

Self-ageism among older rural people

I have read, with great respect, the research titled '*Underlying cancer risk among patients with fatigue and other vague symptoms: a population-based cohort study in primary care*'.¹ The research clarified essential evidence regarding the relationship between fatigue and cancer risk among older patients. Furthermore, the results revealed a higher risk of cancer among older patients with fatigue than among younger generations.¹ Family physicians should thus be cautious about older patients' various symptoms with fatigue in primary settings to detect occult malignancies.

Furthermore, family physicians should also take into consideration ageism prevailing among the older generation.

Ageism refers to age-based stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination against older people, and dealing with older patients' symptoms as trivial or missing them in hospitals.² Especially in rural contexts, older patients tend to dismiss their symptoms, including fatigue, because they tend to consider their symptoms vague and not significant.³ This can be called self-ageism. This research result should be emphasised in rural contexts so as not to miss malignancy among older patients. Both family physicians and older people should take older patients' symptoms of fatigue seriously and investigate them appropriately in primary care settings.

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