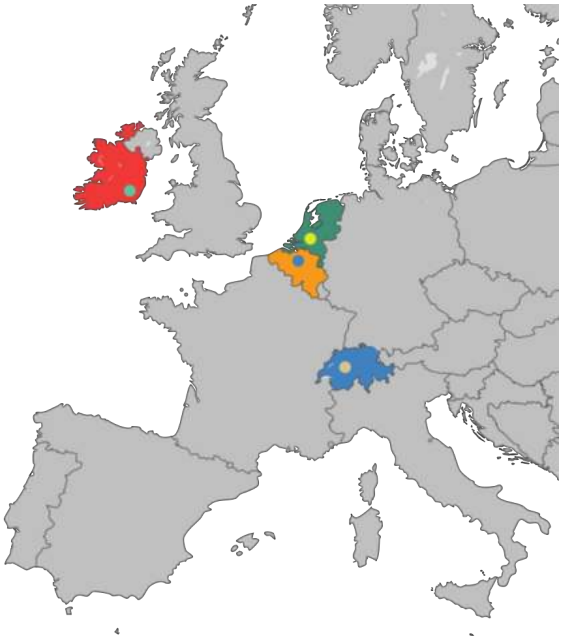
OPERAM

OPERAM is a five-year collaborative project, funded by the European Commission and the Swiss Government.

The consortium integrates trans-disciplinary expertise in different fields needed to conduct OPERAM, such as clinical research, geriatric and internal medicine, clinical pharmacy research with focus on medication optimisation in older people, clinical trials, systematic reviews and network meta-analyses, medical software development, pharmaco- and health economics, and evidence synthesis.



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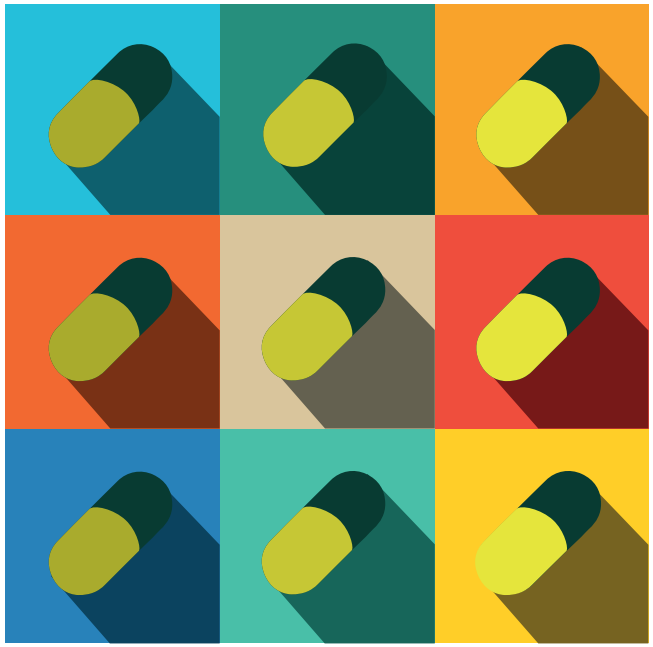
OPERAM

Optimising Therapy to prevent avoidable hospital admissions in the multimorbid elderly

A multi-centre randomised controlled clinical trial

Information for General Practitioners



Dear colleague,

OPERAM is an investigator-driven European multicentre clinical trial on **OP**timising Th**ER**apy to prevent **A**voidable hospital admissions in the **M**ultimorbid elderly conducted by Prof. Rodondi and his research team in Switzerland, and by Prof. Denis O'Mahony in Ireland.

One of your patients has consented to be involved in this study.

Therefore, we would like to give you some information about the OPERAM study in this flyer. As you know, most older adults suffer from multiple chronic diseases (multimorbidity) and require multiple medications (polypharmacy) to manage their conditions. However, multimorbid patients are often excluded from clinical trials and most guidelines address diseases in isolation, which may lead to inappropriate polypharmacy, poor drug compliance, both leading to increased hospital admissions.

The aim of the OPERAM trial is to reduce the risk of side effects and interactions caused by polypharmacy, and to assess whether this leads to reduced drug related hospital admissions. We will compare different methods to review/improve the drug therapy.

The OPERAM study started in December 2016 and will include 500 hospitalised multimorbid patients aged ≥ 70 years and taking ≥ 5 drugs regularly in Ireland. At three other clinical centres in Europe (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland), we are inviting multimorbid patients with polypharmacy to be included in our study.

Yours sincerely,
Prof. Denis O' Mahony
OPERAM Ireland Principal Investigator

How does OPERAM concern my patient and me?

Information about the health of your patient will be collected directly from your patient in follow-up phone calls performed by the OPERAM research team.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if I believe that OPERAM has recommended a medication that is not appropriate for my patient?

→ Any recommendations made by the OPERAM study have been reviewed by the patient's hospital consultant or his/her team. The physician may or may not have accepted some or all of the recommendations, or might have implemented other changes.
As the patient's general practitioner, you will know your patient's medical needs best. Therefore, if you believe that your patient's treatment is not optimal, it is (as per normal practice) at your discretion to modify this as you see fit. The OPERAM trial treatment report will merely make suggestions to try to optimize your patient's drug therapy.

Do I need to contact the UCC OPERAM team if I change my patient's medication(s)?

→ No, you are not obliged to contact the UCC OPERAM researchers. Changes in the patient's drug therapy will be recorded during the trial' follow-up period by our research team. We may need to contact you to verify medication changes. However, you are welcome to contact the researchers to give feedback or to discuss any of the patient's drugs.

You can find further information at
http://www.OPERAM-2020.eu

Do I need to report side effects from the medication(s)?

→ Yes, your patient's participation in OPERAM does not diminish your responsibility to report medication side effects to the Health Products Regulatory Authority.
You are not obliged to report side effects to OPERAM researchers, however, we encourage you to do so.
A full and accurate description of side effects experienced by enrolled patients will contribute to carefully assessing the impact of OPERAM.

Who pays if a patient needs to see me because of these side effects?

→ As OPERAM may only give recommendations regarding the drug therapy, the prescribing physician (in hospital) or you, as the patient's GP (in the outpatient setting), are free to accept or refuse these recommendations. Drug side-effects, if they occur, should be managed in the normal way.

How long will patients be included in the study? Is there something special I have to know about a patient's end of follow-up?

→ Your patient's participation in the study begins at the index hospitalisation. Your patient will receive the intervention if they have been assigned to the intervention arm of trial. Otherwise they will receive standard care.
The follow-up begins after discharge and consists of three phone call interviews over a period of 12 months.

We appreciate your opinion about any aspect of the trial. Do not hesitate to contact the research team.