

Publication

Small Area Variation of Adherence to Clinical Recommendations: An Example from Switzerland.

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Unwarranted variation in healthcare utilization can only partly be explained by variation in the health care needs of the population, yet it is frequently found globally. This is the first cross-sectional study that systematically assessed geographic variation in the adherence to clinical recommendations in Switzerland. Specifically, we explored 1) the geographic variation of adherence to clinical recommendations across 24 health services at the sub-cantonal level, 2) assessed and mapped statistically significant spatial clusters, and 3) explored possible influencing factors for the observed geographic variation.; Exploratory spatial analysis using the Moran's I statistic on multivariable multilevel model residuals to systematically identify small area variation of adherence to clinical recommendations across 24 health services.; Although there was no overall spatial pattern in adherence to clinical recommendations across all health care services, we identified health services that exhibited statistically significant spatial dependence in adherence. For these, we provided evidence about the locations of local clusters.; We identified regions in Switzerland in which specific recommended or discouraged health care services are utilized less or more than elsewhere. Future studies are needed to investigate the place-based social determinants of health responsible for the sub-cantonal variation in adherence to clinical recommendations in Switzerland and elsewhere over time.

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