

Adults with severe mental disorders outpatient treatment

Severe mental disorders, i.e. psychosis, severe depression, mania, or bipolar affective disorder, are relatively rare conditions and approximately 1-3.5% of the population will experience psychosis at some point in their life. Severe mental disorder can lead to long-term and major loss of function as well as extensive need for care, while others can have a shorter period of illness. Patients with severe mental disorders often receive both outpatient and inpatient treatment from the specialist health services.

Sample and definitions

Adults between 18 and 64 years who in 2014-2018 had at least one outpatient contact in mental healthcare, interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment (TSB) or private specialists under public funding contracts, with severe mental disorder as the primary or secondary diagnosis are included. Severe mental disorder (SMD) is defined by the ICD 10-codes F20-29, F30.1, F30.2, F30.8, F30.9, F31, F32.3, F33.3.

Outpatient contacts are defined as contacts where a patient (or next of kin) was physically present, and was admitted and discharged on the same day (includes both outpatient contacts as well as day care). Indirect outpatient contacts are not included here.

Hospital referral area	Number of contacts	Number of patients	Contacts per patient
Lovisenberg	25,402	1,099	23.1
Sørlandet	22,982	1,097	20.9
St. Olavs	21,546	1,213	17.8
Stavanger	26,369	1,514	17.4
Diakonhjemmet	10,733	634	16.9
OUS	20,739	1,241	16.7
Møre og Romsdal	14,424	908	15.9
Bergen	30,580	2,014	15.2
Telemark	10,508	699	15.0
UNN	8,696	596	14.6
Ahus	23,086	1,589	14.5
Vestfold	13,919	965	14.4
Østfold	10,258	766	13.4
Vestre Viken	24,891	1,874	13.3
Fonna	8,774	684	12.8
Nord-Trøndelag	6,248	511	12.2
Innlandet	15,905	1,313	12.1
Nordland	4,976	428	11.6
Helgeland	2,677	249	10.8
Førde	3,461	329	10.5
Finnmark	1,971	255	7.7
Norway	308,145	19,586	15.7

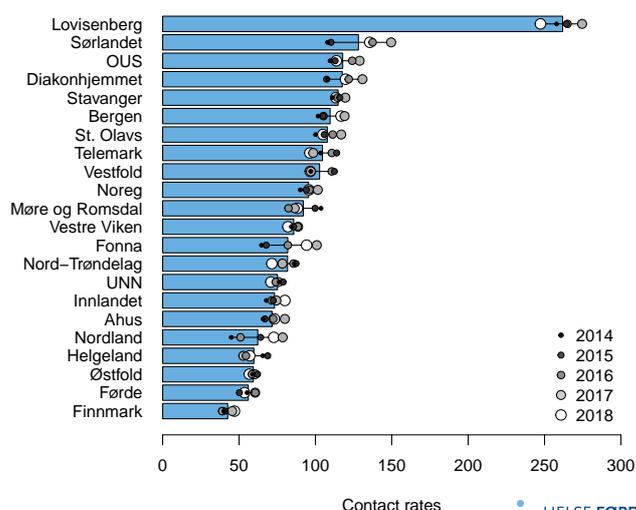
Outpatient treatment of adults with severe mental disorders. Number of contacts, number of patients and contacts per patient, broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. The figures represent average values per year (2014-2018) and contacts with mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services for adults (18-64 years).

Results

Each year almost 20,000 adults with severe mental disorders had one or more outpatient contacts in mental healthcare, interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment or mental healthcare specialists – 308,000 outpatient contacts in Norway in total.

The patient rate varied across hospital referral areas from 4 to 11 adults a year in outpatient treatment per 1,000 population. The contact rate varied from 43 to 262 contacts a year per 1,000 population, with an average of 95.

Adults with severe mental disorder had on average 16 outpatient contacts a year, varying from 8 to 23 contacts across hospital referral areas.



Source: NPR/SSB
 Contact rates, adults with severe mental disorders receiving outpatient treatment. Number of contacts per 1,000 population, broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. The bars show the average values per year for the period 2014-2018, and the dots represent the rates for each year. The rates have been adjusted for age and gender.

Comment

There is large variation in outpatient treatment for adults with severe mental disorders, but little variation in the patient rate. Patients in hospital referral areas with the highest number of contacts per patient had three times as many contacts as patients in the referral areas with the lowest number.

Adults with severe mental disorders receive a varying level of outpatient care, depending on where in the country they live. Care is more extensive for each patient in major cities than elsewhere. The relatively larger use of outpatient services in mental healthcare and specialised addiction treatment in the major cities may also be the result of a higher need for treatment there.