

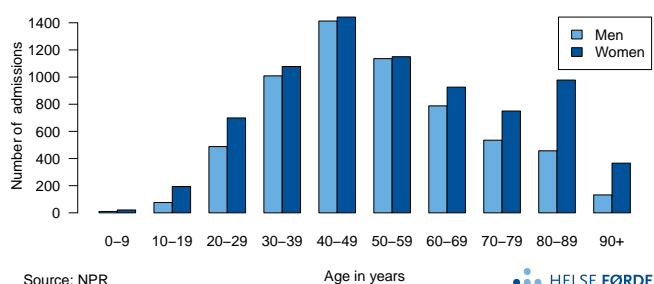
Other lower back pain

By other lower back pain (lumbago) we mean back pain where surgery is not an option. Patients with such pain make up a relatively high percentage of patients admitted to orthopaedic departments. Hospital admission may be necessary in order to provide sufficient pharmacological pain relief and to investigate the cause of the pain with a view to further treatment. If surgery is not indicated and the patient is at risk of developing long-term back pain, referral to physiotherapy or physical medicine treatment for the provision of supervised exercise, information and treatment may be an option. Most patients with lower back pain recover within a few months, but approx. 40 % experience another episode of back pain within six months. Approx. 1 % of people with first-time back pain will suffer long-term pain.

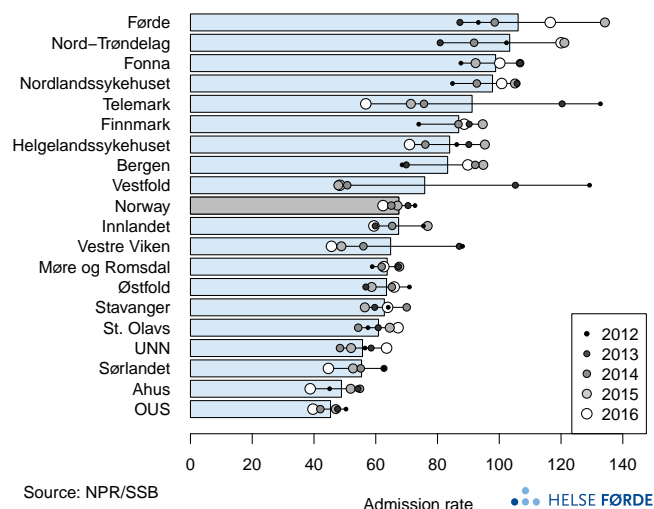
Background

Other lower back pain is defined by a primary diagnosis of M54.4, M54.5, M54.8 or M54.9 (ICD-10). Patients aged 18 years or older are included in the sample, except in the figure that shows the gender and age distribution of patients of all ages admitted for other lower back pain.

Each year on average 2,500 patients are admitted for other lower back pain in Norway.



Source: NPR
Total number of hospital admissions for other lower back pain during the period 2012–2016, for Norway as a whole. The patients have been broken down by gender and age group.

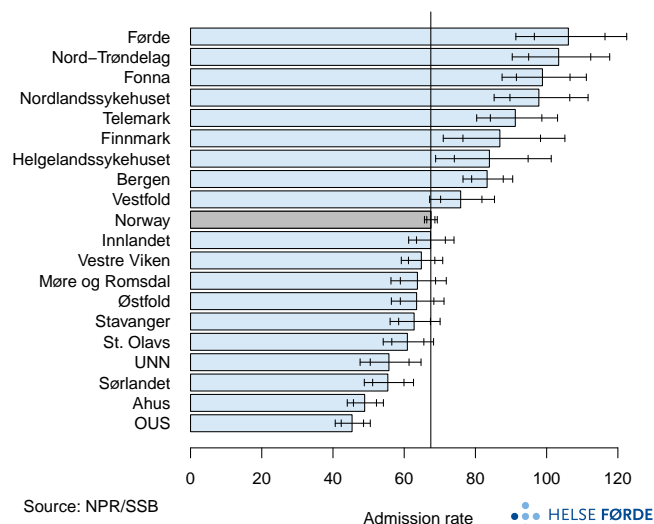


Source: NPR/SSB
Admission rate: Number of admissions for other back pain per 100,000 population (18 years and older), broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. Bars show average value per year for the period 2012–2016, and dots represent rates for each year. Rates have been adjusted for gender and age.

Results

Admission for lower back pain is twice as common in the Førde and Nord-Trøndelag areas as in OUS and Ahus hospital referral areas.

There is considerable variation in admissions over time in some areas. A marked decrease in admissions is seen in Telemark and Vestfold hospital referral areas during the period, and admissions seems to be decreasing on a national as well.



Source: NPR/SSB
Admission rate: Number of admissions for other back pain per 100,000 population (18 years and older), broken down by hospital referral area and for Norway as a whole. Admission rates are the average for the period 2012–2016 with pertaining 95 % and 99.8 % confidence intervals. Rates have been adjusted for gender and age.

Comments

There was considerable variation in admission rates for lower back pain. We consider the variation in admission rates unwarranted because there is no known corresponding geographical variation in the prevalence of lower back pain in Norway.