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‘Implementation of clinical guidelines in specialized palliative care - results from a national improvement project’

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Danske Kræftforskningsdage 2022

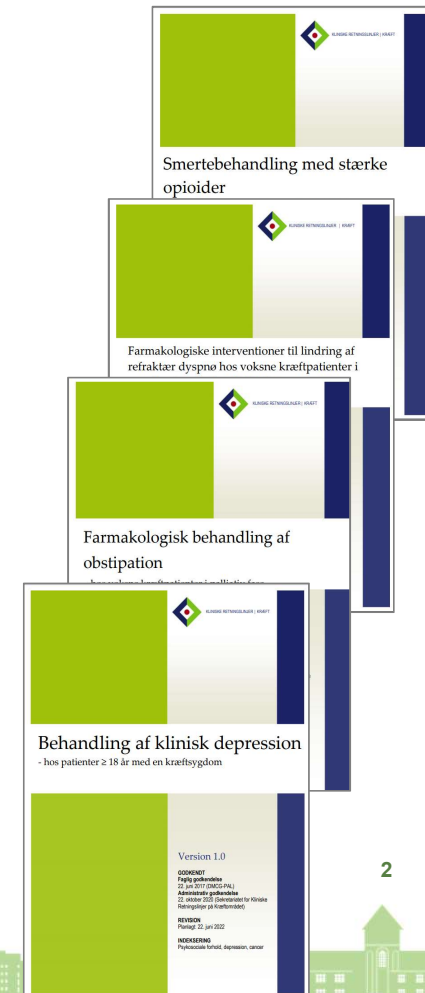
Background

- Inspired by the Improvement Model, a 'Learning and quality teams' project was implemented in the 44 specialized palliative care services in Denmark between September 2017- June 2019
- One of its aims was to implement treatment guidelines developed by the Danish Multidisciplinary Cancer Group for Palliative Care (DMCG-PAL) for pain, dyspnea, constipation and depression

Aim

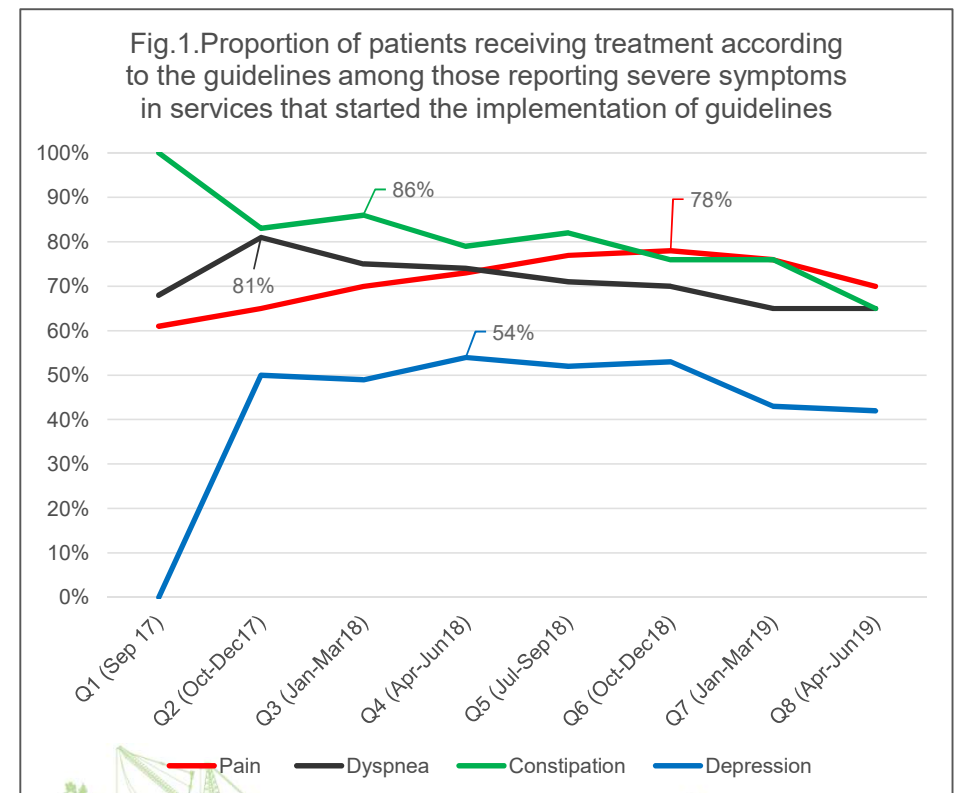
To investigate to what extent clinicians implemented the guidelines by evaluating:

- The proportion of patients receiving treatment according to guidelines among those who qualified (i.e., reported severe symptom level in the EORTC QLQ-C15-PAL) before and after the services started the implementation of guidelines
- How often different types of interventions were given to patients



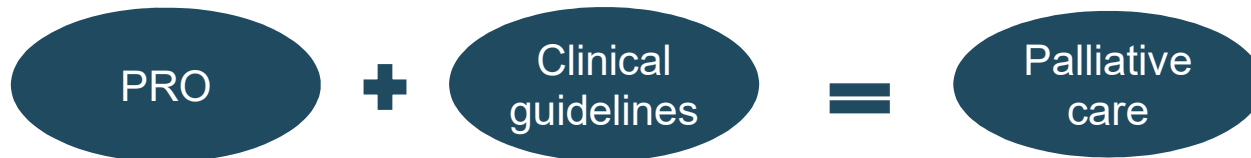
Results

- Among the 18,379 patients admitted to specialized palliative care, 11,330 (62%) completed the EORTC QLQ-C15-PAL
- As shown in Fig.1, services were more successful implementing guidelines for the treatment of physical symptoms (78-86%) than for depression (54%)
- Pain and constipation were most often treated pharmacologically, whereas dyspnea and depression were most often treated non-pharmacologically



Conclusions

- Implementing several guidelines into clinical practice in specialized palliative care was possible but incomplete
- The project was more successful in increasing the implementation of guidelines for physical symptoms than for depression
- This project generated national data on the types of interventions provided, which may be used to understand differences in care and outcomes



Next step: implementation of clinical guidelines outside of specialized palliative care, e.g., in oncology???

