Letters to the Editor

We assessed 100 consecutive patients hospitalized with acute stroke, and determined their risk factors for stroke and their appropriate control before admission. The age range of patients was 44–104 years; 70% were over 65 years; 57% were men. The modifiable risk factors assessed were hypertension, diabetes mellitus, hypertension in those with diabetes, atrial fibrillation, hypercholesterolaemia, smoking, obesity and excess alcohol intake.

We found that hypertension was the most common modifiable risk factor before the stroke—46 patients had a history of hypertension. Based upon their last three known blood pressure readings, hypertension was appropriately controlled (as per British Hypertension Society guidelines [2]) in 13 patients. Of 17 patients with known diabetes mellitus before their stroke, 14 had hypertension: this was appropriately controlled (as per British Hypertension Society guidelines) in only one patient.

Despite the guidelines [2] and the research evidence [3], many patients are missing opportunities for stroke prevention in the United Kingdom.

Abhaya Gupta, Peter Thomas
B6 Department of Medicine, University Hospital, Cardiff CF14 4XW, UK
Fax: (+44) 2920 745036
Email: guptaabha@gmail.com


Management of hypertension in primary care

SIR—We read with interest the report on the management of older patients with hypertension in primary care by Duggan and co-workers [1]. The authors found that the detection and treatment of hypertension in older people in primary care has improved, but only one-third of patients had their blood pressure controlled on medication.