

S04.5

Commercial influence on healthcare and its influence on polypharmacy

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Background & Aim: Profit is maximised for pharmaceutical companies by having as many patients on as many medications for as long as possible. This is especially problematic for older patients with multiple comorbidities and a greater risk of adverse medication effects and interactions leading to polypharmacy and inappropriate medication use.

Methods: The range of methods of influence on prescribing by pharmaceutical companies and the implications for polypharmacy will be reviewed with reference to range of existing literature. (This will be based on the framework outlined in a textbook supported by the WHO and coedited by the presenter “Understanding and Responding to Pharmaceutical promotion”).

Results: The results will be presented from the perspective of polypharmacy and inappropriate medication use on older patients.

Conclusions: Commercial influence is of particular importance to consider in prescribing for older patients. Strategies to address this as well as resources, will be outlined within a framework of Quaternary Prevention (preventing the harms of too much medication).