Agreement concerning research and teaching collaboration between Health, Aarhus University and the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and pre-hospital services in the Central Denmark Region

1. Introduction

The Danish Health Act (in Danish: Sundhedsloven) of 2007 and other measures have led to an increased focus on research at hospitals outside of the university hospitals. The following appears in Section 194 of the new Danish Health Act, which came into force on 1 January 2007:

*The Regional Council shall safeguard the research and development work such that services carried out in accordance with this Act, together with the training of healthcare professionals, may be performed with a high level of professional competence.*

This agreement is part of the research commitment contained in the provisions of the Danish Health Act. On the basis of this agreement, the objective is to create a professional and organisational basis for high quality research and research-based education in the region's hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services.

With this agreement all regional hospitals including regional psychiatric and pre-hospital services have a research affiliation with Aarhus University and an obligation as a research-based teaching hospital. Aarhus University and the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and pre-hospital services, thus enter into a binding collaboration on clinical teaching and research.

Together with the main agreement for collaboration in the area of health between the Central Denmark Region and Health, Aarhus University, this agreement contributes towards creating the framework for research, talent development, education and knowledge exchange (including clinical development) that will support the development of a coherent and collaborative healthcare system in the Central Denmark Region. This ensures that all citizens in the region have access to research-based treatment at a high international level and that the total research potential of the region's health services is utilised in the best possible way.

The agreement describes the framework for the collaboration between Aarhus University and the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region, in relation to research and teaching.

The contractual documentation is dynamic and reflects the current cooperation and must, as such, be updated on an on-going basis.
2. Vision, mission and strategy

2.1 Vision
The vision is for all patient treatment in the regional hospitals, in regional psychiatric services and in the prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region, to be research and evidence-based and to e.g. achieve this on the basis of local research environments.

2.2 Mission
• To strengthen selected research environments at the regional hospitals and in the regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region, until they attain the highest international level.
• To promote new research environments at the regional hospitals and in the regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region.
• To support coherent and coordinated research environments and research-based education at the regional hospitals, as well as the regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region.

2.3 Strategy
Realisation of the mission and vision for the collaboration is to be carried out with the help of management support, special forms of affiliation between hospital and university, as well as a clear division of responsibilities for patient care, research and education. The Central Denmark Region’s Health Science Research Foundation assists in supporting the realisation of the strategy.

3. Parties
The agreement covers the following parties:
• Aarhus Faculty of Health Sciences, Aarhus University
• The regional hospitals, regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region

Sub-elements of the agreement also form part of other partnerships and collaborations between the university and the region.

4. Management structure
The on-going coordination and the day-to-day responsibility for the research and teaching collaboration between Aarhus University and the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region, is handled by the Coordination Committee for Hospitals and University. The overall managerial responsibility for the collaboration is incumbent upon the Management Forum for Collaboration between the University and Region, cf. the General partnership agreement concerning health research, talent development, education and knowledge exchange between the Faculty of Health Sciences (Health), Aarhus University and the Central Denmark Region.
5. Division of responsibilities

One of the framework conditions for the health science research taking place at the regional hospitals and regional psychiatric and prehospital services is that there is an inextricable coherence between basic research, clinical research and clinical development – and thus also treatment, and that the medical degree programmes must be research-based.

Responsibility for patient treatment, research and pre-graduate academic education is unambiguously placed thus:

Responsibility for the clinical functions:
• The Central Denmark Region has the primary responsibility for the clinical functions.
• The Central Denmark Region is a link between research and patient treatment. The quality of the clinical work is closely connected to research.
• The regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region, houses the research and the research is carried out by staff who are affiliated with the region and/or the university.
• The regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region, are responsible for ensuring a well-functioning educational environment for students in all departments.
• The individual hospital, regional psychiatric or prehospital services, determine the physical framework for the internal structure for the research that takes place at the location.

Research responsibility:
• As Aarhus University’s representative, the Department of Clinical Medicine at Aarhus University has responsibility for the research, irrespective of the financial background of this research.
  o At each regional hospital the Department of Clinical Medicine appoints an academic coordinator who is also employed at the regional hospital. This person thus reports to the head of school and the hospital management. On behalf of the department head, the academic coordinator is the local coordinator for research, student teaching, PhD supervision, knowledge exchange etc., and may also carry out tasks for the hospital management.
• The Department of Clinical Medicine may delegate the research responsibility to the academic coordinator or to professors or clinical professors, including the responsibility for any laboratories affiliated to the department. In the departments that do not have a professor or clinical professor affiliated, the research responsibility is delegated to a specific clinical associate professor in the department.
• The research environments are supported at their location, so that research continues to have coherence with the clinical activities. The research is thus carried out in a decentralised structure and the research management is affiliated with the research environments.
• All clinical research projects must be approved by the departmental management at the department in question and by the academic coordinator at the hospital in question.
Bilateral agreements may be drawn up within the framework of this agreement and such agreements may be entered into either: i) between Aarhus University Hospital and the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric or prehospital services, or: ii) between regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and the prehospital services, and other parties. In the case of cooperation agreements with external parties, the internal provisions regarding responsibility for research must be specified.

Responsibility for the clinical student teaching and other forms of student teaching at the hospitals:

- Health, Aarhus University has the primary responsibility for the pre-graduate clinical teaching.
- Health, Aarhus University organises the Master's degree programme and enters into agreements with the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services, regarding the clinical teaching.
- In collaboration with the hospitals, Health, Aarhus University is responsible for preparing overall strategic guidelines for e.g. the professor and associate professor profiles that should be found in the clinical sector (the hospitals).

6. The regional hospitals’ affiliation with Aarhus University

All regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services, have in accordance with the above a research affiliation with Aarhus University and an obligation as a research-based teaching hospital. Aarhus University and the regional hospitals, including regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark region, thus enter into a binding collaboration on clinical teaching and research.

The form of affiliation between hospital and university constitutes the specific framework for research and education in the specific research environment. The form of affiliation matches the scope, potential and level of the research.

A more detailed description of the various forms of affiliation can be found in the Agreement on Forms of Affiliation, cf. the appendix

7. Research profiles

The collaboration on research and education between Aarhus University and the Central Denmark Region is based on the research profiles that are prepared by the regional hospitals and the regional psychiatric and prehospital services in the Central Denmark Region. The research profiles will be updated regularly to reflect current research, as well as perspectives and opportunities for research development.

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