

Elderly patients with severe mental disorders inpatient 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

Patients at the age of 65 years and above who in 2014-2018 had at least one admission in mental healthcare or interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment (TSB), 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.

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 of more than 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
OUS	54	69	54.1
Diakonhjemmet	36	50	47.7
Ahus	90	118	46.6
Stavanger	77	110	41.7
Vestre Viken	88	134	37.7
Østfold	54	76	36.5
Vestfold	41	54	34.8
Bergen	130	205	34.7
Innlandet	87	135	34.4
Lovisenberg	31	45	34.1
Telemark	45	74	34.0
St. Olavs	72	133	31.7
Finnmark	20	31	29.8
Nord-Trøndelag	28	43	29.7
Nordland	21	30	26.5
Helgeland	16	24	26.0
Fonna	54	93	26.0
Sørlandet	63	104	25.1
Møre og Romsdal	64	109	25.0
UNN	39	74	24.9
Førde	30	52	22.9
Norway	1,141	1,764	34.2

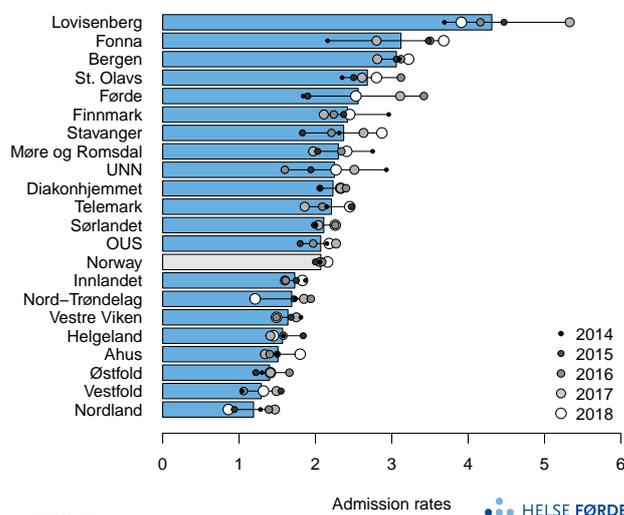
Inpatient treatment of elderly patients with severe mental disorders. Includes inpatient stays in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services. Number of patients, admissions and days per admission, broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. The figures represent average values per year for the period 2014-2018 and apply to elderly people aged 65 years and older.

Results

Each year 1,141 elderly patients with severe mental disorder were admitted for inpatient treatment in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment in Norway, for 1,764 admissions yearly in total.

The patient rate varied across hospital referral areas from 0.9 to 3.0 elderly patients with severe mental disorders in inpatient treatment per 1,000 population each year.

The admission rate varied across hospital referral areas from 1.2 to 4.3 admissions per 1,000 population, with a yearly average rate of 2.1 admissions. Admissions for elderly patients with severe mental disorder varied on average 34 days, and varied across hospital referral areas from 23 to 54 days per admission.



Source: NPR/SSB
Admission rates, elderly patients with severe mental disorders receiving inpatient treatment. Number of admissions 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.

Comments

There is large variation in inpatient treatment for elderly patients with severe mental disorder, and the admissions are on average more than twice as long in the capital area as in hospital referral areas with the shortest admissions.

The variation is unwarranted and there is a strong concern that elderly patients do not receive an equal level of care.