

# Abstract

## Background

The primary duty of the SHS Akutteam<sup>1</sup> is to assess a patient's "emergent" condition and, on that basis, determine whether a patient is a candidate for hospital admission. Many such emergency assessments result in patients' starting treatment with antibiotics at home. However, SHS Akutteam experiences indicate that some patients are, nonetheless, admitted a few days after the emergency assessment and starting an antibiotics course

The present project was prompted by curiosity as to whether the number of hospitalizations might be reduced if the emergency function offered structured, follow-up visits after starting treatment with antibiotics. The project was designed to determine both when follow-up visits should occur and if the emergency nurse's clinical assessment in the context of measuring the patient's vital signs and C-Reactive Protein (CRP) levels might provide indicators related to the course of treatment

## Methods

Selected data from 70 patients were collected during the emergency visit and the follow-up visit as well as from patient-record audits from when patients started antibiotics and 14 days onward

## Results

The project found that the overall clinical assessment and CRP measurement were good indicators for determining the patient's further course of treatment. Measuring vital signs were, by itself, unable to indicate whether patients were on proper track for treatment. For treatment changes to prevent unnecessary hospitalizations and deterioration of critical illness, the follow-up visit should primarily be performed on Day 2 after starting the antibiotics course

## Conclusion

Follow-up visits can prevent a deterioration of critical illness. The nurse's clinical assessment and the determination of CRP levels can be attributed greater value than measuring only vital signs when performing an at-home assessment of patients' antibiotics treatment

In order for patients to receive proper care, we should re-assess which screening methods and workflows are most appropriate for pre-admission activities and for municipal offerings. For patients diagnosed with an illness, the process for early detection of incipient diseases should still be applied — but not as a separate screening tool

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<sup>1</sup> SHS Akutteam - Specialized Home Nursing Emergency Team is an at-home nursing, municipal emergency function that operates in accordance with the Danish national quality standards.