

# Evidence-based guidelines for comprehensive assessment in pre-hospital and hospital emergency care

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## Aim

To investigate the occurrence of evidence-based guidelines for comprehensive assessment in pre-hospital and hospital emergency care in Sweden and to evaluate their quality.

## Background

Providing care for patients seeking emergency care is a challenge. Patients' needs should be seen in the light of cultural, spiritual, emotional and existential aspects that are equally important as physical discomfort. Comprehensive, early assessment should be performed as it promotes continuous care and improves patient outcomes.

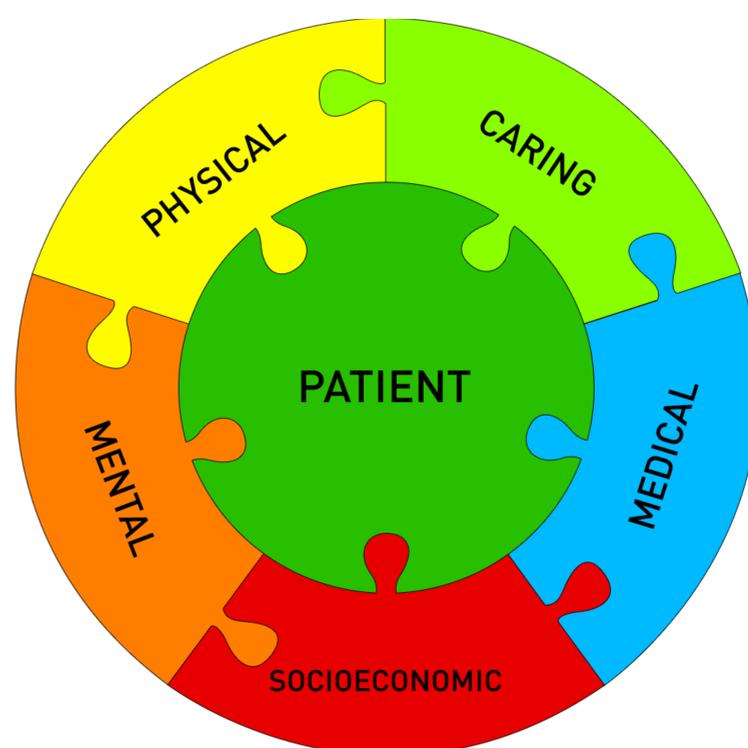
Comprehensive assessment is composed of three main areas: physical, psychological, and existential caring needs. Further, these can be divided into five specific subcategories: **medical needs**, **caring needs**, **physical- and mental abilities**, and assessment of **socio-economic** situation including living situation.

## Methods

A national cross-sectional study was conducted. All emergency departments (72) and ambulance organisations (25) in Sweden were asked to participate. A total of 17 guidelines were obtained for examination. The guidelines were examined and assessed using the Appraisal of Guidelines for Research and Evaluation II tool.

## Results

There is a lack of evidence-based guidelines for comprehensive assessment. The guidelines being used today lack an explicit link to evidence and only one guideline scored high on AGREE II. The results showed that the target patient-group of the guidelines did not participate in the development process and their opinions were not requested.



A model of comprehensive assessment and its subcategories.

## Conclusion

There is a lack of evidence-based guidelines for comprehensive assessment in the pre-hospital and hospital emergency care in Sweden. Therefore, it is essential that emergency departments and ambulance organisations develop evidence-based guidelines for how comprehensive assessment of patients' needs should be conducted.