Mental healthcare and substance abuse treatment 2014-2018



Elderly patients in inpatient treatment

The most common mental disorders among the elderly are the same as for the younger population and can be treated similarly. In addition, the elderly can have other, age-related challenges. In many European countries 35% of the elderly have had a mental disorder during the last year, and Norwegian studies show an increase in the prevalence of depression for the elderly. The prevalence of dementia is 5-10% for the elderly. Mental health issues are often complex, and assessment and treatment occurs both in the primary healthcare service as well as in geriatrics, neurology, geriatric psychiatry and general psychiatry and outpatient clinics. These services are organised differently in different parts of Norway.

Sample and definitions

Patients at the age of 65 and older who in 2014-2018 had at least one inpatient contact in mental healthcare or interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment (TSB) 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	Number	Number	Days
area	of patients	of admissions	per admission
OUS	171	230	38.8
Ahus	281	370	35.3
Diakonhjemmet	102	141	34.2
Stavanger	228	322	32.6
Bergen	383	561	30.8
Telemark	175	238	29.5
Innlandet	299	464	28.5
Finnmark	51	76	27.3
Nordland	130	172	26.9
Lovisenberg	85	139	26.8
Vestre Viken	305	483	26.7
Helgeland	65	89	26.4
St. Olavs	222	367	26.3
Østfold	205	275	26.2
Vestfold	152	193	24.1
UNN	154	246	23.4
Sørlandet	199	298	22.8
Fonna	156	244	22.0
Førde	97	152	21.7
Nord-Trøndelag	102	151	20.3
Møre og Romsdal	250	426	19.2
Norway	3,813	5,634	27.4

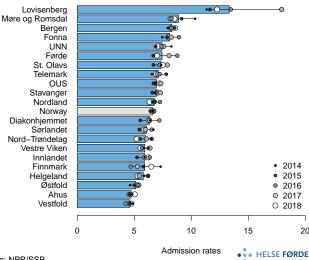
Inpatient treatment of elderly patients in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services. Number of patients, admissions and days per admission, broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. The figures represent average values per year for the period 2014–2018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

Results

Each year 3,800 elderly were admitted for inpatient treatment in mental healthcare or interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment -5,600 admissions in Norway in total.

The patient rate varied across hospital referral areas from 4 to 8 elderly patients a year in inpatient treatment per 1,000 population. The admission rate varied from 5 to 13 admissions s a year per 1,000 population, with an average of 7.

The length of admissions was on average 27 days, varying from 19 to 39 days per admission across hospital referral areas.



Source: NPR/SSB

Admission rates for inpatient treatment of elderly patients (65 years and older) in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services: 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.

Comment

The variation in admission rates for elderly patients in inpatient treatment in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment is moderate. The number of patients is relatively low and the rates therefore contain of a larger share of random variation.

There is still nearly three times more admissions per population in the hospital referral areas with the highest rate than in the referral areas with the lowest rate, and almost twice as many days per admission in referral areas with the highest number of days than in areas with the lowest. We can therefore suspect that people in different hospital referral areas do not have an equal level of care.