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Conference Abstract

## The involvement of the general practitioner in an interRAI assessment for the care of elderly in Flemish nursing homes and home care: an explorative study

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### Abstract:

**Introduction:** Since complexity of the care for the elderly increases and since a frail older person often moves across different care settings, interprofessional collaboration matters. Therefore, the BelRAI web tool with the interRAI instruments was developed in Belgium. The interRAI instruments are internationally validated, comprehensive geriatric assessments, used to collect data of clients in a structured and standardized way by different professionals and across settings. In a pilot study, financed by the Belgian Federal Government, other professionals such as nurses and social workers complained about the lack of collaboration of general practitioners (GPs). Not only this pilot study, but also scientific literature underlines that physicians are reluctant to engage when a new electronic tool is implemented. However, the studies also show that their involvement is crucial. This paper tries to explain how other professionals evaluate the collaboration with the GP and how the involvement of the GP can be improved.

**Methods:** Data was gathered via semi-structured telephone interviews with 39 GPs. Other professionals shared their views on the role of the GP in focus groups and 123 other professionals by filling out a survey.

**Results:** The questionnaire shows a higher GP involvement in nursing homes than in home care. The interviews reveal that the more the GPs are involved with BelRAI, the more positive their views. GPs state their involvement would increase under the following conditions: limited time investment per client (n=11), BelRAI output usable in GP practice (n=10), a more user-friendly application (n=9) and financial compensation (n=8).

**Conclusions and Discussion:** There is room for improving GPs involvement in BelRAI and thus to increase interprofessional collaboration in care for older people in Flanders (Belgium). The findings from this study can be of help to improve the involvement of the GP and to optimize the use of the interRAI instruments via a web based tool.

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## **Keywords**

frail elderly, interprofessional collaboration, general practitioner, explorative study

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