

'Addressing the global challenge of multimorbidity': Call for written evidence questions

Throughout the world, as life expectancy increases, the population incidence of non-communicable diseases is also increasing. Further, communicable diseases, with both their short and long term sequelae, continue to affect millions of people every year. Together, all of these factors mean that multimorbidity has become, and will increasingly be, an international health challenge.

However, currently there is no commonly used framework for defining or more widely understanding multimorbidity. Further, most health related research is currently focused on the prevention and management of disorders in isolation. Consequently, it is difficult to compile a coherent body of research in this area or develop evidence-based strategies for use in healthcare systems. In order to address the challenge of multimorbidity, we must understand the problem better.

Therefore, the Academy of Medical Sciences is undertaking a project to examine these issues in the UK and in several other countries. We have established a Working Group, which aims to:

1. Summarise:
 - a. How multimorbidity has been defined within research to date, and how the existing intellectual framework might impact future progress within the field.
 - b. The existing evidence on the prevalence, burden and determinants of multimorbidity in populations throughout the world, including in high, middle, and low income countries.
 - c. The existing evidence about the most appropriate prevention and treatment strategies among individuals with multimorbidity.
2. Make recommendations about the implications for future medical research, by:
 - a. Identifying ways to think about multimorbidity, potentially through an improved intellectual framework or greater consistency in the research methods used.
 - b. Identifying the most significant gaps in the existing evidence about multimorbidity and the associated research priorities, which might include prevalence, burden, determinants, prevention, management and healthcare delivery strategies.

The major focus of this project is multimorbidity in adults, but information about multimorbidity in children will also be compiled. The output of the project will be a report that will make recommendations to key UK and international stakeholders. For further information, please visit our website: <http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk/policy/policy-projects/multimorbidity/>

In addition to the responses to this call for evidence, the project will be informed by workshops, oral evidence sessions, desk-based research, and expert input from the project's Working Group, Chaired by Professor Stephen MacMahon FMedSci, Principal Director, The George Institute for Global Health. Therefore, **please note that you do not need to address all the questions listed unless you wish to do so** – the Academy welcomes your input to any of the questions you feel are relevant to your expertise or experience.

Please also note that selected excerpts from responses to this call may be included in publications arising from the workstream. **Please notify us at the time of submission if you do not wish your name or input to be published.** We are also happy to receive anonymous submissions.

Please try to limit your response to no more than 3,000 words, and return the completed form by Wednesday 30 November to Dr Rachel Brown: Rachel.Brown@acmedsci.ac.uk (+44 (0)20 3141 3223).

If you have any questions or would like to respond but are unable to meet this deadline, please do not hesitate to contact Rachel who will be happy to provide more information.

Thank you in advance for your contribution to this project.

* *Mandatory fields*

* Name:

* Job title:

* Organisation/institution:

* Email address:

Telephone number:

* Is this input submitted as an organisational or individual response? Organisation / Individual

* Are you happy for your response to be published by the Academy? Yes / No

Definitions

1. There is no standard definition of 'multimorbidity' – various different definitions are used. Which definitions (or aspects of definitions) do you think are most helpful to efforts to describe and understand multimorbidity?

Please provide references for any published research, and highlight any other initiatives related to multimorbidity that the Academy may be interested in.

Current knowledge base

When answering these questions, please consider both national and international populations of high, middle, and low income countries. Please provide examples and case studies to illustrate your arguments where appropriate. Please provide references for any published research.

2. What are the key data, and what data sources exist, on the prevalence, burden (including costs and impact on health systems) and determinants of multimorbidity? Are there significant gaps in such data and, if so, what are they?

3. What are the key data, and what data sources exist, on the prevention of multimorbidity? Are there significant gaps in such data and, if so, what are they?

4. What are the key data, and what data sources exist, on the management of multimorbidity? Are there significant gaps in such data; if so, what are they?

The term 'management' here could refer to clinical interventions designed to specifically treat patients with multimorbidity as well as strategies for the delivery of healthcare services patients with multimorbidity. The term also refers to a wide range of management approaches that may differ by the specific diseases that co-exist.

5. What are the key sources of funding for research into multimorbidity? Are there gaps in funding and, if so, where?

Looking forward

6. What should the definition of 'multimorbidity' be? How would this definition improve research and/or treatment?

7. What are the priorities for research about the prevalence, burden and determinants of multimorbidity?

8. What are the priorities for research about the prevention of multimorbidity?

9. What are the priorities for research about the management (as defined above) of patients with multimorbidity?

10. What should be the strategic response of both national and international research funders and agencies be to multimorbidity?