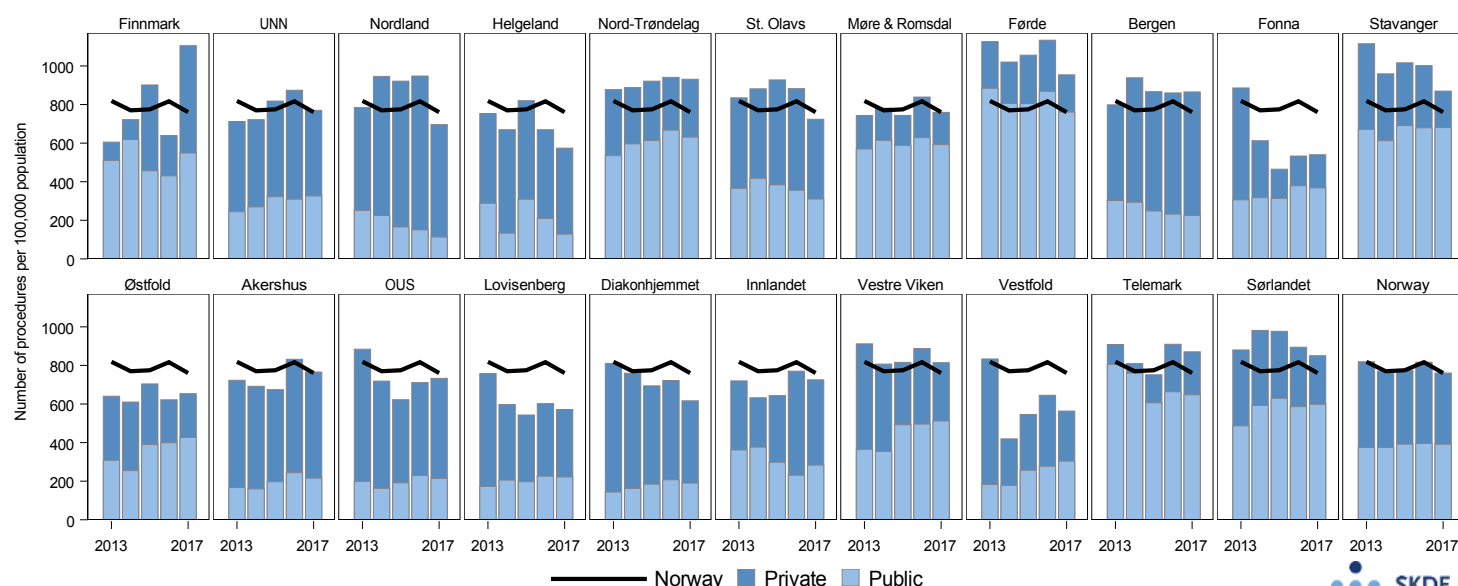


Day surgery in Norway 2013–2017

Age-related cataracts

Cataracts are opacities in the lens of the eye that lead to impaired vision. Most patients develop cataracts as part of the aging process, but there are also hereditary and congenital causes. If left untreated, cataracts will result in blindness. The treatment consists of removing the old lens from the eye and replacing it with an artificial one. Surgery should be considered when the patient's visual function impairs activities of daily living. Patients are entitled to prioritised healthcare when vision in the patient's best eye is poorer than 50% of normal vision.



Source: NPR/SSB

Cataract, development in the number of procedures per 100,000 population during the period 2013–2017, adjusted for gender and age. Broken down by hospital referral areas and public or private treatment providers.

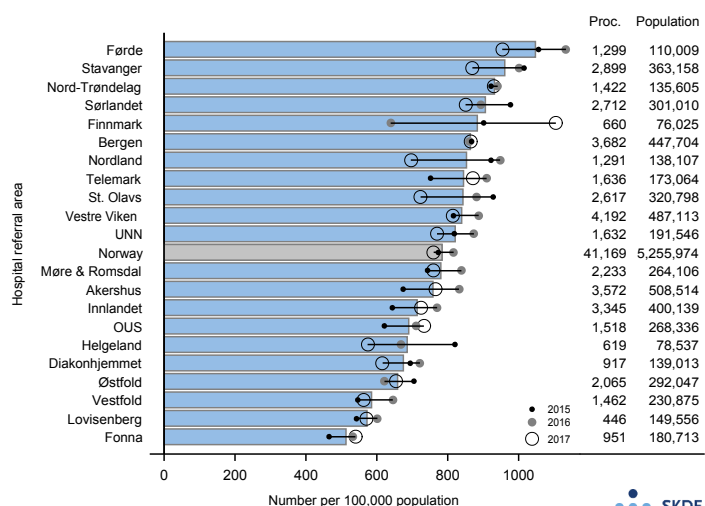
Development since 2013

The 2015 day surgery atlas showed geographical variation in surgical treatment of age-related cataracts during the period 2011–2013. The residents of the Stavanger area had 1.7 times more cataract operations per 100,000 population than inhabitants of Østfold hospital referral area. In 2013, just over 40,000 cataract procedures (adjusted rate: 819 per 100,000) were performed in Norway.

The geographical variation between hospital referral areas remained moderate during the period 2015–2017. Twice as many procedures per 100,000 population were performed on residents of the Førde area as on those resident in Fonna hospital referral area.

The number of operations for cataracts per 100,000 population in Norway per year remained more or less stable from 2013 to 2017, and half of the procedures were carried out by publicly funded private hospitals or specialists in private practice under public funding contracts. In 2017, just over 41,000 such procedures (adjusted rate: 760 per 100,000) were performed in Norway.

Most of the hospital referral areas' rates remained relatively unchanged from 2013 to 2017. There was considerable variation between years in the Finnmark area, but no clear trend towards a higher or lower number of procedures. The rates for Fonna and Vestfold hospital referral areas, however, fell considerably from 2013 to 2017. The main reason for this was the decrease in the number of operations for cataracts performed by publicly funded private hospitals and specialists in private practice under public funding contracts.



Source: NPR/SSB

Number of procedures for cataracts per 100,000 population, adjusted for gender and age. Average year for the period 2015–2017.

Comments

The variation between hospital referral areas in the number of operations for cataracts per 100,000 population was somewhat higher during the period 2015–2017 compared with the period 2011–2013. The difference was more than 500 procedures per 100,000 population. This indicates that the distribution of this health service not equitable. There is no known geographical variation in the prevalence of the condition, and the observed variation is therefore deemed to be unwarranted.