

# Competencies Required By All Hospital Doctors Caring for Older Adults: A Group Concept Mapping Study

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## Introduction

Ireland has a rapidly ageing population. Older adults are the largest healthcare service users. It is essential that all hospital doctors are trained in the minimum geriatric competencies, however no overarching framework exists. To gain expert insight into which competencies are required we conducted a group concept mapping (GCM) study, inviting diverse stakeholders share their perspectives on the competencies essential for hospital doctors treating older adults.

## Methods

- GCM is a mixed methods approach utilized to generate expert group consensus on a specific topic, enabling participants to organise and represent their ideas (2).
- We invited healthcare professionals, patient advocacy groups and clinical educators to participate in GCM via an online platform.
- Analysis was carried out using hierarchical cluster analysis and multi-dimensional scaling.

## Results

- Forty-eight participants completed the brainstorming stage, generating eighty-eight statements.
- Twenty-two participants contributed to the subsequent sorting stage.
- Participants included hospital doctors, general practitioners, allied health professionals and patient advocacy.
- Figure 1 illustrates a concept cluster map visually representing the creation of clusters, which contains a group of related competencies that were identified and organised by participants.
- This study identified nine key competency clusters, each containing competencies considered crucial for hospital doctors treating older adults.
- The clusters are organized by their perceived importance (layer value), with Communication Skills deemed the most critical (layer 5).

### Cluster Legend

Layer	Value
1	3.84 to 3.96
2	3.96 to 4.07
3	4.07 to 4.19
4	4.19 to 4.31
5	4.31 to 4.42

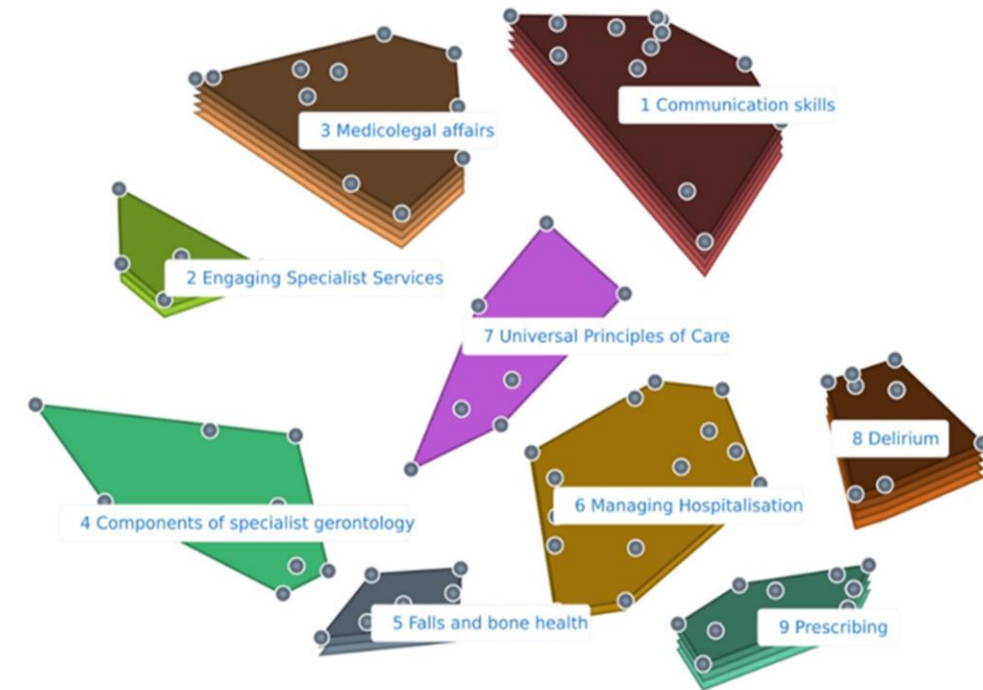


Figure 1. A cluster map illustrating competencies grouped in each cluster.

## Conclusion

- The nine competency domains indicate the diverse skillset required by all doctors to provide comprehensive care to older adults within a hospital setting.
- These competencies serve as a foundational framework for policymakers and educators ensuring quality healthcare for the ageing population.