

Oral presentation

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Policies regarding coercive care in Swedish child and adolescent psychiatry

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Background

To investigate the routines for involuntary admissions and treatment according to the Swedish Compulsory Psychiatric Care Act in Swedish child and adolescent psychiatry.

Methods

A questionnaire specially designed for the study was sent to the heads of all 24 child and adolescent psychiatric clinics in Sweden. Responses were received from 23 of them.

Results

A great variation was found between the different clinics regarding the estimated numbers of involuntarily admitted patients and the practice regarding local guidelines for involuntary hospitalization and treatment, information to patients and relatives, and follow-up of coercive measures. There was a notable difference in the handling of voluntarily admitted inpatients that were also coercively placed simultaneously in the legal custody of social services.

Conclusion

There was no uniform, nationwide practice regarding coercive care in Swedish child and adolescent psychiatry. The legal prerequisites are unclear for inpatients simultaneously in the legal custody of social services, and the legal rights of the individual in these cases may be questioned.