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Title: Long-term survival of COPD patients after first hospital admission with respiratory insufficiency and treatment with non-invasive ventilation in a respiratory ward in Denmark

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Body: Introduction: Implementation of non-invasive ventilation (NIV) as an add-on treatment has been used routinely since 2004 at a University Hospital in Denmark, and data on COPD patients admitted to hospitals in Denmark have been monitored the last three years (National Indicator Project on COPD) show 30-day mortality rates of 10 %. No data on long-term survival on COPD patients in Denmark have reported. Method: Data from medical journals were retrieved from all patients admitted with respiratory insufficiency (respiratory acidosis and hypercapnea) and known or suspected COPD in exacerbation receiving non-invasive ventilation from January 1st 2005 until December 31st 2007. Demographic data collected included age and gender when receiving treatment with NIV for the first time. Results: In total 257 patients (147 female/110 male) received NIV for the first time. The median age was in all 72 [25-percentile: 65.2 years and 75-percentile: 79.2 years]. The 30-day mortality rate was 29.3 %. Survival grouped by gender is illustrated in Fig. 1. There was no statistical significant difference between the groups. The total observation time was between 5 and 7 years.

Conclusion: The mortality rate of patients receiving NIV is as expected high, but the 5 years survival rate was 23.7 % and with a trend of more female than male long-term survivors.