

Adults with substance abuse disorder outpatient treatment

Alcohol use disorder is the most common substance abuse disorder in Norway, and is most common among young adults between 18 and 35 years. Harmful use of alcohol is more common among men than women. Patients with substance abuse disorders usually have other mental disorders and somatic diseases as well. Persons with substance abuse disorders can have both outpatient treatment and inpatient treatment in 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 substance abuse disorder as the primary or secondary diagnosis are included. Substance abuse disorder is defined by the ICD 10-codes F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F18, F19.

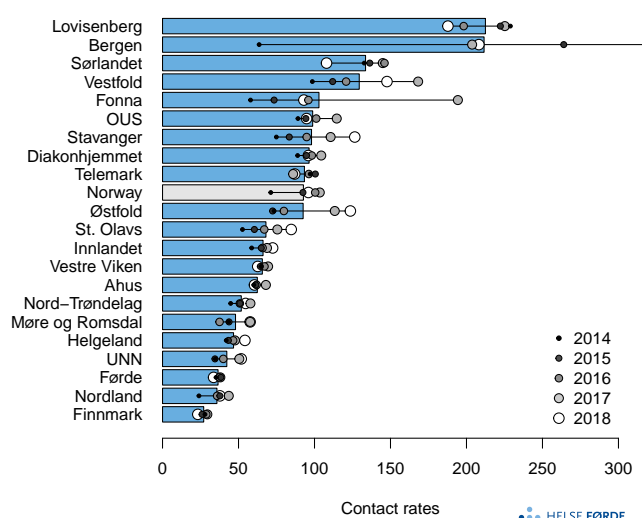
Outpatient contacts are defined as contacts where a patient (or next of kin) was physically present, and was admitted and discharged on the same day (includes both outpatient contacts as well as day care). Indirect outpatient contacts are not included here.

Hospital referral area	Number of contacts	Number of patients	Contacts per patient
Bergen	59,542	2,644	22.5
Vestfold	17,569	1,372	12.8
Lovisenberg	21,644	1,704	12.7
Stavanger	22,782	1,803	12.6
Sørlandet	23,799	1,914	12.4
Fonna	11,059	988	11.2
OUS	16,950	1,590	10.7
Diakonhjemmet	8,769	832	10.5
St. Olavs	13,720	1,312	10.5
Møre og Romsdal	7,516	762	9.9
Ahus	20,102	2,068	9.7
Østfold	15,843	1,666	9.5
Vestre Viken	18,833	1,984	9.5
Telemark	9,364	1,046	9.0
UNN	4,923	554	8.9
Innlandet	14,418	1,661	8.7
Helgeland	2,066	242	8.5
Nord-Trøndelag	4,022	509	7.9
Førde	2,302	328	7.0
Nordland	2,869	432	6.6
Finnmark	1,258	204	6.2
Norway	299,349	25,027	12.0

Outpatient treatment of patients with substance use disorder. Includes contacts with mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services. 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 for the period 2014–2018 and apply to adults aged 18–64 years.

Results

Each year 25,000 adults with substance abuse disorders had one or more outpatient contacts in mental healthcare, interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment or mental healthcare specialists – 300,000 outpatient contacts in Norway in total. The patient rate varied from 4 to 17 adults in outpatient treatment per 1,000 population a year across hospital referral areas. The contact rate varied from 27 to 212 contacts per 1,000 population a year, with an average of 93. Adults with substance abuse disorders had on average 12 outpatient contacts a year, varying from 6 to 22 contacts across hospital referral areas. Interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment represented 77% of the contacts, and mental healthcare represented 11%. The share of contacts in interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment varied from 18% to 91% across hospital referral areas, while the share in mental healthcare varied from 8% to 80%. Mental healthcare specialists represented relatively few contacts.



Source: NPR/SSB
Contact rates, adults with substance use disorder 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

The variation in outpatient treatment for adults with substance abuse disorders is large. The variation in patient rates is also large across hospital referral areas, and adults from referral areas with the highest rates receive more than three times as many outpatient contacts each year as adults in the referral areas with the lowest rates. Adults with substance abuse treatment receive a varying level of outpatient care, depending on where in the country they reside. The relatively high use of outpatient treatment in mental healthcare and mental healthcare specialists is possibly because of the higher need of treatment there.