Background: In Sweden, 150,000 individuals suffer from dementia. To achieve a dementia care of similar and high quality in the country, a national quality registry SveDem, www.svedem.se, was initiated in 2007. Patients with newly diagnosed dementia diseases are registered in this web-based registry and followed yearly. Demographic, diagnostic, treatment and care variables are collected. Moreover, seven quality indicators defined by the national Swedish guidelines for care and treatment in dementia will be followed using data from SveDem.

Results: 9630 patients are at present registered and 3920 followed-up. 88% of the memory clinics have joined, while only 5% of the primary care units are affiliated. The mean age of the patients is 78.6 ± 8 yrs and 59% are women. The median MMSE is 22. The quality indicators "Proportion of patients having basal dementia workup" (cognitive testing, CT or MRI scans, assessment of function), "proportion of Alzheimer (AD) patients treated with antidementia drugs" and "proportion treated with antipsychotics" can be followed locally, regionally and nationally over time. At present 80% of SveDem patients receive a basal dementia workup and 82% of patients with AD are treated with antidementia drugs while 7% are on antipsychotics, although there are regional variations.

Conclusions: At the specialist level dementia work up and treatment adhere quite well to national guidelines but status at the primary care level is lacking. The challenge is to increase implementation of SveDem at the primary care level, to be able to reach a basic national standard of dementia care.