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## CONCLUSIONS

The relatively low level of agreement in the pilot round regarding, above all, Swedescore shows that there is a need for external quality assessment of colposcopy at the regional obstetrics and gynaecology departments and gynaecological outpatient clinics in Sweden. Equalis will offer a regular EQA scheme starting 2023 with minor changes in accordance with the participants' feedback from the pilot round.

## INTRODUCTION

External quality assessment (EQA) is important to ensure good quality, and accurate and comparable examination results. Equalis is a provider of over 100 EQA schemes in laboratory medicine, diagnostic imaging, and point-of-care testing.

In the spring of 2022, a national quality assessment project in colposcopy was carried out for the first time, where gynaecologists in Sweden were invited to participate in a pilot round. Colposcopy is a microscopic examination of the uterine cervix, used in evaluating cervical lesions.

The aim was to investigate the quality of the assessments carried out during a colposcopy examination, as well as to evaluate how/if an EQA scheme in this area could be integrated in clinical praxis.

## METHODS

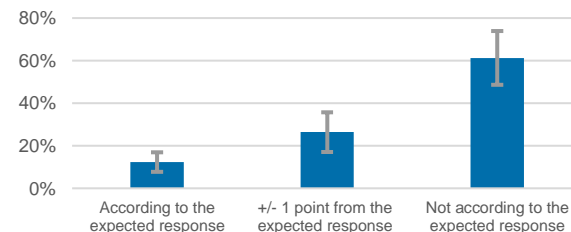
The pilot round consisted of five patient cases with 3–7 digital colposcopic images per case and the anamnesis. The cases were assessed regarding transformation zone type, colposcopic assessability and Swedescore, as well as a combined colposcopic assessment. Swedescore is a validated scoring system developed in Sweden, which is also used internationally, to help the colposcopist to grade cervical lesions. It includes scoring of five different characteristics from 0 to 2, and then a combined Swedescore from 0 to 10 which is the sum of the scores from the five characteristics. In the pilot round there was also room for comments for each case and individual parameter. All participating clinics were offered to register responses for individual gynaecologists as well as a response representing the whole clinic.



Photograph by Hanna Milerad Sahlgren

## RESULTS

Out of 30 registered clinics, 26 reported results. A total of 103 responses were received, of which 87 were individual responses and 16 were responses representing the whole clinic. The results were reviewed against an established expected response assigned by experienced colposcopists based on the histopathological outcome. Transformation zone type and colposcopic assessability had a high concordance with expected response for the majority of cases. The outcome of the Swedescore assessment had a larger variation with approximately 50 % agreement to the expected answer. The agreements for the combined colposcopic assessments varied between 42 and 65 % for the different cases.



**Figure 1.** Percentages for combined Swedescore assessments for all five cases. Error bars show +/- 1 SD.