DIAGNOSTIC WORK-UP IN CLINICAL REALITY. DATA FROM SVEDEM, THE SWEDISH DEMENTIA REGISTRY

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Aims: We aimed to examine the diagnostic dementia work-up in one European country, Sweden, with focus on age and gender differences.

Methods: The analyses were made on the data from the Swedish Dementia Registry (SveDem) and include 6937 dementia patients diagnosed during 2007-2009 at memory clinics (n=50). We have studied differences in the use of investigations for dementia diagnostics such as cognitive tests, blood and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) analyses, radiological examinations and assessments of functions. Severity of cognitive impairment was assessed with Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE). Patients were stratified according to age.

Results: There was a significant decrease in the number of total tests used in the dementia work-up in the elderly group (>75 years) when compared with the middle aged group (65-75 years) and younger patients (< 65 years). The oldest group was examined with 4 of 11 possible tests, the middle age group had 5/11 tests performed and youngest age group 6/11 tests. The costs for the dementia work-up were also studied. There was a significant gender differences in cost of dementia diagnosis in Sweden; however mostly attributable to age. Women are older when diagnosed and thus are more likely to have a lower number of diagnostic tests performed than men. The number of tests positively correlated with the level of cognition assessed by the MMSE.

Conclusion: We here show for the first time the impact of age, gender and MMSE on the dementia diagnostic work-up in a large memory clinic patient population in one country.