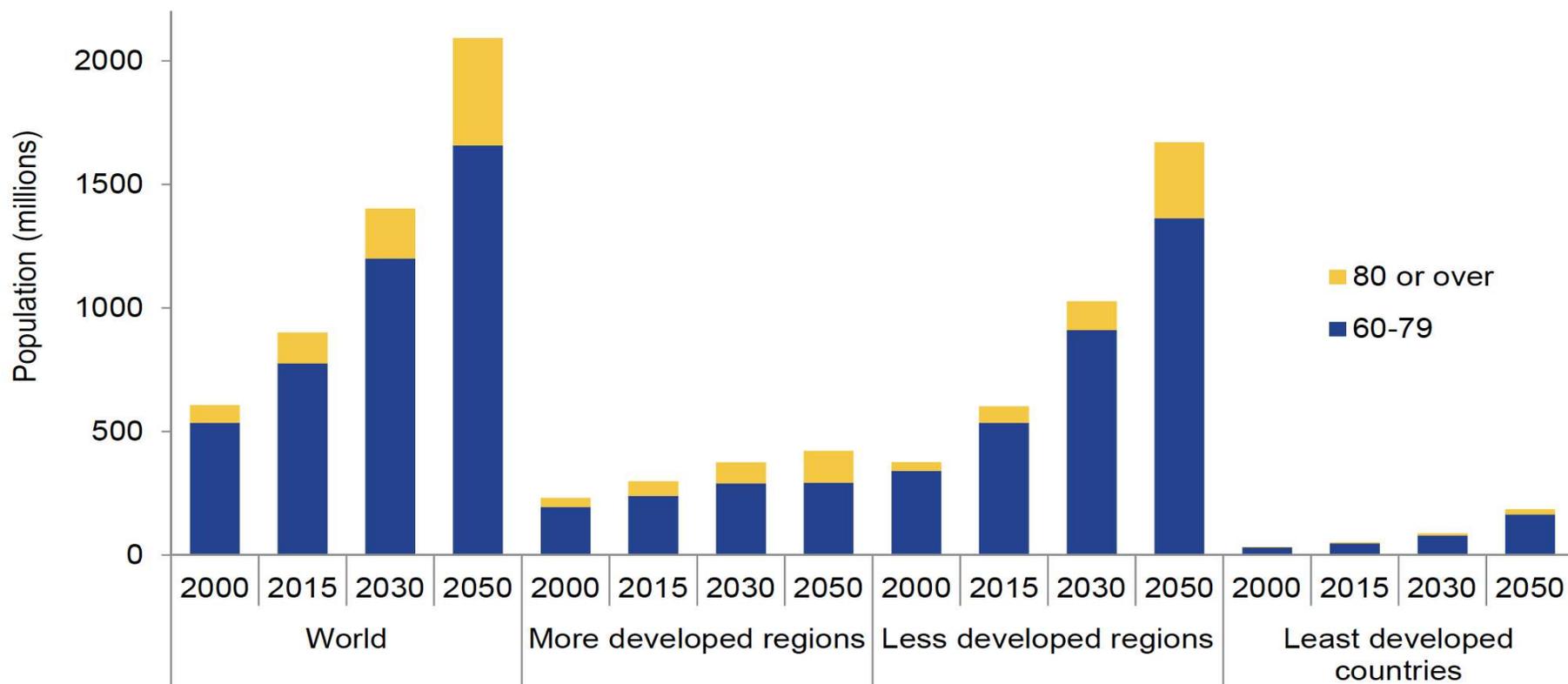
The rate of growth of the elderly segment of world population has been much more rapid than the rate of growth in the overall population

**FIGURE 1: YOUNG CHILDREN AND OLDER PEOPLE AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION: 1950-2050<sup>1</sup>**



Source: *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision*, United Nations.  
Adapted from *Global Health & Aging*, World Health Organization, 2011.

**Population aged 60-79 years and aged 80 years or over by development group, 2000, 2015, 2030 and 2050**

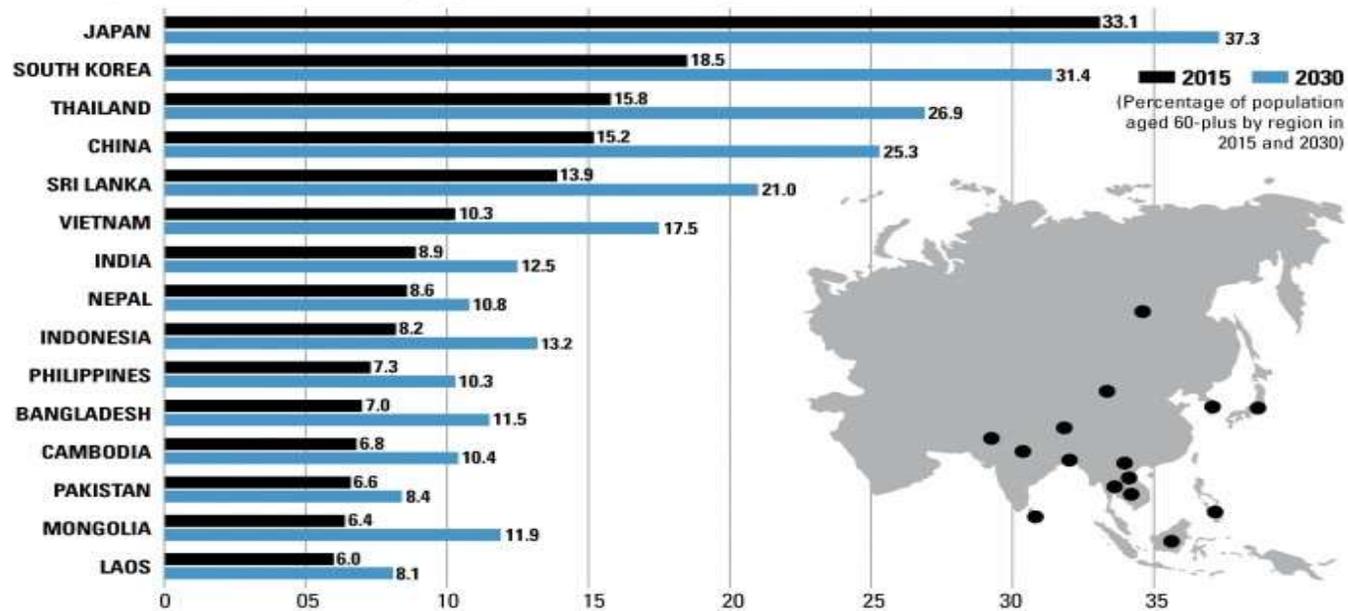


Data source: United Nations (2015). *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision*.

# Elderly people in Asia and in Bangladesh

## How Asia's Population is Ageing, 2015-2030 Scenario

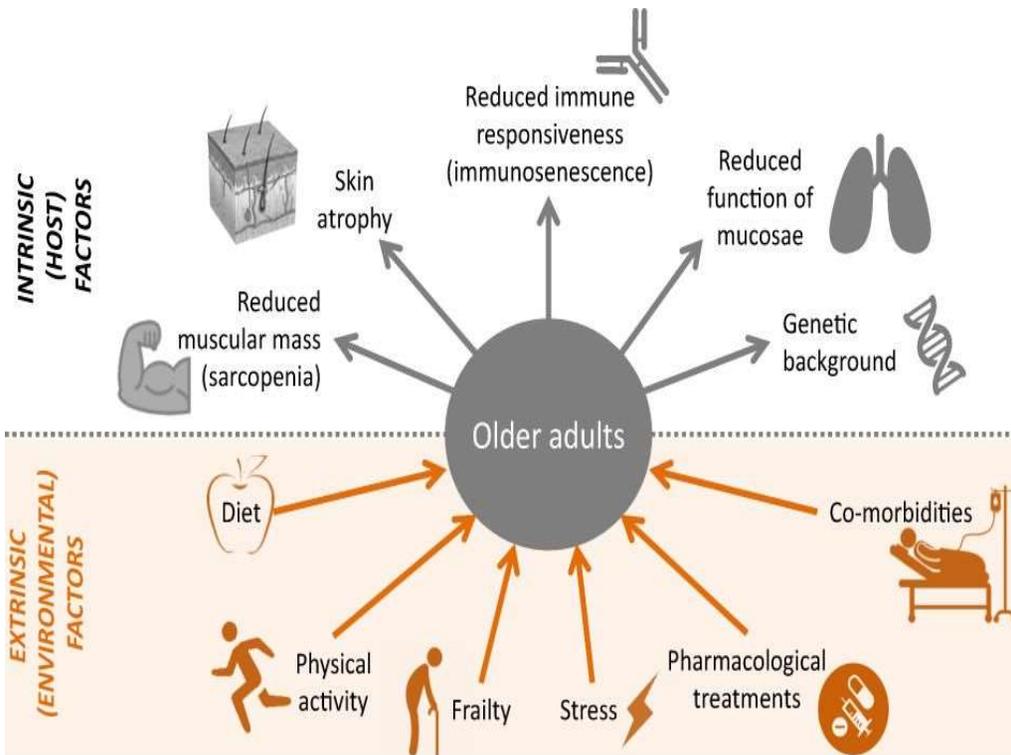
The proportion of people aged 60 and over is projected to grow in all Asian countries with Japan and South Korea aging faster than their neighbours.



Compiled by: ANN/DataLEADS

Source: Global Age Index, 2015

# Older people living with Frailty



## Frailty as a Clinical Syndrome

### Clinical Syndrome of Frailty

#### Symptoms

- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Anorexia
- Under nutrition
- Weight Loss

#### Signs

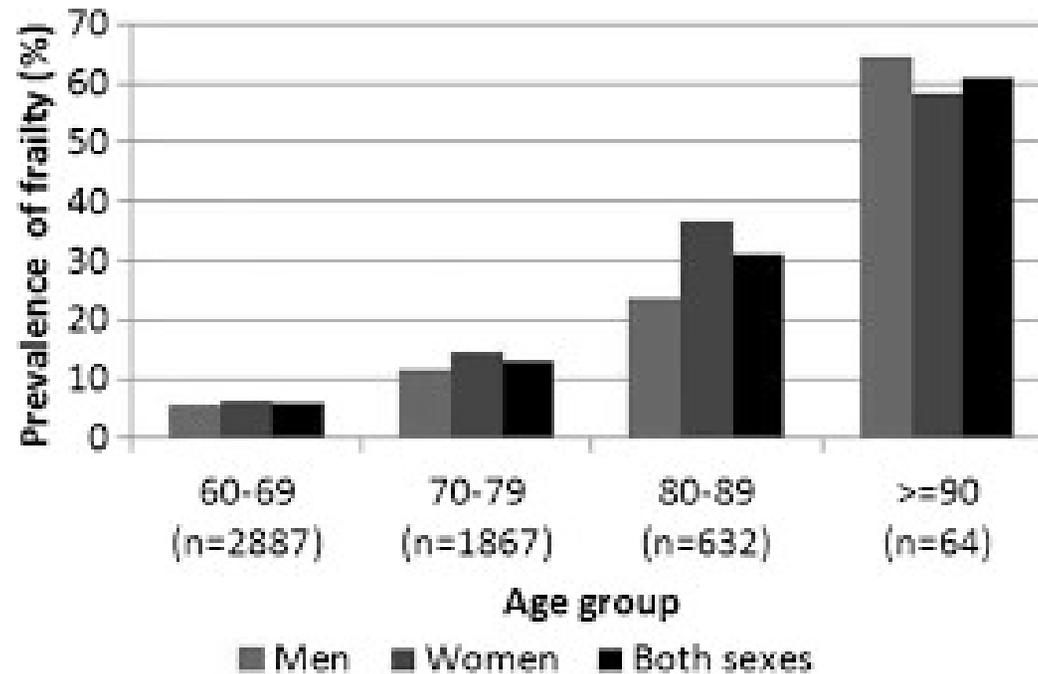
- Physiologic changes marking increased risk
- Decreased muscle mass
- Balance and gait abnormalities
- Severe deconditioning

#### Adverse Outcomes of Frailty

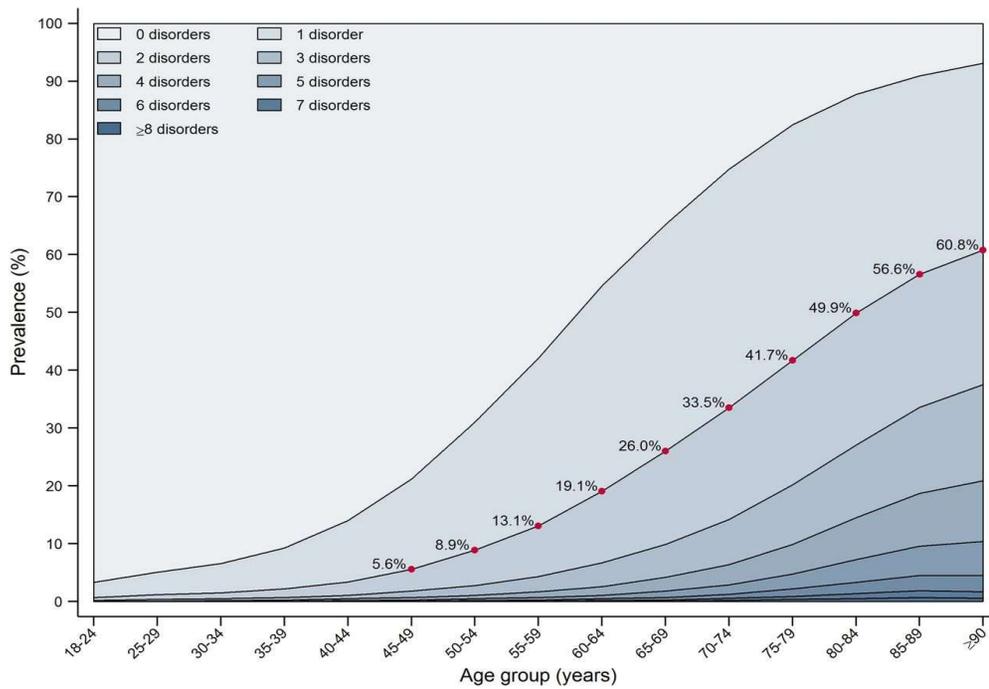
- Falls
- Injuries
- Acute Illnesses
- Hospitalizations
- Disability
- Dependency
- Institutionalization
- Death



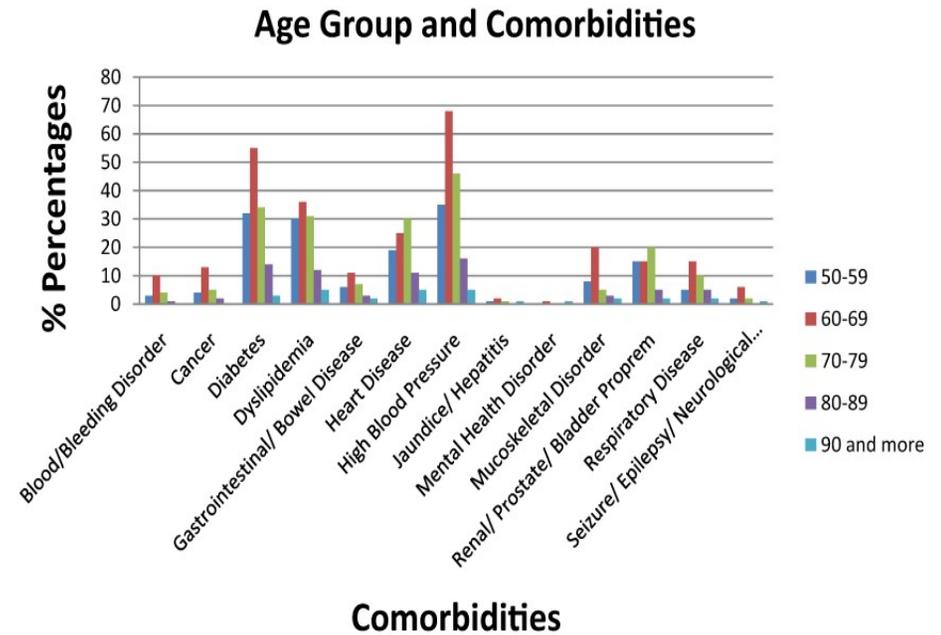
# Prevalence of frailty in UK



# Older people living with comorbidities



Jacopo Lenzi et al. *BMJ Open* 2016;6:e012812



# Poly pharmacy

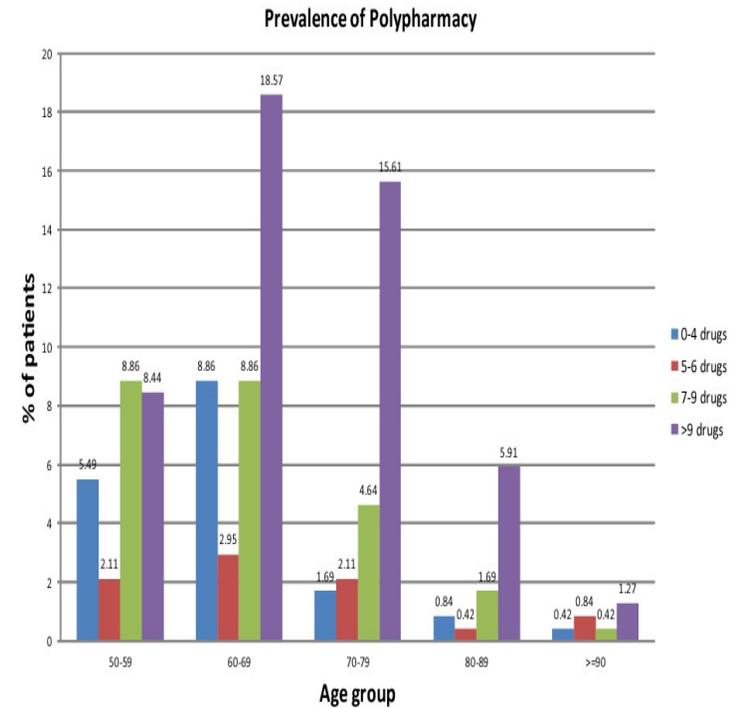
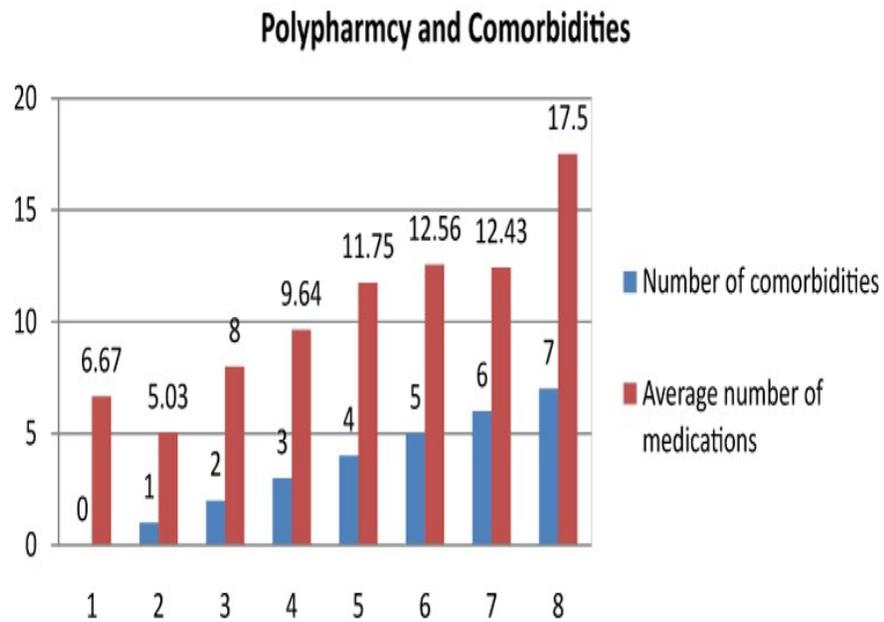


Figure 2: Prevalence of poly-pharmacy among the participating age groups.

# Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment

- ❑ Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) is a multidimensional holistic assessment of an older person that takes into consideration of health and wellbeing
- ❑ There is strong evidence that Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) is the most effective way to provide healthcare services for this population

Component	Elements
Medical assessment	Problem list Comorbid conditions and disease severity Medication review Nutritional status
Assessment of functioning	Basic activities of daily living Instrumental activities of daily living Activity/exercise status Gait and balance
Psychological assessment	Mental status (cognitive) testing Mood/depression testing
Social assessment	Informal support needs and assets Care resource eligibility/financial assessment
Environmental assessment	Home safety Transportation and telehealth

# Geriatric Medicine & Geriatrician

- Geriatric medicine is an exciting and rapidly growing and one of the largest branches of medical speciality focused on the care of older people living with frailty, who have multiple conditions and complex care needs
- Geriatricians—medical specialists with expertise in the healthcare of older people—have a key role in delivery of CGA

# How Geriatric Medicine differ from Other specialty

- Geriatricians asses patients more holistically than ‘single organ ‘specialties.
- Geriatricians are known for treating the whole person—along with managing main medical problem they also asses other geriatric syndromes such as falls, delirium, dementia, incontinence or polypharmacy.
- Geriatricians develop care plans that address the social needs along with health care needs of older adults; communicate with families and other caregivers.
- Geriatricians are also responsible for care coordination across settings; and to take a patient-centered, holistic approach to maintaining older adults’ functional status, independence and quality of life.

# Challenges in Geriatric Medicine

- Geriatricians need breadth of medical knowledge covering all medical specialties.
- Geriatric medicine is stimulating and intellectually challenging as they treat older adults that have different patterns of disease presentation when compared to younger adults, and they respond to treatments and therapies in different ways.
- Older people may react differently to drugs and geriatricians need a comprehensive knowledge of adverse drug reactions, drug interactions and how these might be affected by different diseases
- The challenges vary – from managing complex comorbidities and challenging atypical presentation and to dealing with ethical issues and to knowing when it is right to stop investigations and simply to palliate the patients.

# Attributes to be a Geriatrician

- Good communication, leadership skills, coordinating care and working very closely with other professionals in multidisciplinary team setting (MDTs) is vital.
- Providing rehabilitation after an illness is a key aspect of the work, and geriatricians will work with other team members to enable patients to work towards specific rehabilitation goals.
- Geriatricians play a key role in enabling patients to be supported at home rather than being admitted to hospital and to enable those who have been in hospital to return home sooner where possible. Planning the effective transfer of frail older patients from hospital can be complex and the geriatrician is closely involved in this process
- Understanding the legal and ethical issues surrounding work with elderly people is important, including appointment of power of attorney, guardianship, mental health legislation and resuscitation

# Subspecialty & Research

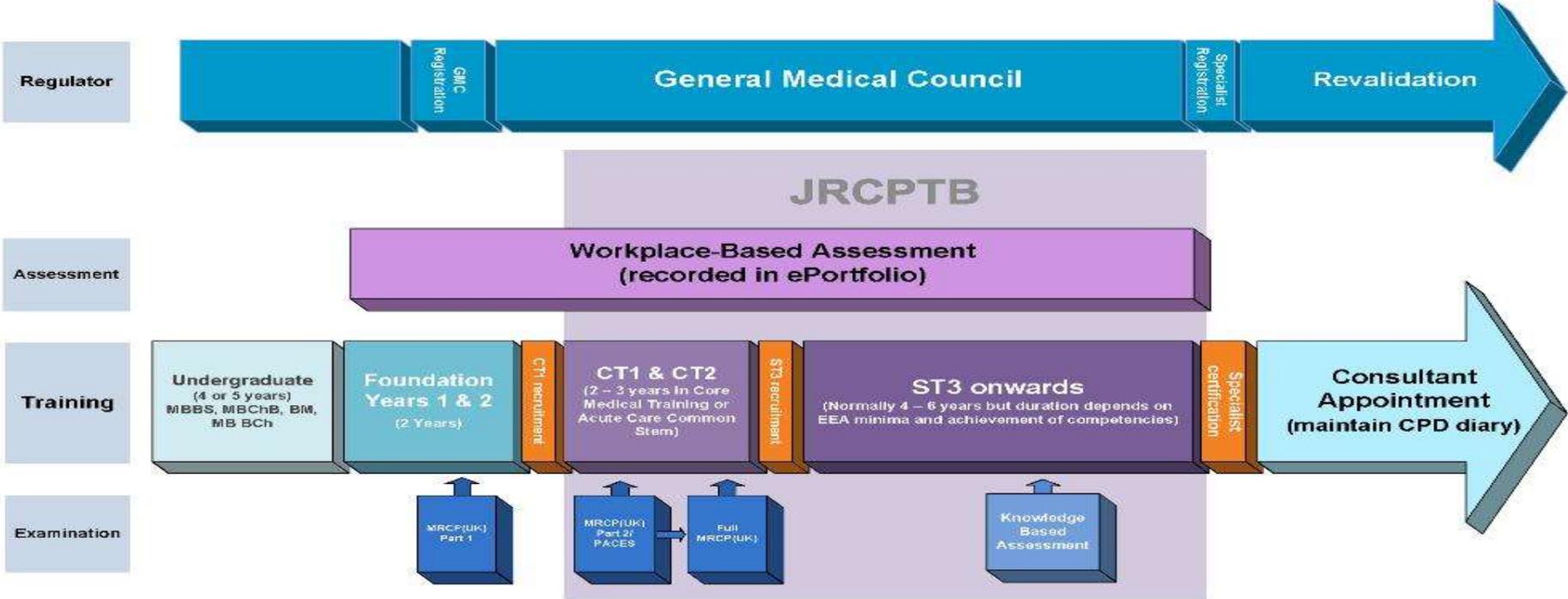
- hyperacute stroke care
- perioperative medicine
- Ortho Geriatric falls and dealing with metabolic bone disease
- incontinence
- Movement disorders ie Parkinson's disease.
- Consultants are involved in the effective management of geriatric services and there are also ample opportunities for research.

# Work Place

Geriatricians practice in many different settings and provide a patient-centred, compassionate and [holistic](#) approach—ranging from academic medical centres to community hospitals to private to rural health centres.

- outpatient departments
- acute wards
- A&E
- medical assessment units
- rehabilitation wards
- intermediate and long-term care wards
- day-care centres
- care homes
- hospices
- They work very closely with GPs, other hospital doctors, social workers and many others involved in caring for elderly people including families and carers.

# UK training pathway



**UK Medical Training Timeline**

*Geriatric medicine provides immense diversity and is rewarding, as often small improvements in health status can have a tremendous impact on older adults' quality of life, as well as that of their families and other caregivers*



# References

- *References:*
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- Royal college of Physicians London <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk>
- British Geriatric society <https://www.bgs.org.uk>
- **JRCPTB | Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board**  
*<https://www.jrcptb.org.uk>*