

Prevalence of patients treated with anti-diabetic medicine in Greenland and Denmark. A cross-sectional register study

Diabetes mellitus is a large and growing worldwide health issue. Prior to this publication, a direct comparison of the prevalence of persons treated with anti-diabetic medicine in Greenland and Denmark has not been found. Therefore, the aim of this study is to estimate and compare the age- and gender-specific prevalence of patients treated with anti-diabetic medicine comparing Greenland and Denmark. The study was performed as a cross-sectional register study using data from population and medical registers in Greenland and Denmark. A total of 784 Greenlandic and 215,580 Danish patients treated with anti-diabetic medicine were included. The prevalence of patients aged 20–79 years treated with anti-diabetic medicine in Greenland was 2.6% (95% CI 2.4–2.8), much lower ($p < 0.001$) compared to Denmark with 5.2% (95% CI 5.2–5.2). The difference was less pronounced after excluding those treated with insulin and women below 45 years treated with metformin. In conclusion, this study showed a lower prevalence of patients treated with anti-diabetic medicine in Greenland than Denmark. The main reason may be a much higher prevalence of undiagnosed diabetes in Greenland, particularly among the middle-aged. Differences in awareness of diabetes and access to continued primary healthcare may be contributing factors.

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