



The Capital Region
of Denmark



Early diagnosis and targeted treatment of inflammatory joint diseases

The Copenhagen Center for Arthritis Research (COPECARE) is part of the largest rheumatology department in Denmark. As such it is able to rapidly implement new diagnostic strategies and treatment measures developed by the centre's staff, enabling COPECARE to significantly improve quality of life for a vulnerable group of patients. This is one of the reasons why the centre received a Global Excellence – In Health award.

Rheumatoid arthritis, spondyloarthritis and psoriatic arthritis are chronic inflammatory joint diseases that can be debilitating for the patient, cause severe pain and functional loss and ultimately also lead to increased mortality as a result of various comorbidities. Early diagnosis, effective treatment and continuous monitoring of the disease are essential for improving the individual prognosis, and the researchers at COPECARE are key figures in efforts to improve diagnosis, treatment and monitoring.

In partnership with colleagues from other fields, primarily radiologists and other rheumatologists from the rest of Denmark and abroad, COPECARE has developed new diagnostic methods and innovative therapeutic algorithms that make it possible to commence and optimise targeted treatment at an early phase of the disease.

COPECARE is internationally renowned for especially research in and optimal use of MRI and ultrasonography. The centre is affiliated with the Center for Rheumatology and Spine Diseases, which treats more than 2,000 inpatients and 6,000 outpatients (30,000 visits) every year, thus providing a unique opportunity to recruit patients for its projects and to effectively introduce new treatments directly to clinical practice.

COPECARE is the home of DANBIO – a nationwide registry of arthritis patients – and in 2015 a nationwide biobank was launched as a supplement to the registry. This unique combination is the first of its kind in the world and opens the door to entirely new research opportunities, aiming at personalised medicine.

Copenhagen Center for Arthritis Research (COPECARE) in brief

The centre, headed by Professor Mikkel Østergaard from the University of Copenhagen and COPECARE, is embedded in the Center for Rheumatology and Spine Diseases at Rigshospitalet - Glostrup. COPECARE has a staff of 21 – including two professors, six postdocs, seven PhD students and administrative staff consisting of nurses, secretaries and a bio-analyst. A number of hospital physicians are also affiliated with the centre.

COPECARE won a 2015 Global Excellence – in Health award

Further information is available at www.copecare.dk



Professor Mikkel Østergaard, Rigshospitalet - Glostrup, University of Copenhagen

Facts about Global Excellence – in Health

The Global Excellence programme seeks to recognise and highlight leading research and therapy environments in the field of healthcare in the hospitals and universities of the Capital Region of Denmark. Established in 2010 in close cooperation with the University of Copenhagen and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), the programme is designed to encourage internationalisation of the region's excellent research and therapy environments with a view to attracting international partners, researchers and talented individuals, in addition to private-sector and public funding for research. One to two prizes are awarded annually and are followed up with focused support that includes, for example, consultancy services, tools, website development and conferences.

The Global Excellence award is given to hospital and university environments in the region that perform first-rate international level research leading to the development and implementation of new, pioneering healthcare services, treatment methods and products for the benefit of patients. The selected Global Excellence environments have been chosen by the regional council of the Capital Region of Denmark based on evaluations by a specialist review committee of national and international experts. The awardees are characterised by their unique efforts within one or more areas, such as the extent and quality of their research and development, teaching, examination and treatment of patients, and innovation and dissemination of the new knowledge. In addition to the Global Excellence distinction, which is valid for a period of five years, the awardees each receive a grant of EUR 200,000 to help strengthen and further their international profile.



Facts about the Capital Region of Denmark

One of five regional administrative units in Denmark, the Capital Region of Denmark provides healthcare and mental healthcare services, in addition to carrying out research and regional development for 1.7 m people or about 30% of the population of Denmark. Besides hosting the largest healthcare system in Denmark the region is also home to one of the world's strongest life science clusters, with 70% of Denmark's biotech companies located in the area.

The Capital Region is home to a number of specialist environments at the ten university hospitals in the region that perform world-class health research and have the ability to translate new, innovative knowledge into pioneering healthcare services and treatments of the highest international standard. In order to highlight and acknowledge these environments, 26 hospital and university environments were presented with the Global Excellence – In Health award from 2010-2015.

Denmark ranks third among OECD countries for scientific publications per inhabitant, as well as for citations. Accordingly health research in the Capital Region is among the best in Europe. In close collaboration with the University of Copenhagen and the Technical University of Denmark, the Capital Region of Denmark represents frontline health science and clinical research together with high quality research in other areas relevant to the development of future healthcare. Approximately EUR 268,000,000 in external and internal funding is spent annually on health research in the region's university hospitals.

Research barometer 2013 (Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation), based on data from 2008-2012.
 Research assessment 2014 (Capital Region of Denmark), based on data from 2013.

