

## Volume 10, Issue 5 / 2008 - Country Focus:Denmark

### The Danish Association of Healthcare Management

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Because of the rising importance of international hospital and healthcare affairs, the Association has recently decided to also to set up a new subcommittee in charge of following up on international developments concerning healthcare management.

The Association was founded in 1912 and is one of the oldest hospital management associations in Europe; it will celebrate its 100th birthday in just 4 years time.

The statutes of the Association state that it is a professional forum for people employed in the hospital and healthcare sector with an interest in strategic management and operational management. The focus of attention is on areas such as the improvement of quality, organisation development, patient flow, administration, finance, human resource development and information.

#### Members

The Association has at present 398 ordinary personal members, and 37 institutional memberships, representing 760 members, bringing the total number of members to 1,183 individuals. The majority of the ordinary members are hospital managers, but membership also includes administrative chief doctors as well as chief and head nurses.

#### Organisational Structural

##### General Assembly

The members collectively have the ultimate authority, which, on a practical level they exercise at the annual ordinary General Assembly. The General Assembly is led by a Chairman elected by the participants at the beginning of the meeting. The annual report and latest accounts are always listed on the agenda for discussion and adoption, as well as the budget for the following year, membership fees and proposals from members.

The General Assembly also agrees on the election of a President and members of the Executive Committee to be entrusted, for a twoyear period, with day-to-day business and with necessary initiatives for the planning and implementation of the objects clauses, including the detailing of specific action plans.

##### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee comprises nine members, including the President, and meets normally four or five times a year. The Treasurer and the Secretary of the Association also participate in these meetings, both of whom are employed on a parttime basis, as well as a member who is in charge of international affairs within the Association.

These participants are not members of the Committee and only have an observer status in the meetings. The meetings are chaired by the President. The current President since 2006, Regional Hospital Director Per Christiansen, is the seventeenth president of the Association.

##### Subcommittees

Many years ago, the Committee set up two subcommittees to deal with day-to-day business under the chairmanships: a publications committee for the magazine of the Association and a course committee. The chairmen of the subcommittees are members of the Executive Committee. The subcommittees each have normally about 7-8 participants, all of whom are members of the Association. They hold 4-5 meetings a year.

Moreover, because of the rising importance of international hospital and healthcare affairs, the Association has recently decided to also to set up a new subcommittee in charge of following up on international developments concerning healthcare management. They are also entrusted with the mission of publicising Danish experiences in an international context.

#### Activities

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The Association carries out activities of various kinds in accordance with its statutes. For instance it has published a magazine since 1925, which is distributed ten times a year to all association members and other interested parties who want to subscribe.

Another core area of activity for hospital and health care professionals is the organisation of seminars, courses and annual conferences, during which, according to a long-standing tradition, speakers will normally include the Danish Minister for Health. And last but not least, the Association organises a one-week foreign study trip for 20-22 members of the Association each autumn.

These study trips, after which participants draft a study report for publication in the magazine of the Association, have occurred for more than 30 years. Last year the main theme was "Modern Hospital Constructions", and the destination was the Netherlands. The trip included visits to nine new and upgraded hospitals and was a great success.

Moreover, on an international level, the Association will continue its active participation in European cooperation within the framework of its membership in the European Association of Hospital Managers. The Danish Association was one of its six founding members in 1970. Since 1984, Denmark has represented Nordic countries on the EAHM Board.

#### **Finances**

The annual fee for ordinary members of the Association is about 65 euros. For institutions the fee depends on how many people are included in the membership.

Total membership fees amount to approximately 75,000 euros. Largest expenses go to administrative costs of the Association, the magazine, international affairs as well as to the development of activities for members, for instance the preparation of a homepage ([www.dssnet.dk](http://www.dssnet.dk)), including an electronic directory of magazine articles, courses etc.

#### **Outlook**

Over the past few years the Association has experienced a steady increase of members and continues to have sound finances. The Association intends to develop and increase its activities for members in the coming years. It plans to continue to offer high-level professional content and will thus try to influence developments in the Danish hospital and healthcare sector, including assisting and advising authorities and political decision makers.

Moreover, the Association will continue its active participation in international cooperation within Europe, contributing relevant knowledge and advice, and will also apply knowledge gained from international exposure to its current operations.

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