

Trial Nation Network for Psychiatry

Psychiatry in Denmark

Psychiatric treatment in Denmark takes place at general practices, at private clinics specialized in psychiatry and in hospital-based psychiatry (including outpatient treatment). The recently adopted 10-year plan for Danish psychiatry has resulted in positive feedback from the political level that psychiatry should be prioritized as a focus area.

Psychiatry is divided into two specialties; children/adolescents and adults. The network primarily concerns adult psychiatry, i.e., from the age of 18 (adult psychiatry starts at age 20 in the Region of Southern Denmark). Studies with children and adolescents as participants are most often carried out in the field of paediatrics.

Number of patients

In Denmark, one in ten persons has a mental illness. This corresponds to 580,000 Danes; 25% of the inquiries received in general practice relate to mental health issues¹.

Approximately 160,000 patients are treated in the hospital-based psychiatry (period 2018-2021), of which 25% were children and adolescents under the age of 19. Approximately 45,000 citizens are admitted annually, some more than once, and more than 1,000,000 outpatient visits are carried out each year. In the hospital-based psychiatry, on average a citizen is seen at seven follow-up visits on an outpatient basis.

In 2017, there were 23,584 hospitalized patients in adult psychiatry, while 118,992 patients received outpatient treatment.² The network only communicates directly to hospital-based psychiatry, but patients are also referred from e.g., general practice and also sees patients who make contact directly to the hospital.

The network is in close collaboration with somatic specialties like cardiology, neurology, gastroenterology (microbiomes), pediatrics, endocrinology (diabetes).

Most frequent diagnosis in Denmark

The most frequently used diagnosis in hospital psychiatry is *nervous and stress-related conditions* such as anxiety (F 40-49), followed by mood disorders (F 30-39), which include depression and bipolar disorder.

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- Clinical trial feasibilities
- Start-up and execution of GCP monitored clinical trials, including contract negotiation, IRB approval etc.
- Patient recruitment initiatives
- Site specific databases of patients interested in participating in clinical research
- Involving peers in treatment and research
- Commercially funded and investigator-initiated research

¹ <https://danskepatienter.dk/temaer-projekter/temaer/psykisk-sygdom/det-siger-statistikkerne>

² <https://www.esundhed.dk/Emner/Patienter-og-sygehuse/Noegletal-for-sygehusvaesenet-og-praksisomraadet>

Psychosis, specifically schizophrenia (F20-29), is the third most common diagnosis, followed by disorders and changes in personality structure and behavior (F60-69)³⁴

Treatment

In the hospital-based therapy, a variety of treatments are used. These include psychotherapy, psychoeducation, environmental therapy, occupational and physiotherapy, physical therapies like electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) and pulsed electromagnetic field therapy (PEMF) and medical treatment.

Medication

Approximately 12% of the Danish population received medical treatment with the following drug groups: Antidepressants and antipsychotic drugs, ADHD medicines, tranquilizers and sleeping medicines (2016)

Med-Tech equipment

ECT is best known, but equipment such as PEMF and Virtual Reality has increased focus.

Rating scales are used as a defined clinical practice for depression in all patients but are frequently used in all other mental conditions treated in hospital-based psychiatry.

Network for project staff

Study nurses in all regions are highly engaged in the network and have established a sub-network. They meet on a regular basis to exchange experiences and share best practice on all issues related to running a clinical trial. This initiative will boost qualifications and help streamline the Danish sites.

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For studies in child psychiatry (participants <18 years), please also refer to Trial Nation's network DanPedMed.

Members of the Trial Nation psychiatry network:

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³ <https://www.esundhed.dk/Emner/Patienter-og-sygehuse/Noegletal-for-sygehusvaesenet-og-praksisomraadet>

⁴ Translation of ICD-11 into Danish is currently underway, and implementation in the clinic is expected to be completed in 2026.

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