

A multicentre study on the use of the Single Question in Delirium (SQiD) in acutely hospitalised elderly patients

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Introduction

Delirium is a serious complication especially affecting hospitalised elderly patients but is often overlooked.¹ Asking relatives the Single Question in Delirium (SQiD) “Is your relative more confused now than before being hospitalised?” checks for acute onset of cognitive impairment and fluctuation. In geriatric patients, SQiD has so far only been investigated in small samples, and not at all in Germany.

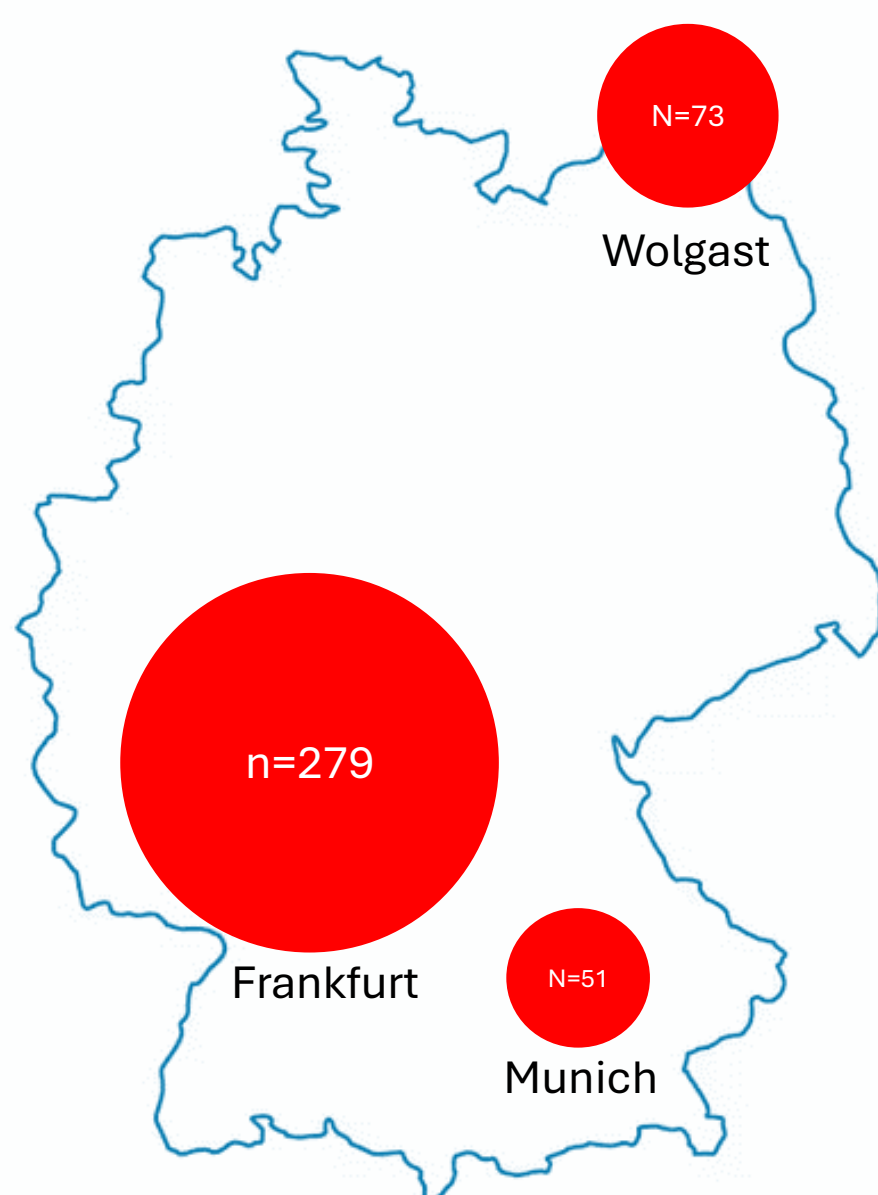
Methods

On World Delirium Awareness Day 2024, delirium screening was performed in three hospitals in Germany (**Figure 1**) for inpatients aged ≥ 70 years using 4AT. In addition, relatives were asked the SQiD question by telephone. In addition delirium awareness was assessed by asking healthcare staff if they thought delirium is present. Primary endpoint was the proportion of patients with delirium. Secondary endpoints were the detection of delirium by 4AT with and without SQiD, SQiD as a standalone question in comparison and Delirium awareness of healthcare staff.

Results

Overall, 403 patients were included, mean age was 81.3 years (+/- 6.3) with 223 (55.3%) being female. SQiD was available in 283 of patients (70.2%). **Figure 2** illustrates the results: Delirium was diagnosed in 126 of patients (31.3%) using combination of 4AT and SQiD (blue circles). 44 additional cases (+ 53%) were identified through the use of SQiD. Of all 126 patients with delirium, only 44 (34.9%) were perceived as delirious by nursing staff (yellow numbers). In patients screened positive for delirium by SQiD, only 3 of 44 (6.8%) were perceived as delirious by nursing staff.

Figure 1



Key conclusions

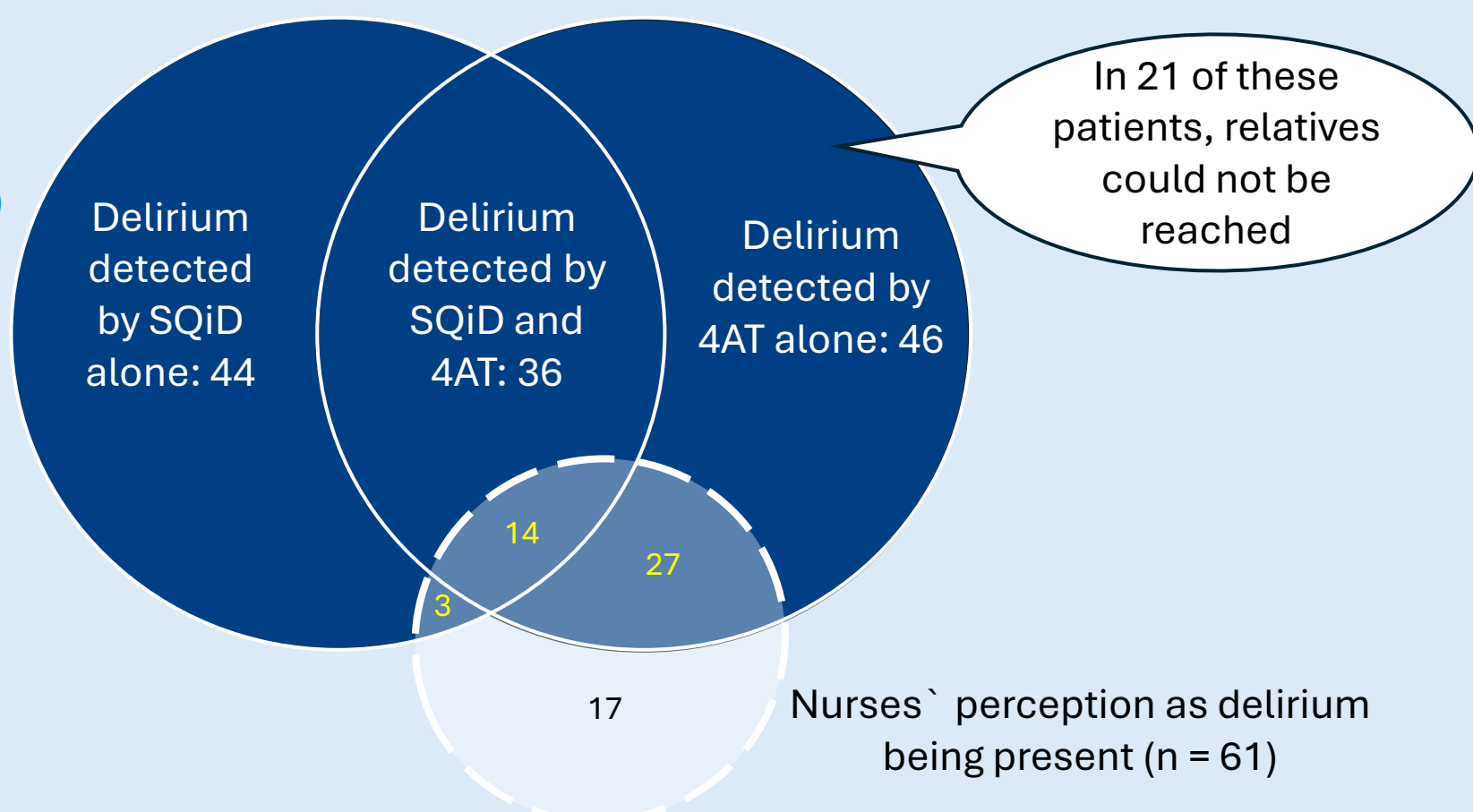
SQiD is reliable and easy to obtain provided relatives can be reached. Thus, it can help to significantly improve delirium detection.

At the same time, delirium is often overlooked by nursing staff, especially if delirium is indicated only by positive screening by SQiD.

Figure 2

Patients without delirium (n = 277)

Patients with delirium (n = 126)



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Literature

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- 2) Hendry K et al. Evaluation of delirium screening tools in geriatric medical inpatients: a diagnostic test accuracy study. *Age Ageing*. 2016 Nov;45(6):832-837.