

### **OP15.3**

Consumption of anti-depressive drugs in primary care in Denmark, Sweden and Norway – a register based comparative study.

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**Background & Aim:** The use of anti-depressants (ADs) has increased remarkably in the Western countries the last decades. Most AD prescriptions are done by GPs. The relevance of the treatment has been subject to discussion among GPs and psychiatrists. It is interesting for the discussion to compare prescription patterns between countries. The aim of this study was to describe the consumption of ADs prescribed in primary care in three Nordic countries in relation to gender, age, type of AD and geography.

**Method:** The data on redeemed prescriptions was drawn from the governmental prescription databases in Denmark(DK), Sweden(S) and Norway(N). ADs prescribed to in-patients in hospitals were not included.

**Results:** The one-year prevalence of treatment in the populations in 2014 varied considerably from 6.2% (N) over 7.5% (DK) to 9.1% (S). The development in sales 2010-14 was +2% (N), -11% (DK) and +13% (S). The gender difference was substantial: 92% (N), 73% (DK) and 93% (S) more females than males were treated with ADs. In all countries, the prevalence was increasing with age in the age group 15-60, levelling for people in their sixties, and then increasing steeply, reaching 13.9% (N) and 22,5% (DK) in the age group 85-89. In Sweden, 28.5% in the age group +85 redeemed a prescription. SSRIs were the most frequently used ADs: 59% (N) 61% (DK) and 68% (S). Geographically the sales were lower for the younger age groups in the regions of the capitals than in other regions.

**Conclusions:** The level and development of consumption of ADs showed quite different patterns in the Nordic countries, which in many respects otherwise are comparable in relation to standard of living and health care. Age, gender and geography were strong determinants for sales in all countries. The results call for clinical research in the subject.