

# BD DAYS – Sepsis:

The need for system changes and innovations to improve sepsis management

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**Almost 40,000**

Swedes develop sepsis each year<sup>1</sup>

**Around 20%**

of them die<sup>1</sup>





Assoc Prof Adam Linder

In 2014, Adam Linder's team carried out a survey on sepsis awareness in Sweden<sup>2</sup>. While 53% of Germans have heard the term sepsis, only 20% of Swedes have<sup>2</sup>. This led them to set up Sepsisfonden the following year<sup>3</sup>. This organisation's main goals are to fundraise for sepsis-related research initiatives and educate the general public, decision makers and healthcare professionals on sepsis<sup>1</sup>. According to Ron Daniels and Konrad Reinhart, personal stories are the key to success<sup>3</sup>.

So, Sepsisfonden has raised awareness with videos on social media, brochures, a card listing sepsis symptoms and a team of ambassadors who give lectures on sepsis throughout Sweden<sup>3</sup>. They organised a seminar with the Swedish government. Along with the U.K. Sepsis Trust and the German Sepsis Society, Sepsisfonden is an active member of the Global Sepsis Alliance<sup>4</sup>. Thanks to Sepsisfonden's efforts, sepsis awareness in Sweden has increased from 21% in 2015 to 43% in 2019<sup>3</sup>.

They are collaborating on the study of epidemiology of sepsis and AMR in Europe with the European Sepsis Alliance (EUSEP) to better map the incidence of sepsis in Europe and measure the clinical impact of antimicrobial resistance on morbidity and mortality<sup>3</sup>. The first post-sepsis clinic in Sweden has opened Lund this fall. Its aims are to bring together multidisciplinary competences, provide better follow-up and conduct research on the long-term outcomes of sepsis<sup>3</sup>. The early detection of sepsis is challenging. In Sweden, the Rapid Emergency Triage and Treatment System (RETTTS) uses a list of criteria and scoring to identify patients with sepsis<sup>3,5</sup>. If patients meet one of the criteria and have a suspected infection, a sepsis alert is triggered<sup>3,5</sup>.

Thirty percent of Swedish hospitals lack standardised guidelines for diagnosing and managing patients with suspected sepsis in the emergency department<sup>3</sup>. However, the Swedish government recently designated sepsis as a national standardised healthcare procedure, meaning it will adopt the World Health Organisation resolution on sepsis to implement standardised guidelines<sup>3,6</sup>. A lot has been accomplished, but Prof Linder knows there is still much left to be done. He is optimistic about the future of sepsis management in Sweden.

#### References

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