

Mental healthcare and substance abuse treatment 2014-2018

Children and adolescents in outpatient treatment Age segments

Mental disorders are often referred to as young people's disease, and in most cases, the disorder manifests itself before the patient turns 25. Outpatient contacts for the youngest children in mental healthcare could be due to autism, premature children, postnatal depression in the mother, disorders caused by exposure to intoxicating substances or complex child welfare cases. 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. 95% of patients are treated in outpatient treatment, and most of the stays in day treatment are voluntary.

Sample and definitions

Patients 0-5, 6-12 and 13-17 years old receiving at least one outpatient contact in mental healthcare for children and adolescents, mental healthcare for adults, interdisciplinary specialised addiction treatment and mental healthcare specialists in private practice under public funding contracts during the period 2014-2018.

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

Results

Children aged 0-5 years had the lowest number of outpatient contacts. The contact rate ranged from 37 to 212 per 1,000 population, with a yearly average of 92.

The average contact rate in the age group 6-12 years varied from 377 to 750 contacts per 1,000 population, across hospital referral areas, with a yearly average of 524.

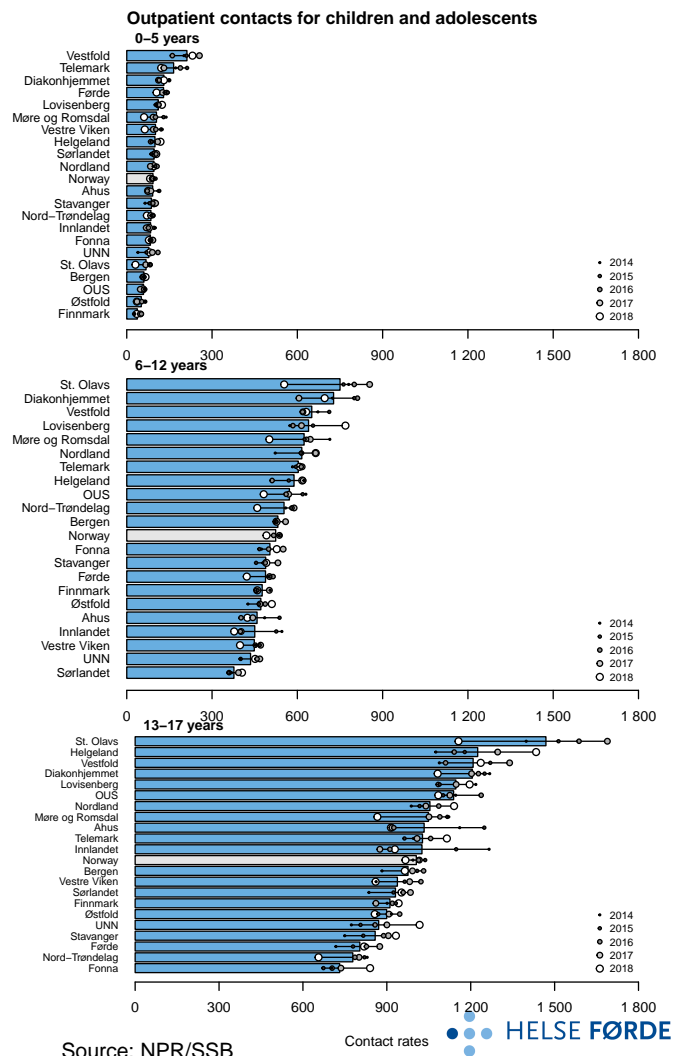
The outpatient contact rate was highest in the age group 13-17 years, averaging at 524 yearly. The rate varied from 731 to 1,469 per 1,000 population across hospital referral areas.

Comments

Children and adolescents make up the second largest patient group in the health atlas for mental healthcare and substance abuse treatment. The variation in outpatient treatment in the age group 0-17 years is low both for contact rates and patient rates.

In the age group 13-17 years the rate was higher for girls, and the contact rate at the highest level in the atlas for mental health care and substance abuse treatment. The rate is higher than for adults and the elderly.

Outpatient contact rates for different age groups vary across hospital referral areas. Some areas have relatively high contact rates for children in the age group 0-5 years, while others have relatively high contact rate in every age group, and in some hospital referral areas the contact rates are high merely from the teenage years.



Contact rates, age group breakdown. Outpatient contact rates for treatment in mental healthcare and interdisciplinary specialised addiction services: Number of contacts per 1,000 population, broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole, for the age groups 0-5 years, 6-12 years and 13-17 years. 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.