

Mental healthcare and substance abuse treatment 2014-2018

Children and adolescents in inpatient treatment

Mental disorders are often referred to as young people's disease, and in most cases, the disorder manifests itself before the patient turns 25. A high proportion of boys are referred to mental healthcare services at primary school age. Developmental and behavioural disorders are the most common conditions among boys, and 'suspected hyperkinetic disorder' (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, ADHD) is a common reason for referral. Among the girls, the majority of patients are referred at lower secondary school age. Common reasons for referral include 'suspected depression' or 'suspected anxiety disorder'. From puberty, adjustment disorders and eating disorders also become common among girls. Outpatient contacts for the youngest children could be due to postnatal depression in the mother, in which case the parents receive follow-up for the first year, or they could be services aimed at children with autism, premature children, disorders caused by exposure to intoxicating substances or complex child welfare cases. 95% of patients are treated in outpatient treatment, and most of the admissions in day treatment are voluntary.

Sample and definitions

Children and adolescents between 0 and 17 years who in 2014-2018 received at least one day of inpatient treatment in mental healthcare are included.

Admissions are defined as stays in / admissions to an institution with a duration of more than zero days registered in mental healthcare or interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment. Admissions less than eight hours apart have been added together. Admissions with a duration exceeding 365 days were excluded from further analyses. The yearly rates are registered in the year of discharge.

Hospital referral area	Number of patients	Number of admissions	Days per admission
Lovisenberg	13	15	67.0
OUS	59	79	62.0
Ahus	80	114	48.9
Diakonhjemmet	23	33	46.9
Vestre Viken	111	146	41.3
Helgeland	43	57	38.0
Telemark	65	91	36.9
Innlandet	145	214	35.8
Vestfold	47	64	32.1
Nordland	78	104	28.7
Finnmark	68	97	25.7
Fonna	79	98	24.7
Stavanger	127	201	21.8
St. Olavs	98	148	21.0
Østfold	99	198	21.0
UNN	94	148	20.1
Sørlandet	80	131	18.3
Møre og Romsdal	128	172	17.0
Førde	43	70	16.9
Bergen	189	284	15.9
Nord-Trøndelag	103	117	14.3
Norway	1,770	2,581	26.9

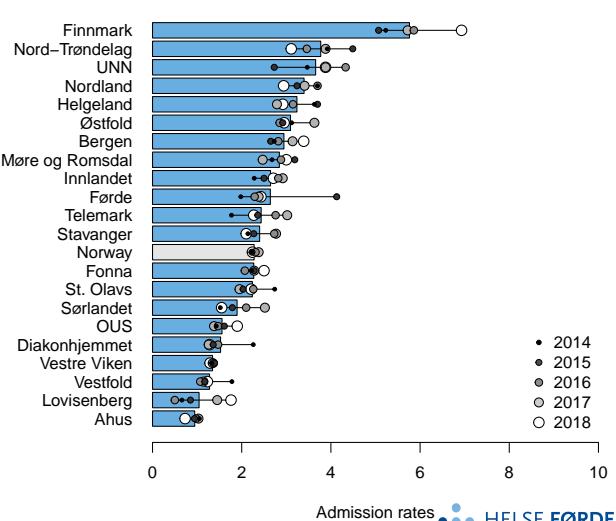
Inpatient treatment of children and adolescents in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services. Number of patients, number of admissions and days per admission broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. Average values per year (2014-2018).

Results

Each year 1,770 children and adolescents were admitted for inpatient treatment in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment in Norway, with an average of 2,600 number of admissions yearly.

The patient rate varied across hospital referral areas from 0.9 to 5.8 admissions per 1,000 population, averaging at 2.3 yearly.

Admissions for children and adolescents varied 27 days on average, but varied particularly much across hospital referral areas from 14 to 68 days per admission.



Comments

Relatively few children and adolescents were admitted to inpatient treatment, but the variation is particularly high both for admission rates and patient rates. The differences in duration of admissions is significant, with almost five times longer stays in hospital referral areas with the longest stays, compared to areas with the shortest admissions.