



[Head of department--manager or physician?].

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Abstract: In Norway, as in other countries, questions regarding medical leadership in hospital departments are much discussed. The purpose of this study was to determine how much time medical heads of hospital departments spend on various leadership tasks.

Information was collected by a questionnaire survey in 1996.

567 out of 657 (86%) completed the questionnaire. 71% shared the departmental leadership with a nurse, and 48% of these were content with such co-leadership. Nearly all the respondents were clinically active. 49% of heads of large departments used more than half their working hours on administration, compared with 7% of heads of small departments.

Selection criteria for heads of hospital departments should be adjusted to the work they actually do. Clinical competence is of importance for all heads of clinical departments; the importance of administrative competence varies with the size of the department.

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