

# Public Health & Epi News

NO. 1, 6<sup>TH</sup> VOLUME, DECEMBER 2019

## Welcome to the 2020s!

We are fast approaching the 20s. A hundred years ago – the 1920s – was called the 'roaring twenties'. It brought a number of highly visible social and cultural trends like Art Deco and Jazz. There was also strong political and societal movements and most countries passed laws that allowed women to vote (although this already happened in 1918 in Denmark).

One thing that really characterized the roaring twenties was that the public/ the population showed a strong voice in art and politics. This also leads me to draw a parallel to current climate debate, where we again see a strong popular movement. People are rethinking ways of life, upscaling garbage and engaging in politics in a completely new way.

I believe we as researchers and as a large university need to engage in this debate and be first movers. Luckily, many have already started taking the first steps in upcycling paper for Christmas decorations, or choosing to fly less. And we may even have vegetarian tapas as the standard for all PhD defenses in the near future.

Merry Christmas to everyone and see you in 2020!



### 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 three times a year (around June, November and March) 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).

**Editors:** Naja Hulvej Rod, [nahuro@sund.ku.dk](mailto:nahuro@sund.ku.dk) and Lisbeth Lyng Hansen, [llh@sund.ku.dk](mailto:llh@sund.ku.dk)

Deadline for next issue of Public Health & Epi News is **24<sup>th</sup> of February, 2020**.

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

## Conference calendar

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

16-19 June, Boston, USA

<https://epiresearch.org/annual-meeting/2020-meeting/>

### World Congress of Epidemiology

2020, 13-17 September, Melbourne, Australia

[https://www.iipc-se.org/documents/2020\\_IEA\\_WCE\\_AUSTRALIA\\_announcement.pdf](https://www.iipc-se.org/documents/2020_IEA_WCE_AUSTRALIA_announcement.pdf)

### 10<sup>th</sup> annual SLLS International Conference

5-7 October, 2020, Vilnius, Lithuania

<https://www.slls.org.uk/>

### 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Epidemiology & Public Health

September 23-24, 2020 Berlin, Germany

<https://epidemiology.expertconferences.org/>

### GRASPH Summer School 2020

26-27 May, 2020 at Comwell

Klarskovgaard, organized by AAU  
Registration will open primo January 2020

More info at

<https://phd-pubhealthepi.ku.dk/summer-school/>

## PhD's of the Month

**Rasmus Hertzum-Larsen, MSc Public Health**

### *Participation in cervical cancer prevention among immigrants in Denmark*

The subject of my PhD is the participation of immigrants/descendants in HPV-vaccination and cervical cancer screening. Denmark has national programs which offer these preventive services free of charge, and we already know that are very effective at preventing cervical cancer. However, the programs only work for women who actually participate! Previous research have shown that many, but not all, immigrants and descendant groups have lower rates of participation in these preventive measures, compared to multi-generation Danes. A focus of my PhD is to understand why these differences in participation exist.

Sociodemographic factors such as such as income, employment, civil status and education are often very important in explaining health and health behavior, and this is also the case in the study of immigrant health. However, other immigration specific factors also plays important roles. For example, immigrants may experience language problems, difficulties navigating the Danish health care system and stressors related to the immigration process, which may act as barriers for behavior conducive to health. The potency of these barrier may in turn interact with other factors for example socioeconomic status, the length the stay of immigrants in Denmark or degree of attachment to Denmark.

To examine these questions I use register-epidemiological methods. This means that I use the information which is routinely registered about all residents in Denmark each time they interact with public institutions. For example when they finish an education, pay their taxes, register

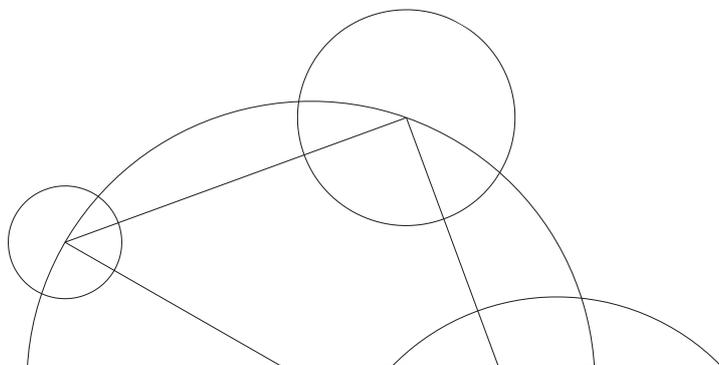


moving to another city or receive medical assistance. Because this information is collected at a very high quality, for the entire population, Denmark is very well suited for conducting epidemiological research. In many other countries much of this information would have to be collected through surveys, which is very expensive, time consuming and is challenged by many methodological problems which reduce the quality of the data collected. For example, not everyone are equally likely to have the time and energy to participate in a survey, posing challenges for the representativeness of the survey.

A challenge to conducting registry research in a country like Denmark, is that many researchers have access to the same data at the same time. This means other researchers might be working on very similar projects. In these cases it is important to finish the article first! Otherwise, it is much more difficult to have the results published in a good journal.

In my experience, writing a PhD is much like writing a masters thesis, but instead of taking 6 months like a masters thesis does at Danish universities, the PhD takes 3 years. This makes it possible to delve more deeply into the subject matter, but can also make it more challenging to create a birds eye view of the project. It is very important to have advisers who can provide guidance and experience to the project, which, luckily I have!

Contact: [Rahela@cancer.dk](mailto:Rahela@cancer.dk)



## Industrial PhD of the Month



### Stine Øien Dandanell, MSc Public Health

Center for Diabetes, Copenhagen Municipality & Section for Social Medicine, Department of Public Health, Copenhagen University

### *Evaluation of three interventions targeted socially vulnerable people with type 2 diabetes living in deprived areas of Copenhagen*

**Description:** Type 2-diabetes (T2D) is one of the biggest and fastest growing chronic diseases in Denmark, and by 2025, over half a million Danes will have T2D(1). In Copenhagen, research from Section for Social Medicine, at the Department of Public Health, shows major socioeconomic differences in the prevalence of risk factors and the occurrence of T2D(2). Further, it address the complexities that make up diabetes vulnerability and conclude a need for better and more equal access to health care services for people living in disadvantaged areas(3).

The research is conducted as part of the global partnership program 'Cities Changing Diabetes' (CCD) initiated by Novo Nordisk<sup>1</sup> that aims to improve understanding of the driving factors behind the rise of diabetes in urban settings. Further, to share and apply that knowledge to real-world solutions for people to live healthier lives. In Copenhagen, the partnership is between the Section for Social Medicine at University of Copenhagen, the Municipality of Copenhagen, Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen, the Danish Diabetes Association and Novo Nordisk.

The overall aim with my PhD is to investigate the CCD Copenhagen partnership. This, by evaluating the stakeholders' collaboration on three selected interventions that aims to reduce the socioeconomic inequality in the prevalence and consequence of T2D, Copenhagen is facing.

The three interventions consist of:

- 1) 'Together on Diabetes' - A peer-support program that aims to support socially vulnerable people with type 2-diabetes,
- 2) Early detection and outgoing diabetes rehabilitation in the disadvantaged Copenhagen district Tingbjerg.

- 3) 'General practice for All' - a cross-sectoral model to ensure equal access to GPs for all, including people living in disadvantaged areas of Copenhagen, where it is difficult to attract GPs. The model is a collaboration between the Municipality of Copenhagen, the Capital Region of Denmark and the GPs organization in the Capital Region of Denmark.

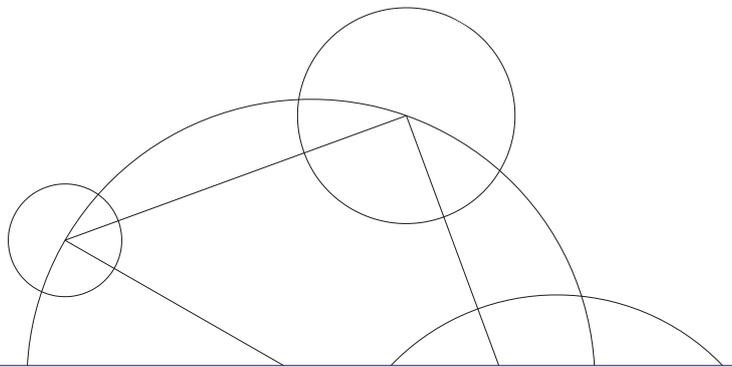
In my PhD, I use a realistic evaluation approach, which has a specific focus on contextual factors and mechanism that can affect the implementation and thereby effect of the interventions(4). This, to improve understanding of how and why the interventions work or do not work for socially vulnerable groups, in different settings and contexts. Further, I use relational coordination theory to investigate the collaboration between the stakeholders(5). Methodology, I use a combination of in-depth qualitative interviews, observational studies and survey data.

My PhD results will hopefully, contribute with knowledge on how the partnership program and the three interventions works in practice. Knowledge that can be used by the CCD program and others to further develop and disseminate interventions targeted socially vulnerable with T2D.

My PhD is an industrial PhD and funded by Novo Nordisk (25%), Copenhagen Municipality (25%) and the Innovation Fund Denmark (50%).

**My background:** I obtained my master's degree in Public Health Science from the University of Copenhagen, 2016. Through the master course "Intervention and implementation" I developed an interest within the implementation and evaluation field, which led to become an intern and later student at an

<sup>1</sup> [Citieschangingdiabetes.com](http://Citieschangingdiabetes.com)

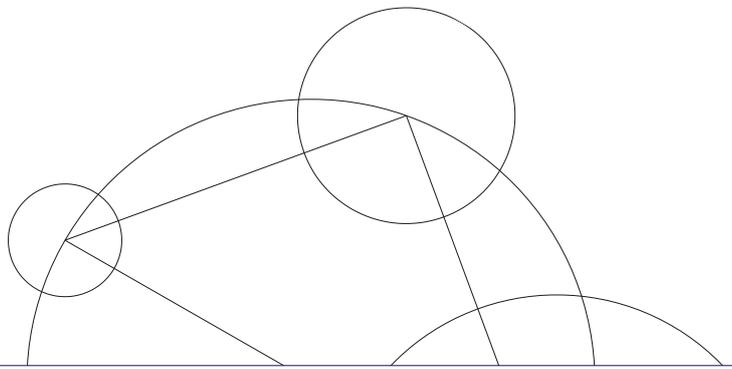


evaluation bureau. Since graduating from UCPH, I have been working with implementing and evaluating complex interventions, first as a consultant at the evaluation bureau and later as a research assistant and

industrial PhD fellow at Section for Social Medicine and Center for Diabetes at Copenhagen Municipality.

Contact: [soga@sund.ku.dk](mailto:soga@sund.ku.dk)

1. Københavns Sundhedspolitik. Handleplan for Type 2-Diabetes 2016-2019. 2016; Available from: [https://www.kk.dk/sites/default/files/handleplan\\_for\\_type\\_2-diabetes\\_2016-2019.pdf](https://www.kk.dk/sites/default/files/handleplan_for_type_2-diabetes_2016-2019.pdf)
2. Rule of Halves analysis for Copenhagen.
3. Christensen U, Kristensen EC, Malling Hvid GM. Vulnerability Assessment in Copenhagen, Cities Changing Diabetes. Copenhagen; 2016.
4. Pawson R. Simple Principles for The Evaluation of Complex Programmes. An evidence-based approach to public Heal tackling Heal inequalities Pract steps Methodol challenges. 2004;1–36.
5. Hoffer Gittel J. Relationships and resilience. J Appl Behav Sci [Internet]. 2008;44(1):25–47. Available from: [10.1177/0021886307311469%5Cnhttp://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=31200653&site=ehost-live](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=31200653&site=ehost-live)



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## Elton Henry Lobo, ME

*Joint Doctoral Candidate Deakin University and  
University of Copenhagen*



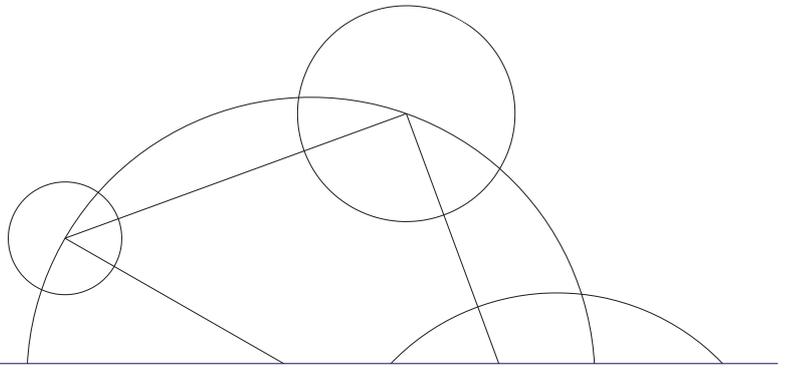
With the increase in the number of incident cases of stroke worldwide, there is a large-scale dependence of patients on their caregivers. The caregiving burden has not only impacted the physical and emotional well-being carers in Denmark but also in Australia, with carers confused on the means to manage and support the people they care for, leading to several unmet needs. The unmet needs can be social, emotional, psychological, physical, and educational as demonstrated in the literature. However, on caregiver observations in Australia, it was noted caregiver needs differ based on the individual they care for, and there are several variables that need to be accounted for in order to ensure efficient caregiving support. Hence, my research would be to observe caregivers in their local setting to guide the development of a mHealth application to support their needs. Once the application is developed, the caregivers would be required to review and reiterate the design in three co-design workshop conducted in both Australia and Denmark to ensure acceptance on a global platform.

My project initially began in Australia with the observations of various stakeholders in stroke care including medical professionals, patients and caregivers. On closer observations, the medical professionals are more focused on the patients during the 15-30 minute appointments given to them and post this the medical professional expect the caregiver to provide treatment and

support, while patients are dependent on the caregivers for the same. Moreover, it was noted that patients tend to react in a similar fashion as the caregiver. So any disappointment in the caregiver could lead to a disappointment to the patient. Hence, it would be ideal to support the caregiver. Moreover, it was observed caregivers are more likely to accept new technology rather than patients if it meant improving patient outcomes while reducing their burden. This is important because, in Australia, people above the age of 65 with cognitive disability are less likely to use technology.

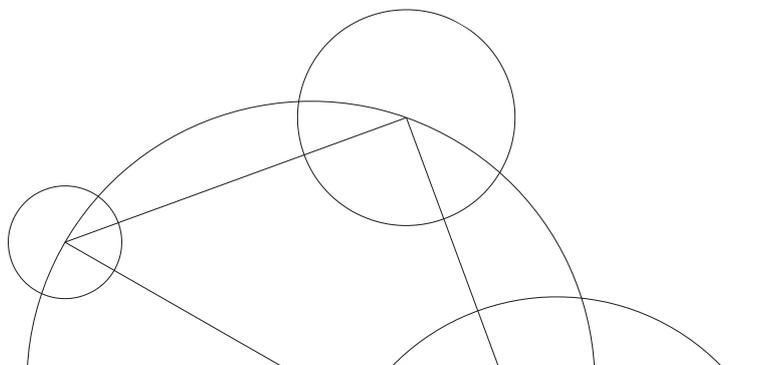
Based on these observations, I looked at current technology and literature to identify the best means to support caregiving burden, while also considering participant engagement which is an important aspect towards acceptance of any technology. Using this knowledge, I aim to conduct my observations on caregivers in their local environment and then perform the three co-design workshops first in Copenhagen, Denmark (5<sup>th</sup> Feb to 1<sup>st</sup> Sept' 20) and then in Melbourne, Australia (4<sup>th</sup> Sept to 1<sup>st</sup> Dec'20).

I come from a background of electronics, computer science and biomedical, and the transition towards healthcare has been one of the most eventful times of my life, as I got to learn from several individuals both in my field and in several other domains. It is always a good experience to talk to individuals and find means to collaborate as that was the main defining point for



my knowledge acquisition. Moreover, the constant constructive feedback from my supervisors on a bi-weekly basis made it possible for my constant growth within this domain. My advice to other students would be to understand why you are doing your PhD as it could help you steer your project to support your individual goals making it more enjoyable (*a quote from my supervisors book*). As a person who has received caregiving in the past, my goal was to create a tool to help people like me to be supported throughout their condition and this research helps me achieve that.

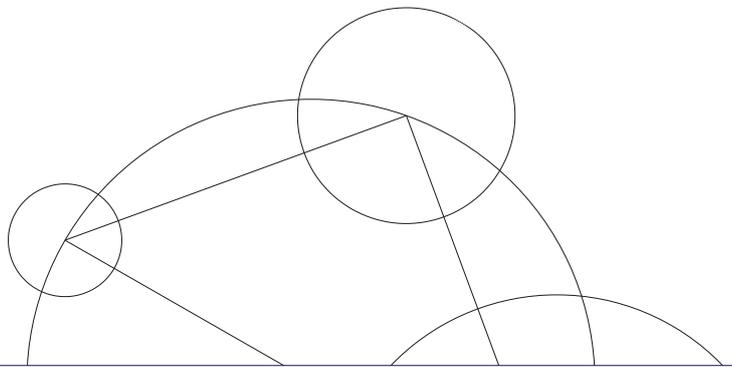
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## Welcome to the new PhD students

*12 new PhD students have been enrolled between 1<sup>st</sup> of May and 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2019*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
Anna Elise Engell	Familial hypercholesterolemia - Frequency and identification of patients in primary care	Henrik Løvendahl Jørgensen
Daniel Joseph Ward	Nationwide studies of biologic therapies for inflammatory bowel disease in Denmark and France	Mads Melbye
Frederikke Fog Lihme	The cardiovascular consequences of preeclampsia	Mads Melbye
Johan Lerbech Vinther	Gestational Age and Offspring BMI	Anne-Marie Nybo Andersen
Julie Bergeron	Impact of prenatal exposure to stress on preterm birth and development of toddlers: A study using data from several birth cohorts	Anne-Marie Nybo Andersen
Kim Boesen	Methodological limitations of psychiatric drug trials with a focus on extended-release methylphenidate for adults with ADHD	Jacob Rosenberg
Mads Langager Larsen	The impact of perinatal care on the development of cerebral palsy: Markers for use in early screening	Gorm Ole Greisen
Mia Østergaard Johansen	"Metabolomically healthy obesity" in the age of high-throughput metabolomics: Studying personalized medicine in 30,000 individuals	Børge Nordestgaard
Sabrina Trappaud Rønne	Living with type 2 diabetes and severe mental illness – experiences of illness management and needs for support	Sidse Marie Arnfred
Sidsel Marie Bernt Jørgensen	Enhancing return to work following heart disease	Maria Kristiansen
Thomas Vedste Aagaard	Exercise therapy for patients with diabetic foot ulcers	Stig Brorson
Vanja Kosjerina	DiaLate - Diabetes in the late stages of life	Jørgen Rungby



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## Epidemiological seminar series

### Program for the Winther 2019/ 2020

#### **19<sup>th</sup> of December at 3-4 pm.: The Philosophy of Epidemiology**

Professor Alex Broadbent, Institute for the Future of Knowledge, University of Johannesburg

#### **6<sup>th</sup> of February at 3-4 pm.: Methodological issues related to sibling and twin designs in epidemiology**

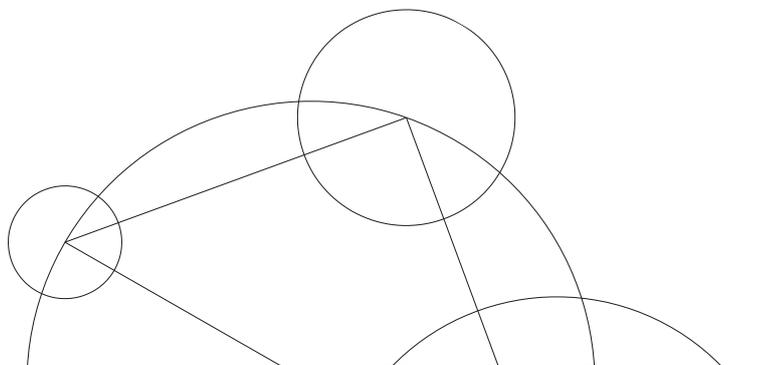
Professor Thorkild IA Sørensen, Section of Epidemiology and Associate Professor Theis Lange, Section of Biostatistics, University of Copenhagen

#### **15<sup>th</sup> of June: Challenges in emulating target trials**

Professor Bianca de Stavola, UCL (Lunch seminar)

These seminars are organized in collaboration between the Graduate Program in Public Health & Epidemiology and the Section of Epidemiology at the Department of Public Health, University of Copenhagen. Please **sign up** to the mailing list with updates about location and titles for the upcoming seminars by sending an e-mail to Kathe Jensen ([kje@sund.ku.dk](mailto:kje@sund.ku.dk)).

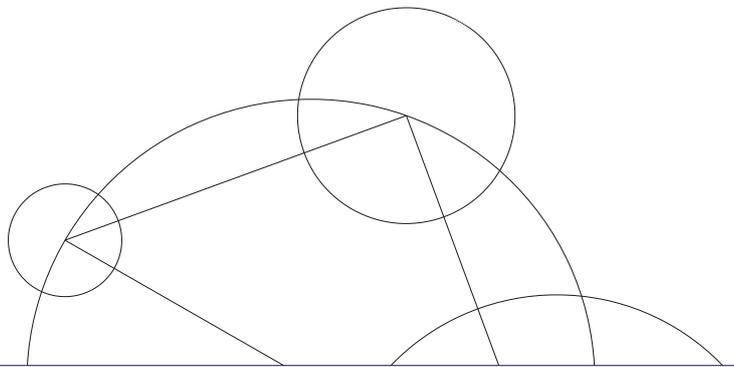
You can also check this link: <https://publichealth.ku.dk/about-the-department/section-epidemiology/seminars/>



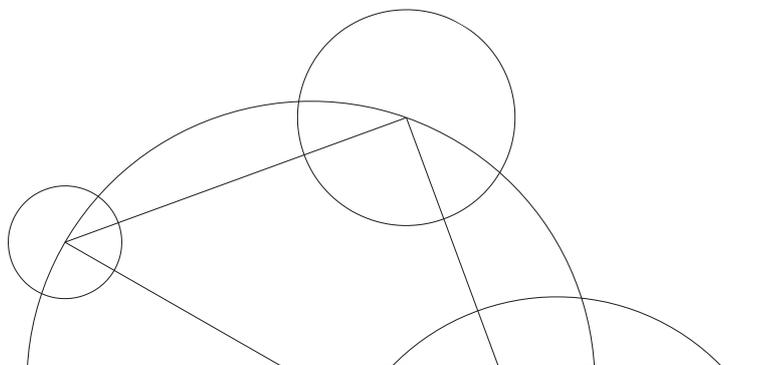
## Up-coming PhD courses

<b>Public health courses at SUND</b>	<b>Start</b>
Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Health Sciences <a href="#"><u>3738-20-00-00</u></a>	27.01.2020
Pregnancy and programming and later risk of obesity <a href="#"><u>3213-20-00-00</u></a>	27.01.2020
Medical Ethics: Theory and Practice <a href="#"><u>3770-20-00-00</u></a>	28.01.2020
Questionnaires in clinical and public health research: development, validation and evaluation <a href="#"><u>3740-20-00-00</u></a>	30.01.2020
Introduction to Directed Acyclic Graphs (DAGs) <a href="#"><u>3229-20-00-00</u></a>	16.03.2020
How to design and conduct your Mixed Method Study <a href="#"><u>3763-20-00-00</u></a>	24.03.2020
Prognostic Research in Precision Public Health <a href="#"><u>3682-20-00-00</u></a>	30.03.2020

<b>Statistics courses at SUND</b>	<b>Start</b>
Epidemiological methods in medical research <a href="#"><u>3602-20-00-00</u></a>	14.01.2020
Programming and statistical modelling in R <a href="#"><u>3329-20-00-00</u></a>	04.02.2020
Use of the statistical software R <a href="#"><u>3314-20-00-00</u></a>	09.03.2020
Use of SAS statistical software <a href="#"><u>3301-20-00-00</u></a>	31.03.2020
Introduction to SPSS <a href="#"><u>3303-20-00-00</u></a>	02.04.2020



Advanced Statistical Topics in Health Research B <u>3334-20-00-00</u>	27.04.2020
Statistics for experimental medical researchers <u>3325-20-00-00</u>	12.05.2020
Causal Inference, Part I: Marginal structural models, IPW and time-varying confounding <u>3326-20-00-00</u>	18.05.2020
Modern scale validation using IRT and Rasch models <u>3323-20-00-00</u>	12.06.2020



## PhD defenses

11 December 2019, 14:00-17:00

[Eszter Török](#)

Work-unit social capital and the risk of long-term sickness absence in the healthcare sector

19 December 2019, 13:00-16:00

[Christopher Jamil de Montgomery](#)

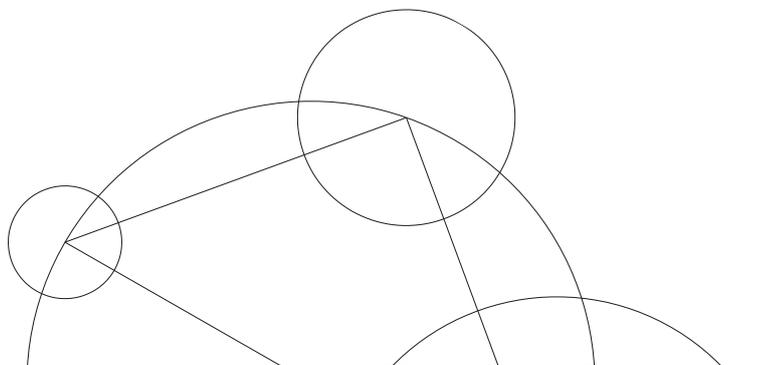
Growing up as a refugee: A comparative study of health, education and employment in the early life courses of refugee children in Denmark

You can always find an updated list of PhD defenses at <http://phd-pubhealthepi.ku.dk/phd-defenses/>

## PhD degrees

*Congratulations to the 11 PhD students who have been awarded their PhD degree between 4<sup>th</sup> of June and 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2019 within the graduate program 'Public Health & Epidemiology'.*

Name	Supervisor	Thesis
Anders Husby	Mads Melbye	Nationwide cohort studies on reproductive history and cancer incidence
Ane Nørgaard Christensen	Gunhild Waldemar	Use of Psychotropic Drugs in Patients with Dementia
Astrid Karnøe Knudsen	Lars Kayser	An Investigation of Diet and Lifestyle Factors in Multiple Sclerosis and Their Relations to Symptom Severity
Birgitte Bøcher Bennich	Ingrid Eugenie Egerod	The influence of family function on self-management behaviors and quality-of-life in adult patients with type 2 diabetes
Heidi Jeannet Graff	Ingrid Eugenie Egerod	Long-term consequences of mild traumatic brain injury - labour market attachment, marital stability, academic achievement and socio-economic status
Jannatul Ferdous	Peter Kjær Mackie Jensen	Assessment of microbiological quality of drinking water in an urban low-income settlement of Bangladesh: investigation for Escherichia coli and Vibrio cholerae
Kasper Grandahl	Ole Steen Mortensen	Solar Ultraviolet Radiation Exposure, Sun Protection Behavior and Skin Photodamage in Danish Workers
Kazi Ishtiak Ahmed	Åse Marie Hansen	Social relations at work and risk of dementia in old age - An epidemiological investigation of the association
Maiken Bang Hansen	Mogens Grønvold	Symptoms and problems reported by cancer patients admitted to specialized palliative care
Maria Guerra Andersen	Peter Møller	Health effects of exposure to combustion-derived particulate matter from real-life exposures in firefighting and in diesel trains.
Zenat Zebin Hossain	Peter Kjær Mackie Jensen	Investigation of household transmission pathways for Vibrio cholerae and Escherichia coli in Bangladesh



## Allocation of grants from the graduate program, Autumn 2019

### Research stays abroad:

**Lærke Taudorf**, 10,000 DKK to stay at The Dementia Centre for Research Collaboration, University of New South Wales, Australia

**Julie Andersen**, 10,000 DKK to stay at Stanford University, USA

### Writing retreats at Skjalm Hvide Hotel:

**Laura Glahder Lindberg**

**Rie Mandrup Poulsen**

## Funding opportunities for research stays abroad in 2020

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 2020 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.

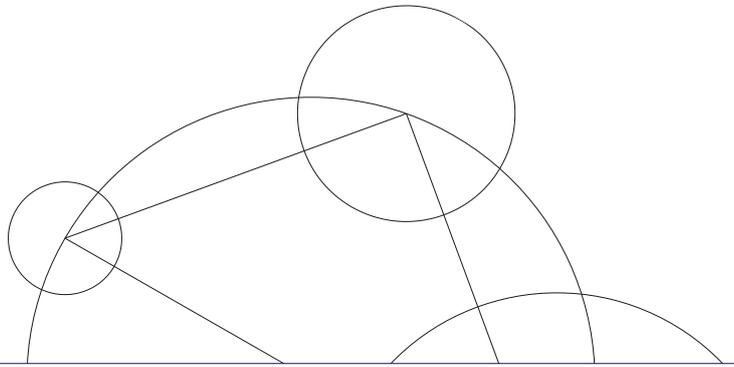
Please be aware that these funds are in addition to the funds you can apply for through the PhD School:

<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 up to 5 days. We now use Skjalm Hvide Hotel close to Slangerup in Nordsjælland. Please send a short motivated application to Lisbeth, [LLH@sund.ku.dk](mailto:LLH@sund.ku.dk).

Recommendation:

*"Opholdet på hotellet har virkelig været godt! Personalet har været enormt søde, servicemindede og hensynsfulde.*

*Jeg er taknemmelig for, at jeg fik muligheden for dette – og kan varmt anbefale et skriveophold på Skjalm Hvide Hotel."*

**Anne Beiter Arreskov**

Læge, ph.d.-studerende.



## Coaching sessions

We offer coaching sessions to PhD students that experience challenges in their projects. We have contact to two 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/)