

# Public Health & Epi News

NO. 3, 3<sup>RD</sup> VOLUME, MAY 2017

## Problems or challenges?

I just returned from the annual GRASPH seminar, where PhD students and supervisors have spent two days together engaged in academic discussions and social networking. And we had a really good time!

I feel that engaging in such multi-disciplinary meetings nicely summarizes why we (or at least some of us) are motivated by a research career: you get to meet new interesting people, you are challenged in your opinions, and you become inspired by new or different ideas.

There was a returning theme at the seminar: what to do when you find something unexpected or counterintuitive? The key question is whether to view it as a problem or a challenge. Some people may argue that problems and challenges are the same and that it is just a matter of terminology, but I think there is a subtle difference.

Problems are something we want to get rid of; whereas challenges can be overcome and by actively engaging with them they may even bring new insights. And this new insight may be what brings our research a major step forward. So next time you run into a problem, you might want to welcome it as a challenge.



**Naja Hulvej Rod**  
Professor, Head of the  
Graduate Program in  
Public Health &  
Epidemiology

### Editorial info

Public Health & Epi News is distributed to PhD students and supervisors affiliated with the graduate program in Public Health and Epidemiology.

The newsletter is published four times a year and is meant to be a dynamic platform for exchanging information within the graduate program. Any inputs on events, new books, international courses, writing groups etc. are very welcome.

Please send your input in an e-mail to Lisbeth Lyng Hansen, [llh@sund.ku.dk](mailto:llh@sund.ku.dk).

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Deadline for next issue of Public Health & Epi News is **18 August, 2017**.

Previous editions to be found at: <http://phd-pubhealthepi.ku.dk/>

## Conference calendar

### Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER) annual meeting

20-23 June 2017, Seattle, USA

<https://epiresearch.org/annual-meeting/50th-anniversary/>

### World Congress of Epidemiology

2017, 19-22 August, 2017, Omiya Sonic City, Japan,

<http://wce2017.umin.jp/index.html>

### NorDoc

Nordic PhD Summit "Health Sciences across Borders"

21-22 August, 2017

<https://www.nordochealth.net/about-the-summit>

*Deadline for registration: 19 June, 2017*

### NordicEpi 2017

13-15 September, 2017, Lund, Sweden

[http://www.malmokongressbyra.se/nordicepi/abstract\\_info](http://www.malmokongressbyra.se/nordicepi/abstract_info)

### SLLS Annual Conference 2017

11-14 October, Stirling, Scotland

<http://www.slls.org.uk/conf>

### 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Epidemiology & Public Health, 23-25

October, 2017, Paris, France

<http://epidemiology.conferenceseries.com/>

### 10<sup>th</sup> European Public Health

Conference, 1-4 November, 2017, Stockholm, Sweden

**Sustaining resilient and healthy communities**

<https://ephconference.eu/>

# PhDs of the Month

**Camilla Holten Møller, MD.**

*Dept. of Infectious Disease Epidemiology & Prevention  
Division of Infectious Disease Preparedness  
Statens Serum Institut*



*MRSA epidemiology in Denmark from 2006-2015 with special focus on CC398*

Denmark hold one of the lowest incidences of methicillin resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA) in the world, mainly due to a prudent and regulated use of antibiotics. However, since the beginning of the millennium, pigs have been found to represent a reservoir for livestock-associated MRSA (LA-MRSA) belonging to the clonal complex 398 (CC398), with an estimated 88% of Danish swineherds affected to date. LA-MRSA is a zoonosis that colonizes and infects humans who have direct or indirect contact with live pigs, and 43% of human MRSA cases in Denmark are now CC398 MRSA.

Although CC398 MRSA in humans is closely related to pig contact, human cases of CC398 MRSA with no known livestock exposure are emerging. These cases, about 13% of human CC398 MRSA cases in Denmark, indicate a continuous spillover into the community, with a potential of further spread and adaptation of LA-MRSA in the human population.

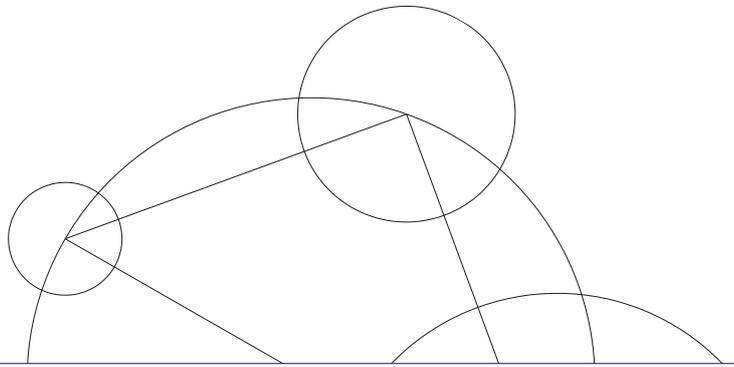
LA-MRSA has become an important political issue in recent years because of the potential threat to public health. Media attention is high, focusing on how to combat LA-MRSA. Do we need to sanitize all MRSA-positive swineherds in Denmark to remove LA-MRSA from Danish pigs, as done in Norway? Are the health implications from LA-MRSA in the community so small, that we just need to focus on keeping LA-MRSA out of the hospitals? The front lines are being drawn in the discussion of LA-MRSA.

My PhD project will address these issues. The project is part of a One Health-approach research program on LA-MRSA carried out by the SSI and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) in collaboration. The project will provide knowledge of the clinical consequences of LA-MRSA carriage and infection in humans, and estimate the risk of severe outcomes from LA-MRSA infection as compared to other MRSAs and methicillin susceptible *S. aureus* (MSSA). Knowledge that is needed to qualify the decision-making in implementing various programs to control LA-MRSA.

About me:

I graduated from Aarhus University in 2008. After completing my internship my focus and interest has been on infectious diseases, working with infections both as a clinical doctor and in clinical microbiology. At the Department of Infectious Disease Epidemiology & Prevention at Statens Serum Institut, I work with infections from a public health perspective in collaboration with epidemiologists, microbiologists and veterinarians. I feel very privileged to get to work in the field of One Health and antimicrobial resistance, two extremely important global issues that will have a large impact on future public health.

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## **Maria Hach**

*RHD, MPH, Department of Odontology, section of dental public health  
School of Oral Health Care  
Department of Public Health, Section of Social Medicine*

### *Social inequality in oral health – The role of health behavior*



Despite increasing interest in social inequality in oral health during the past decades, there are still major inequalities among socioeconomic groups with regards to tooth loss and oral and oropharynx cancers (oral cancers). Tooth loss is foremost caused by tooth extraction as a consequence of dental caries, periodontitis and the inability to pay for restorative treatment. Smoking, alcohol consumption and sugar-sweetened beverages are considered among the risk factors for periodontitis and dental caries. Oral cancers are mainly caused by smoking and alcohol consumption. The underlying mechanisms in the association between socioeconomic position (SEP) and oral diseases are, however, not well established.

The aim of my project is to investigate the mediated proportion of smoking, alcohol consumption and sugar-sweetened beverages in the association between SEP and tooth loss and oral cancers, respectively.

My studies are based on a large pooled cohort study, the Social Inequality in Cancer cohort (SIC), consisting of 83 006 participants aged 20-93 years. SIC includes information on a wide range of biological and behavioural risk factors and all participants are followed in nationwide demographic, social and health registries. Especially for this study the data are linked to the Register of Odontology, Sundhedsdatastyrelsen and the Danish

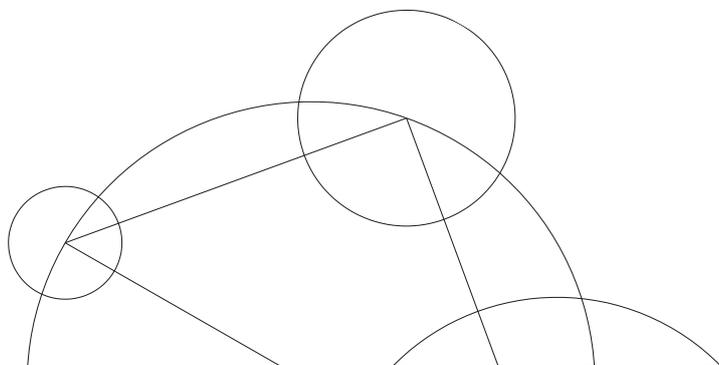
Cancer Registry to obtain information on tooth loss and oral cancers.

This project will provide a new understanding of risk factors for tooth loss and insight into the mechanisms underlying social inequality in tooth loss and oral cancers, respectively.

#### **About me**

I have a background as a dental hygienist (Tandplejer), where I have been working for 10 years. As a dental hygienist I have always had a great interest in the social inequalities in oral disease and the ability to undergo preventive treatment. Therefore I have mainly worked with physically and mentally disabled adults and adults with low education or low income. In 2013 I graduated as Master of Public Health and started applying for funding for my project. In the period 2013-2016 I worked as a research assistant in the Section of Social Medicine and The School of Oral Health Care. I was enrolled as a PhD student 1 August 2016.

Contact: Maria Hach, [maria.hach@sund.ku.dk](mailto:maria.hach@sund.ku.dk)



## Line Tang Møllehave

*MSc in Clinical Nutrition*

*Research Centre for Prevention and Health (RCPH), Capital Region of Denmark*

### *Iodine and thyroid function – public health consequences*



Since 2000 salt has been fortified with iodine in Denmark to rectify an insufficient intake. Adequate iodine intake prevents thyroid diseases, while both insufficient and excess intake increase the risk of thyroid diseases.

Therefore, iodine fortification must be closely monitored to evaluate the effects on public health. The aim of my PhD is to examine the effects of the Danish iodine fortification program on thyroid disease and effects of thyroid function on public health. Specifically, I will examine development in treatment costs, treatment practices, and the health consequences of subclinical thyroid disease.

Since fortification, iodine deficiency-associated diseases have decreased, while some iodine excess-associated diseases have increased. However, it is not known whether the total costs of thyroid disease treatment has increased or decreased. In my first paper, I am examining the development in annual costs of thyroid disease treatment during 1995-2015.

Hypothyroidism is the main iodine excess-associated disease and it has increased since fortification. However, the use of medication for this disease has increased more than can be explained by the iodine fortification. It is hypothesized that this is because more people with

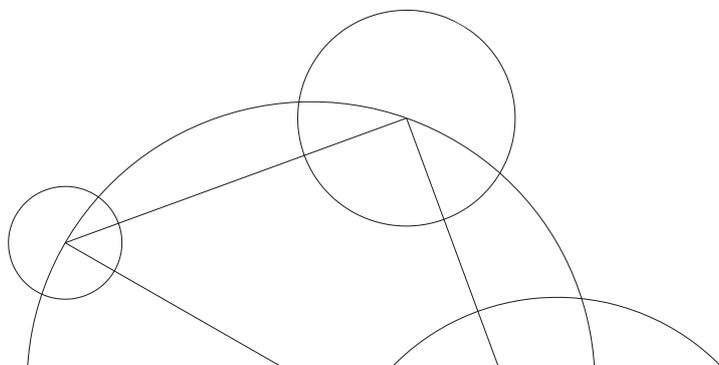
subclinical hypothyroidism are treated now, who would not have been treated earlier. I will examine this hypothesis by combining register- and laboratory data. Finally, I will examine the health consequences of subclinical hypothyroidism in cohort studies, as the evidence for treating subclinical hypothyroidism is debated.

#### About me:

I was enrolled as a PhD student in October 2016. I have an MSc in Clinical Nutrition from the University of Copenhagen and was lucky to work with a broad range of epidemiological projects at the RCPH during my studies and for a year after. I am excited to combine my interests, epidemiology and nutrition, in this great learning environment and collaborate with different professions and nationalities.

Contact Line Tang Møllehave:

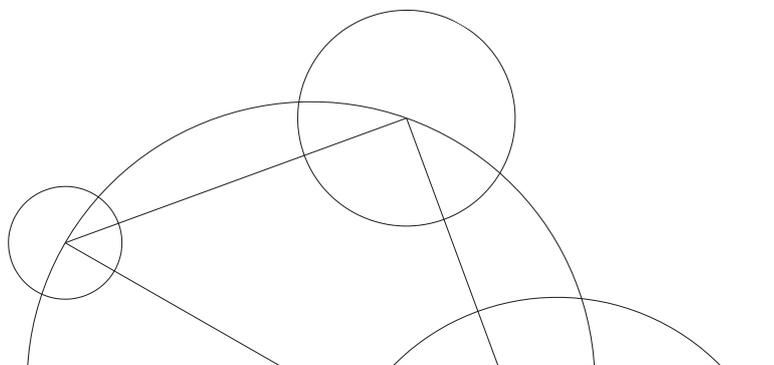
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## Welcome to the new PhD students

*12 new PhD students have been enrolled between 1<sup>st</sup> of February and 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2017*

Name	Project title	Supervisor
Amani Meaidi	The influence of tranexamic acid on thromboembolic risk in women	Øjvind Lidegaard
Annet H. P. Bens	Chemopreventive therapies and contralateral breast cancer	Niels Thorndahl Kroman
Annika B. von Heymann-Horan (transferred from SAMF)	Distress in informal Caregivers of patients with terminal cancer - from palliative care through bereavement	Christoffer Johansen
Cecilie A. D. Dornonville de la Cour	Do aspirin and NSAIDs affect the risk and mortality of head and neck cancer? Focus on association with HPV	Susanne Krüger Kjær
Jeanette Halskou Hesselvig	Cutaneous lupus erythematosus and systemic lupus erythematosus: epidemiological studies	Lene Dreyer
Lars Jørgensen	Benefits and harms of the human papillomavirus vaccines: systematic review of industry and non-industry study reports	Peter Gøtzsche
Mads Østrup Nordentoft	Psychosocial work environment and risk of type 2 diabetes	Naja Hulvej Rod
Mette Ladefoged Kopp Schmidt	MOVING MEN - exploration and support of physical activity promotion in men undergoing treatment for prostate cancer	Jens Otto Reimers Sønksen
Nille Birk Wulff	Total laryngectomy: Long-term observations and follow-up. A study of postoperative complications, survival and quality of Life in Denmark and Southern Sweden	Preben Homøe
Rikke Thoft Nielsen	Effect of ethnicity and migration on risk of bacteremia, multi-drug resistance and mortality after bacteremia: a register-based cohort study	Marie Nørredam
Sif Helene Arnold	Improved antibiotic prescribing for nursing home residents with suspected urinary tract infection	Lars Bjerrum
Sonia Guleria	Fertility drugs and risk of cancers	Susanne Krüger Kjær



## Up-coming PhD courses

### Public Health courses at HEALTH-UCPH

#### **Quantitative Bias Analysis for Epidemiologic Research**

Course director: Naja Hulvej Rod  
14-16 August, 2017

#### **Advanced Social Epidemiology: A focus on Concepts, Methodology, Context and Life-course**

Course director: Ingelise Andersen  
28 August – 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2017

### Other courses

#### **European Educational Programme in Epidemiology (EEPE)**

**Residential 3-week Summer Course in Epidemiology, 19 June – 7 July 2017**

**Pre-Course week, 13 – 16 June 2017** (*can be attended independently from the 3-week residential course*)

Contact: [eepe@eepe.org](mailto:eepe@eepe.org) and [www.eepe.org](http://www.eepe.org)

### Statistics courses at HEALTH-UCPH

#### **Statistical analysis of survival data**

#### **Use of SAS statistical software**

#### **Programming and statistical modelling in R**

#### **Regression models**

#### **Introduction to Stata**

#### **Use of the statistical software R**

#### **Programming and statistical modelling in Stata**

#### **Introduction to scale validation**

#### **Modern scale validation and using IRT and Rasch models**

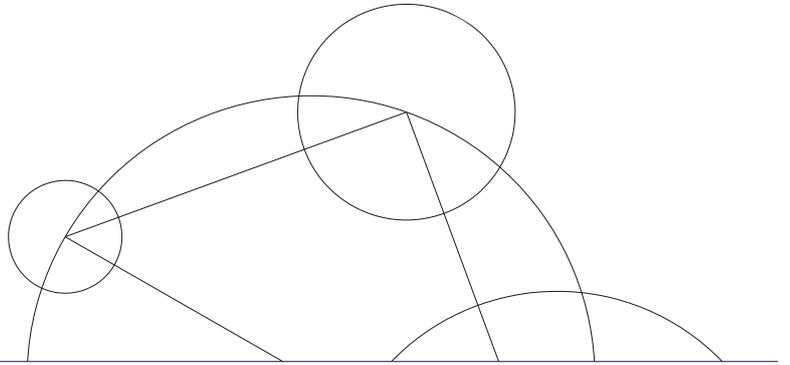
#### **Analysis of correlated and repeated measurements**

Read more at:

<https://phdcourses.ku.dk/Kursusliste.aspx?printPreview=1&TermId=337&KatId=53&OCatID=4300117&sitepath=SUND>

Applications for public health and statistics courses through the Graduate School:

<https://phdcourses.ku.dk/Default.aspx?sitepath=SUND>



## PhD defenses

29 May at 14:00-17:00

**Laura Emdal Navne**

*Careography: Practices and Experiences of Life and Death in a Danish Neonatal Intensive Care Unit*

[http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/calendar/q2-2017/phdforsvar\\_navne290517/](http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/calendar/q2-2017/phdforsvar_navne290517/)

30 May at 10:00-13:00

**Janni Uyen Hoa Lam**

*CSi - Copenhagen Self-sampling Initiative: HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS-BASED SELF-SAMPLING TO OPTIMIZE CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING*

[http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/calendar/q2-2017/phdforsvar\\_lam300517/](http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/calendar/q2-2017/phdforsvar_lam300517/)

8 June at 14:00-17:00

**Maria Wessman**

*Women living with HIV - Issues regarding sexuality and fertility*

[http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/calendar/q2-2017/phdforsvar\\_wessman080617/](http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/calendar/q2-2017/phdforsvar_wessman080617/)

## Funding opportunities for research stays abroad in 2017

The Graduate Program in Public Health and Epidemiology will provide up to 10.000 DKK in financial support to research stays abroad of *at least three months duration* in 2017 in order to encourage internationalization.

Please send a brief description of your research stay abroad and a budget to Lisbeth Lyng Hansen ([llh@sund.ku.dk](mailto:llh@sund.ku.dk)) in order to apply for these funds. Everyone who meets the qualifications will be awarded funding up to a maximum of 10.000 DKK depending on their budget.

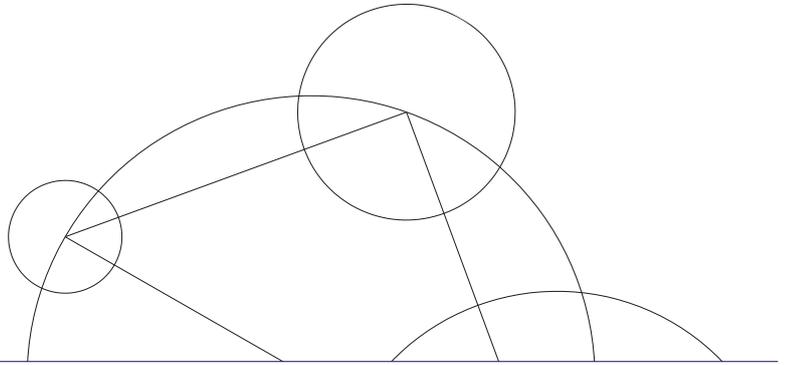
Please be aware that these funds are in addition to the funds you can apply for through the PhD School:

<http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/studyabroad/financial-support-for-studying-abroad/>

There is also an excellent 'PhD supervision service' for going abroad handled by International Staff Mobility (ISM) who assists PhD students with practical issues such as visa, insurance, de-registration, social security and funding. More information can be found at: <http://phd.ku.dk/english/abroad/>

## Financial support for seminars

If you wish to organize a seminar, the graduate program in Public Health & Epidemiology has some means to support for instance travel and accommodation for guest lecturers. The only condition is that the seminar is open for PhD students in the program. Please contact Naja Hulvej Rod, [nahuro@sund.ku.dk](mailto:nahuro@sund.ku.dk) or Lisbeth Lyng Hansen, [LLH@sund.ku.dk](mailto:LLH@sund.ku.dk) for more information.



## Financial support for writing retreats



We offer a number of writing retreats of one week duration at Fuglsang Manor House, [https://intranet.ku.dk/employeeguide/buildings\\_and\\_facilities/fuglsang-manor-house/Pages/default.aspx](https://intranet.ku.dk/employeeguide/buildings_and_facilities/fuglsang-manor-house/Pages/default.aspx)

Please send a short motivated application to Lisbeth, [LLH@sund.ku.dk](mailto:LLH@sund.ku.dk).  
Application deadline for stays in the Autumn semester: **20<sup>th</sup> of June, 2017**.

## Coaching sessions

We offer coaching sessions to PhD students that experience challenges in their projects. We have contact to three coaches with specific experience in PhD coaching.

This is an **on-going offer**, so if you feel in need of this kind of support, please contact Lisbeth Lyng Hansen, [llh@sund.ku.dk](mailto:llh@sund.ku.dk). She can mediate the contact to the coaches. All requests will be handled confidentially.

## Courses on supervision for PhD supervisors

### Supervision of PhD students

Department of Science Education, University of Copenhagen

This course aims to provide participants with the practical and theoretical basis supervising PhD students - both as principal or supplementary supervisor. The course is designed for new as well as experienced supervisors.

For course dates, see [http://www.ind.ku.dk/english/course\\_overview/teacher\\_training/phd\\_supervision/](http://www.ind.ku.dk/english/course_overview/teacher_training/phd_supervision/)