

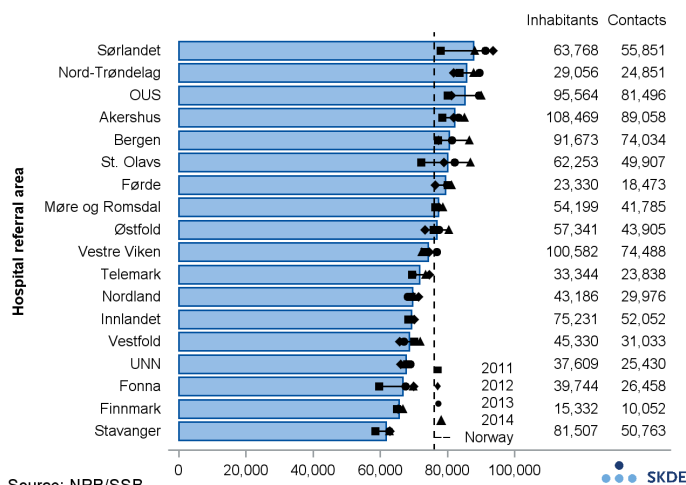
# Children – outpatient/day patient

## The specialist health service

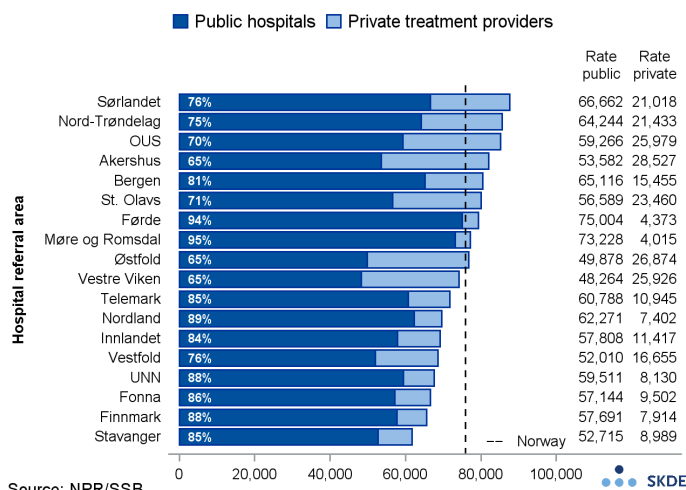
Most conditions in children that need specialist health service assessment, surgical as well as medical, can be treated through outpatient consultations or day treatment. Asthma, ear grommet insertion, treatment of children with chronic bowel conditions and chemotherapy for cancer are examples of conditions that are usually treated in outpatient clinics or as day patient treatment. Other conditions where GPs see a need for assessment by the specialist health service come in addition to this.

### Sample

The sample consists of all outpatient consultations and day patient treatments (lasting less than one day) for children in the somatic specialist health service, including specialists in private practice under public funding contracts.



Source: NPR/SSB  
All outpatient/day patient services, age-adjusted usage rates per 100,000 children 0-16 year, per hospital referral area, per year and as an average for the period 2011-2014.

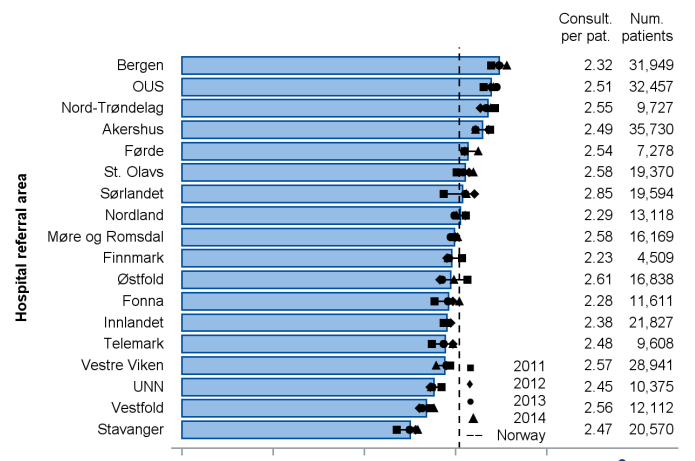


Source: NPR/SSB  
All outpatient/day patient services, broken down by public or private treatment providers, age-adjusted usage rates per 100,000 children 0-16 year, per hospital referral area and as an average for the period 2011-2014.

### Comments

Each year, approx. 320,000 children had a total of 800,000 outpatient and day patient consultations. Of these children, 52,000 have consultations both at medical and surgical outpatient clinics. Usage and patient rates are approx. 40% higher in the hospital referral areas of Sørlandet (consultations) and Bergen (patients) than in Stavanger (lowest rates).

In the hospital referral areas of Førde and Møre og Romsdal, 5% of these consultations are with specialists in private practice under public funding contracts. The corresponding proportion for the hospital referral areas of Akershus and Østfold are 35%.



Source: NPR/SSB  
All outpatient/day patient services, age-adjusted patient rates per 100,000 children 0-16 year, per hospital referral area, per year and as an average for the period 2011-2014.

Each year, 30% of all Norwegian children have one or more consultations at specialist outpatient clinics or day treatment units. The contact frequency for these children is 2.23 for Finnmark hospital referral area and 2.85 for Sørlandet. The differences in contact frequency mean that there are 620 more consultations per 1,000 children treated in Sørlandet hospital referral area than in Finnmark.

Based on the above, we find reason to ask whether there is unwarranted variation in usage rates. There is relatively high variation between hospital referral areas, both in terms of the number of patients treated and the average number of consultations per patient. Whether this indicates an overuse of specialist health services for children is something the specialist communities should discuss.