

*Title:* Alcohol screening in the North Denmark Region hospitals: A qualitative study of health professionals' experiences.

*Presentation:* Oral.

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*Keywords:* Alcohol use, screening, hospital, health professionals.

*Background:* Alcohol consumption is a risk factor for disease, disability and death. Approximately 20 % of all hospital admissions are alcohol related. In Denmark, hospitalised patients undergo systematic health risk screenings to establish preventive initiatives if the screening detects a risk. The health professionals' experiences of the screening is unknown.

*Aim:* To examine health professionals' experiences of conducting systematic alcohol screenings in the North Denmark Region hospitals.

*Methods:* This study consisted of six focus group interviews of health professionals (n=20) regarding their experiences of conducting alcohol screening.

*Results:* Hospital based alcohol screening was perceived ambiguously leading to a schism between standardised alcohol screening and the individual needs of the patient. Health professionals described different patient types with each their perceived needs, and screening was associated with taboo and reluctance to engage in alcohol screening of some patient groups.

*Conclusion:* This study revealed factors that influence health professionals working with hospital based alcohol screening. The variation in and complexity of alcohol screening suggests that screening practice is an ambiguous task that needs continuous reflection and development to ensure that health professionals are prepared for the task.

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