

# Trends in eating disorder admissions to a general paediatric hospital over a five-year period

F. Hoare<sup>1</sup>, S. Fitzgerald<sup>2</sup>, Ó. Walsh<sup>2</sup>, C. Carroll<sup>3</sup>, C. Boylan<sup>1</sup>, S.C. Richardson<sup>4</sup>, E. Barrett<sup>1,5</sup>



1. Department of Psychiatry, CHI at Temple Street
2. Department of General Paediatrics, CHI at Temple Street
3. Department of Dietetics, CHI at Crumlin
4. Department of General Paediatrics, CHI at Crumlin
5. School of Medicine, University College Dublin



## Background

- In Ireland, the prevalence of “eating problems” in adolescents has been estimated to be as high as 10%
- There is evidence that the prevalence of eating disorders have been increasing worldwide

## Aims

To determine trends in admissions of patients with eating disorders to CHI at Temple Street

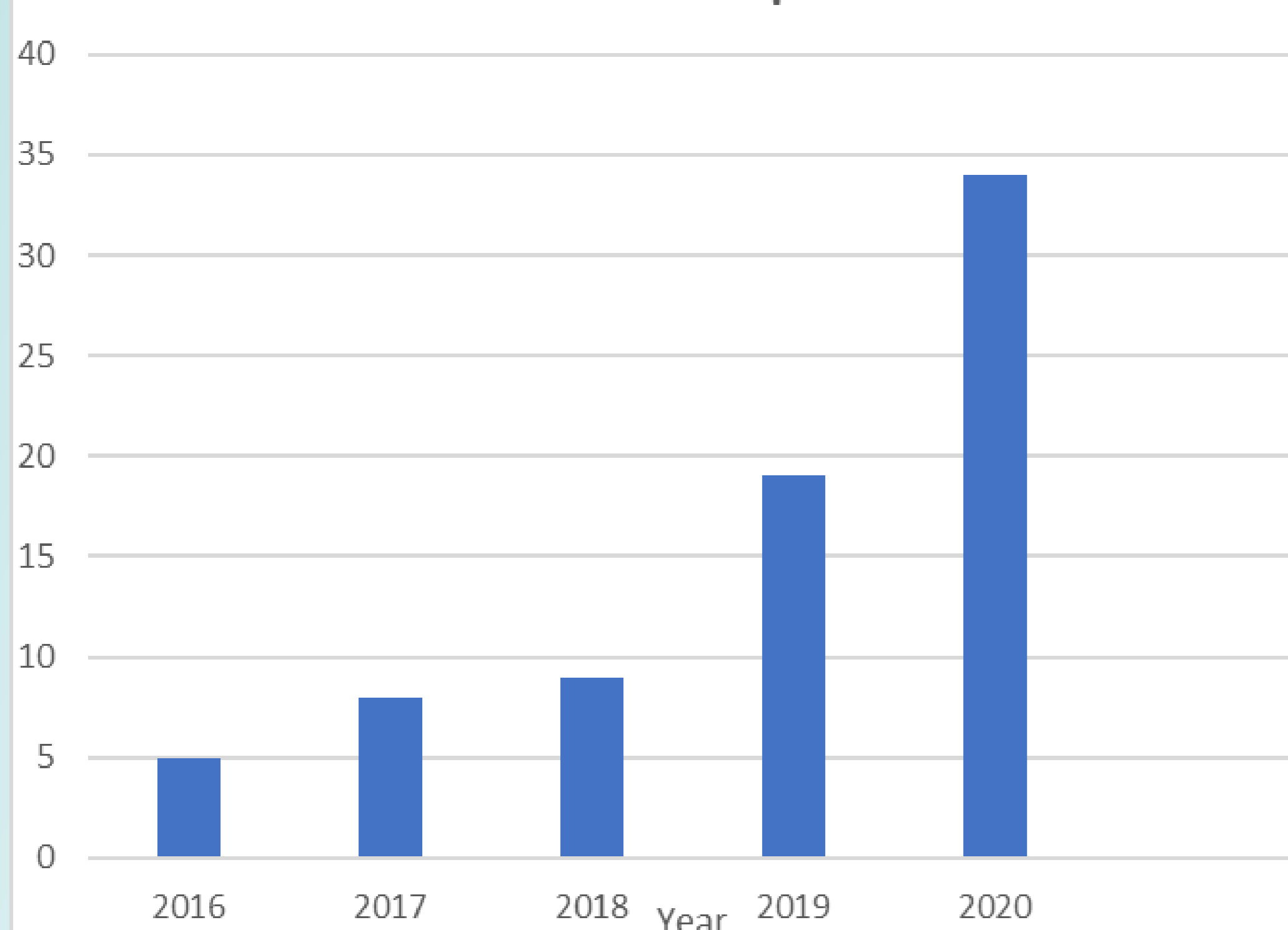
## Methods

Retrospective chart review carried out for all patients admitted with a confirmed eating disorder from 1st January 2016 to 31st December 2020

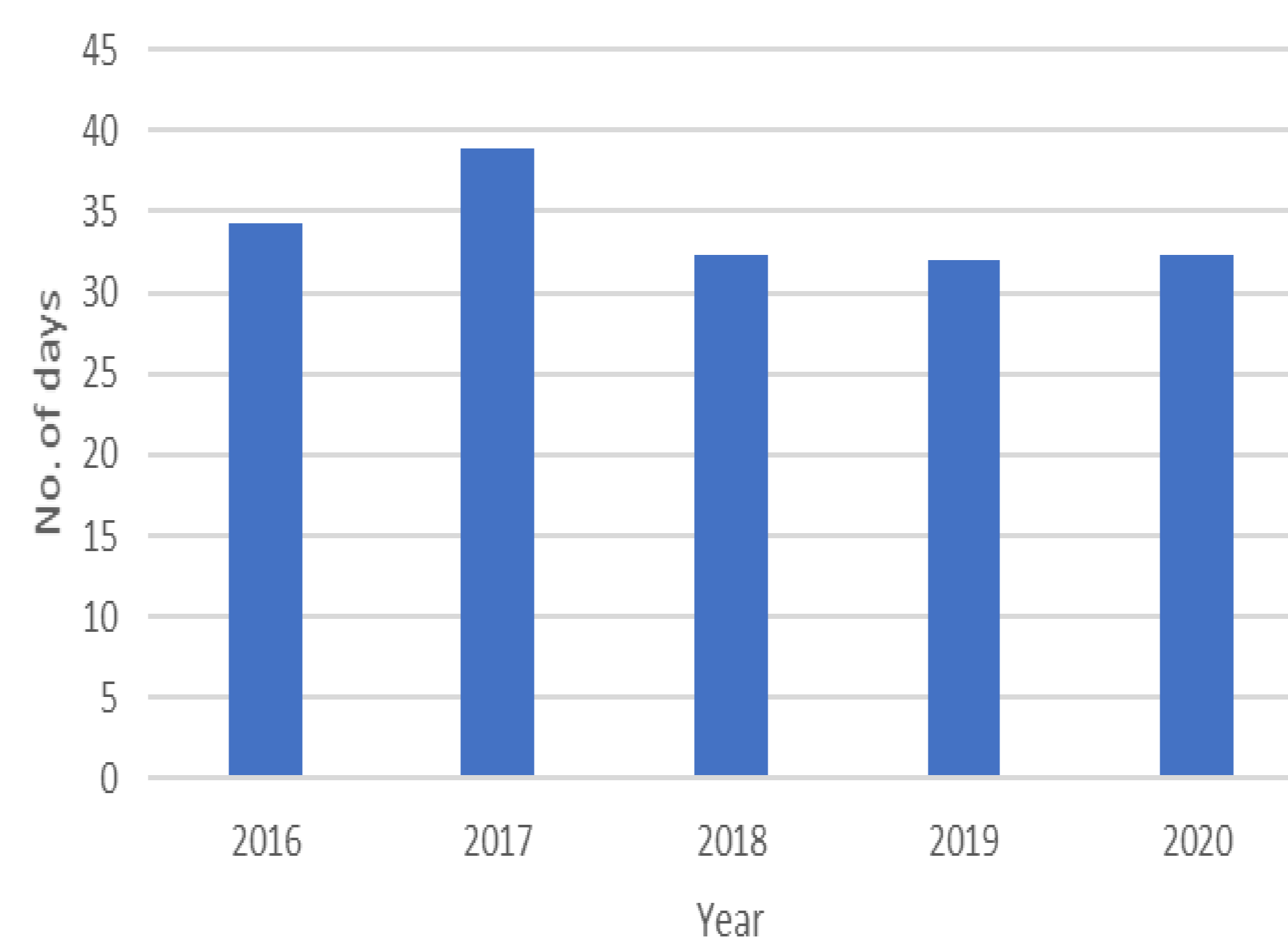
## Results

- Mean length of stay ranged from 34.2 days in 2016 to 32.4 days in 2020
- Total bed days increased from 171 days in 2016 to 1068 days in 2020
- 83% (n=62) had a diagnosis of anorexia nervosa (AN), 7% (n=5) were diagnosed with avoidant restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) and one patient with orthorexia
- SSRIs were prescribed in 33% (n=25) of admissions. An antipsychotic was prescribed in 13% (n=10)
- 11% (n=8) of admissions required transfer to a specialist eating disorder unit
- 15% (n=11) readmitted during the study period
- 2 patients had three admissions each, while 7 patients were admitted twice

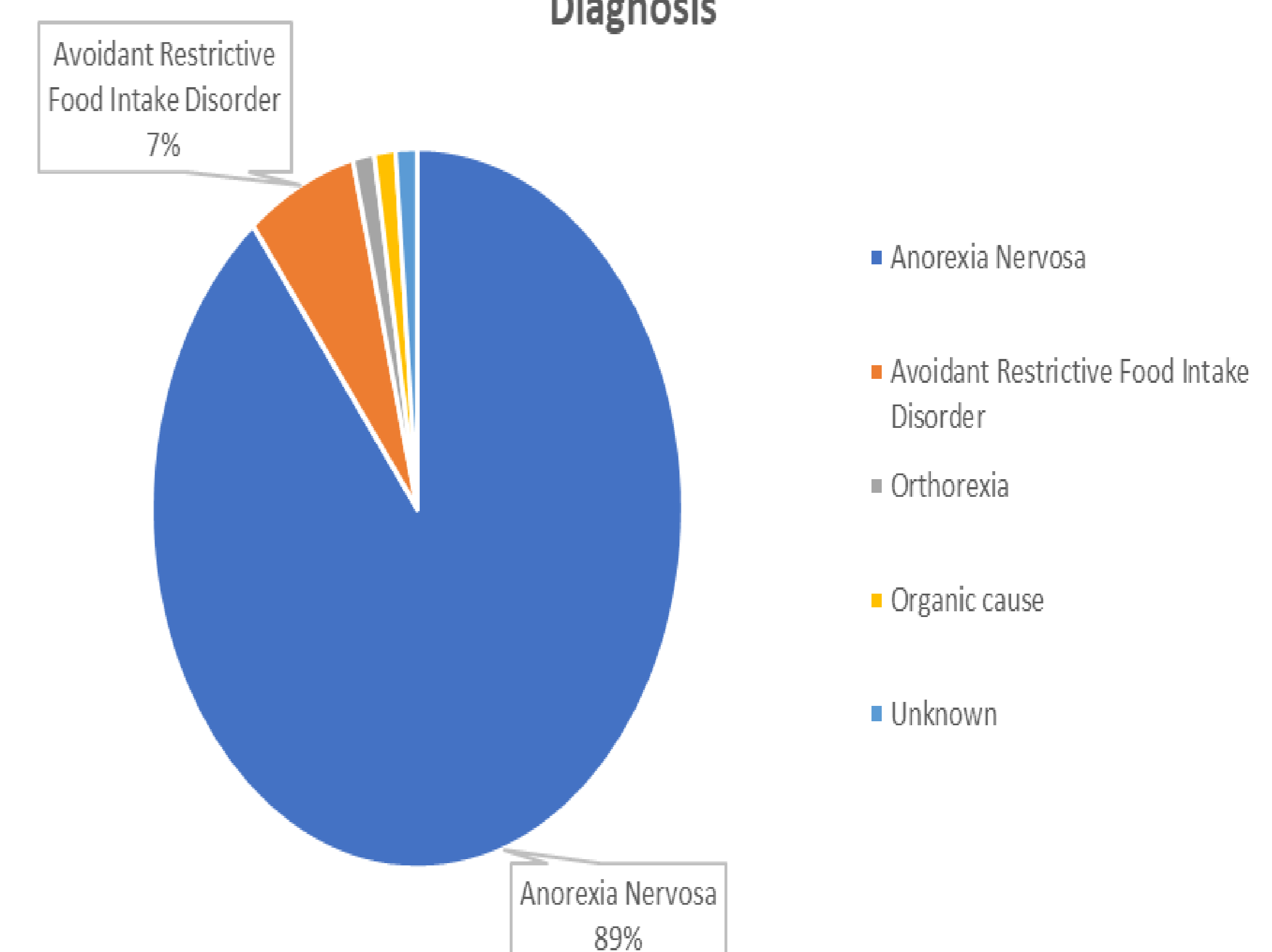
No. Patients Admitted with Eating Disorders to CHI at Temple St



Mean Length of Stay



Diagnosis



## Discussion

- Our data demonstrated an annual increase in admissions of patients with eating disorders over the study period, but a consistent mean length of stay. Bed days have thus increased significantly annually
- Admissions were increasing annually prior to the pandemic, the reasons likely multifactorial. The pandemic may have exacerbated this.
- Most admissions had a diagnosis of AN and a high percentage were prescribed a psychotropic, although their use in this cohort remains controversial
- This is the first longitudinal sample of this cohort in Ireland and highlights the need for young people to be represented in eating disorder data and the national programme

## Ethical Consideration

Ethics approval was granted from the Research Ethics Committee in CHI at Temple Street