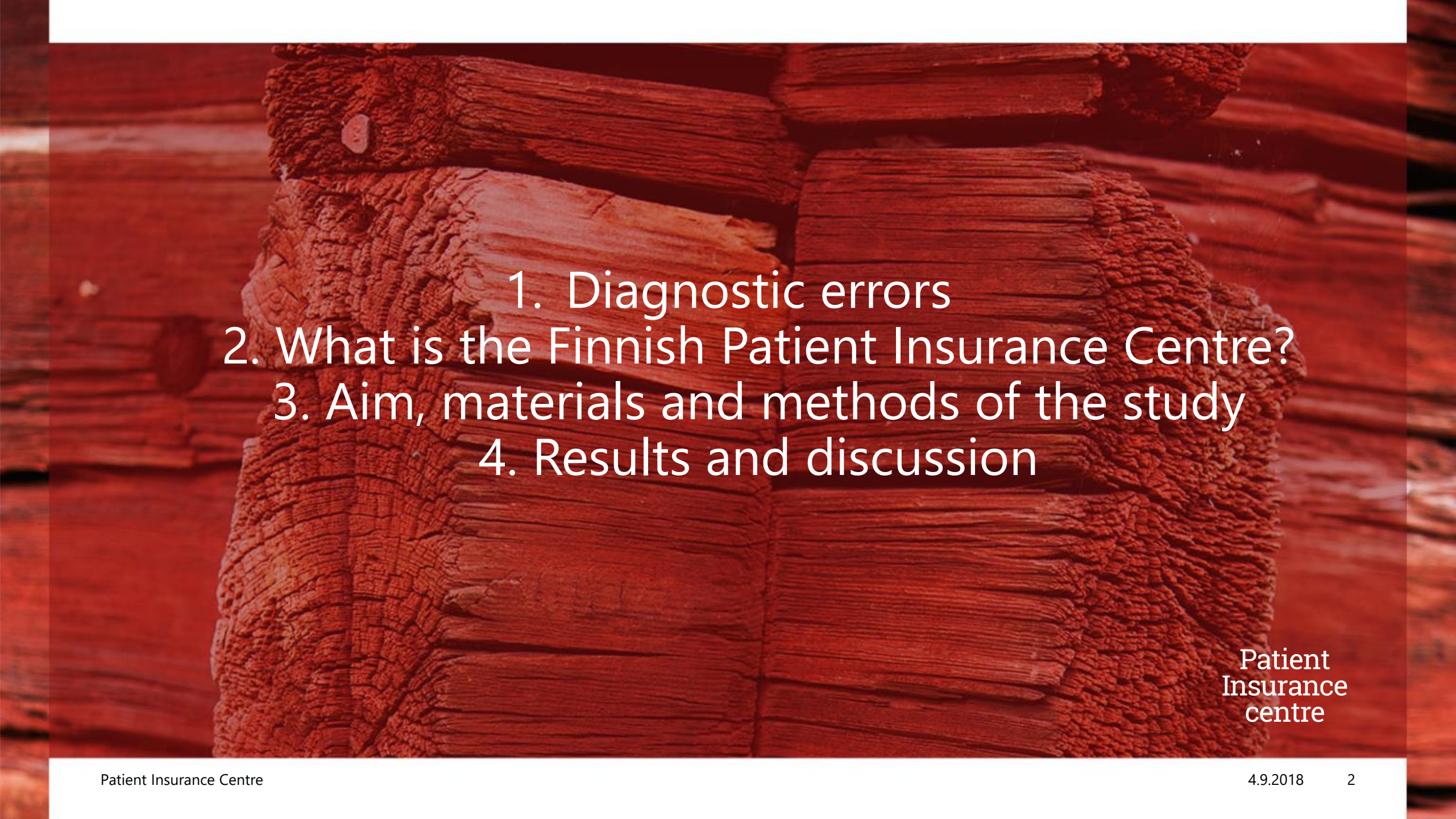


Patient Insurance centre

Delayed diagnoses as patient injuries
Data from the Finnish Patient Insurance Centre

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- 
1. Diagnostic errors
 2. What is the Finnish Patient Insurance Centre?
 3. Aim, materials and methods of the study
 4. Results and discussion

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Diagnostic errors

- Diagnostic error = diagnosis is missed, inappropriately delayed or wrong
- Account for the majority of malpractice claims in primary care
- Approximately 5% of adults experience diagnostic errors in outpatient settings each year (Singh *et al.* 2014)
- This study focuses on injuries caused by **delayed diagnoses** (= accurate diagnosis is not found when it should have been found)

What is the Finnish Patient Insurance Centre (PIC)?

- PIC handles all personal injuries that occur in connection with healthcare activities in accordance with the Patient Injuries Act
- Its members include all insurance companies granting patient insurance policies in Finland
- PIC grants patient insurance policies
- PIC promotes patient safety by conducting research, performing calculations and generating statistics

Preconditions of patient injury



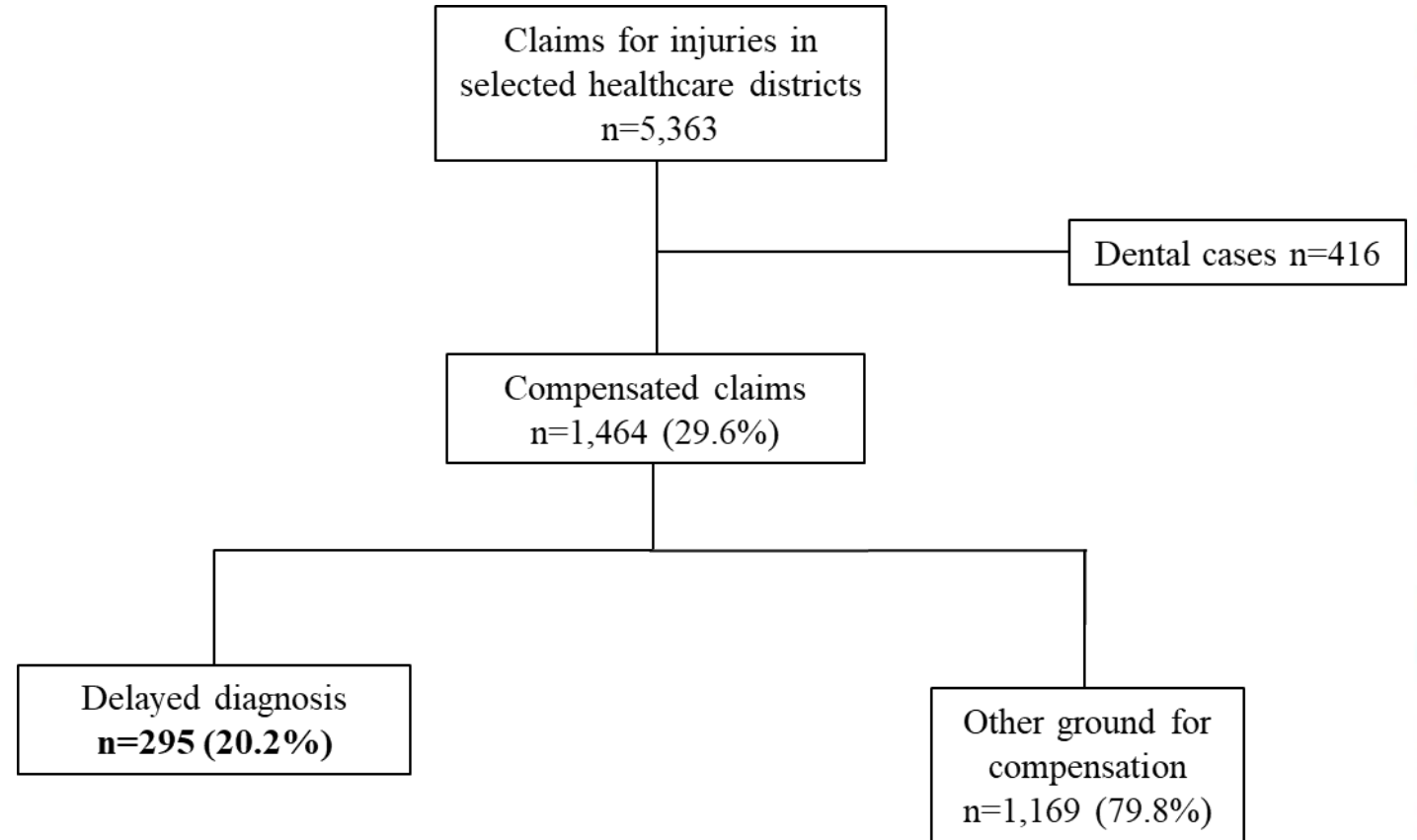
- Patient has sustained a bodily injury
 - Illness, disability, weakening of health or loss of life
- Injury was sustained in connection with medical treatment or health care
- The injured party is a patient (person being examined or treated)
- The injury occurred within the geographical area of Finland

Aim of the study

- To determine the proportion of compensated claims related to delayed diagnoses in the Patient Injury Register
- To determine which diagnoses are delayed most often
- To evaluate what kind of factors cause these diagnostic errors

Material & methods

- Patient claims for injuries that occurred between 2014-2015 in the public health care in Finland were obtained from PIC
 - All claims from five large healthcare districts were evaluated and the number of compensated claims due to delayed diagnosis was determined



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What diagnoses were delayed most often?

- Fractures (n=76)
 - Wrist (n=15)
 - Spine (n=13)
 - Hip/femur (n=11)
 - Foot/toe (n=6)
 - Finger (n=7)
- Tumors (n=40)
 - Breast (n=9)
 - Brain (n=4)
 - Lung (n=4)
 - Prostate (n=4)
- Tendon and muscle injuries (n=28)
 - Finger (n=9)
 - Achilles tendon (n=6)
- Spinal disc herniation (n=9)
- Appendicitis (n=8)
- Lower limb ischemia (n=6)
- Cerebrovascular accident (n=6)
- Spinal stenosis (n=5)

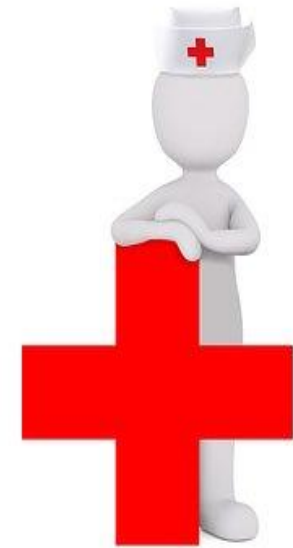
Common causes of injuries

- Wrist fractures (n=15)
 - X-ray was not taken (n=5)
 - Fracture was not seen in the x-ray (n=5)
- Spine fractures (n=13)
 - X-ray was not taken (n=6)
- Tumors (n=40)
 - Mostly due to insufficient investigations or delays in referral
 - Metastasis was not recognized (n=5)
- Tendon and muscle injuries (n=28)
 - Mostly due to insufficient clinical status



Discussion

- Standards of practice always include an acceptance of some degree of error
 - Criteria for compensations may vary between countries -> comparing numbers is difficult
- Sometimes delays in diagnoses do not lead to personal injury and are therefore not compensated
- Balancing between effective diagnosis (+fast treatment) and over-medicalisation is challenging
- In order to prevent injuries that are caused by delays in diagnosis, focusing on the pitfalls is recommendable



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Thank you!

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