

## **SAND abstract No. 71 from the BEACH program 2004–05**

### **Subject: Patient BMI, morbidity and medication use in adults**

**Organisations supporting this study:** Merck Sharp and Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd

**Issues:** The proportion of general practice patients who are underweight, in a normal weight range, overweight or obese; the selected conditions for which adult patients are being prescribed a medication; the types of medications that are being prescribed for these conditions; the duration of each of the conditions since diagnosis.

**Sample:** 1,913 adult respondents (18 years and over) from 75 GPs; data collection period: 20/07/2004–23/08/2004.

**Method:** Detailed in the paper entitled 'SAND Method 2004–05' on this website: <[http://www.fmrc.org.au/publications/SAND\\_abstracts.htm](http://www.fmrc.org.au/publications/SAND_abstracts.htm)>.

### **Summary of results**

The age–sex distribution of the adult respondents was similar to the distribution for all adult BEACH encounters, with the majority of patients (57.1%) being female. Patients aged 45–64 years accounted for 26.8% of the sample.

In this analysis, the standard method of BMI was applied to adults (aged 18+ years) only. Therefore, the sample size was 1,913 adult patients. Of the 1,735 patients for whom BMI could be calculated, more than half (56.8%, 95% CI: 51.0–62.5) were overweight or obese and 7.6% (95% CI: 6.1–9.0) were underweight. One third (35.7%, 95% CI: 32.8–38.6) had a normal BMI.

Of 1,913 adult respondents, one quarter (25.4%) were taking a prescribed medication for hypertension, 12.1% for elevated cholesterol, 11.5% for osteoarthritis, 8.9% for depression, 7.3% for cardiovascular disease (CVD) or peripheral vascular disease (PVD), and 6.1% were taking a prescribed medication for diabetes type 2.

There were 649 prescribed medications for hypertension in adult patients. Perindopril and irbesartan were the most common medications (10.5% and 10.3% respectively). They were followed by ramipril (9.2%) and atenolol (8.9%).

Of 411 adult patients taking a prescribed medication for hypertension and responding to the question about duration of hypertension since diagnosis, 84.9% had suffered from hypertension for more than 24 months, 4.9% for about 24 months and 6.3% for approximately 12 months. The remainder (3.9%) had hypertension newly diagnosed.

In the overweight or obese adult respondents (n=985), about one third (32.0%) were taking a prescribed medication for hypertension, 15.8% for elevated cholesterol, 14.2% for osteoarthritis, 10.0% for depression, 8.6% for diabetes type 2, and 8.5% for CVD or PVD.

Of the 750 underweight or normal weight adult respondents, 18.0% were taking a prescribed medication for hypertension, 9.2% for osteoarthritis, 7.9% for depression, 7.3% for elevated cholesterol, 6.3% for CVD or PVD, and 2.4% for diabetes type 2.

Overweight or obese adult patients were more likely to be taking a prescribed medication for hypertension, elevated cholesterol, and diabetes type 2, when compared with their underweight or normal weight adult counterparts.

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