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SEVERITY OF AGGRESSION IN A FORENSIC IN-PATIENT HOSPITAL IN DENMARK: USING THE STAFF OBSERVATION AGGRESSION SCALE - REVISED (SOAS-R)

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Aim: To illustrate the targets and the severity of the aggressive incidents in a forensic psychiatric setting.

Material and method: The study was conducted in a forensic psychiatric setting at Psychiatric Centre Sankt Hans. It utilizes data from the three year period between 2008 and 2010. Staff Observation Aggression Scale Revised (SOAS-R) is used to examine all aggressive incidents during the period mentioned.

Results: 212 patients were admitted between 2008 and 2010. The majority being mainly men (98.6 %) with a diagnosis within ICD10 F20-F29 (79.7 %). In total there were 1507 recorded aggressive incidents of whom 63.2 % were registered with at least one aggressive incident. The most prevalent trigger of aggression was related to patients being denied something (45.9 %) and the staff is the primary target of the aggressions in 64.4 % of the incidents.

Mean severity score we found to be 10.12 (SD 4.84). According to the severity of the aggressions, we found 61.5 % of the reported incidents, with a severity score ≤ 9, symbolizing more severe aggression. We found abusive patient to be significantly more aggressive (OR 3.47 p = < 0.001), but no difference in the severity score between the abusive patient and the non-abusive patient was found (p = 0.28).

Conclusion: Aggression is a prevalent phenomenon in a forensic psychiatric setting in Denmark. The Majority of the aggressive incidents are characterized by being severe, but not necessarily related to abuse. The staff was the primary target of the aggressions.