

Strategy for CANCER RESEARCH

2025-2027



midt
Central Denmark Region

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AARHUS
UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL

**Aarhus
Comprehensive
Cancer
Centre**



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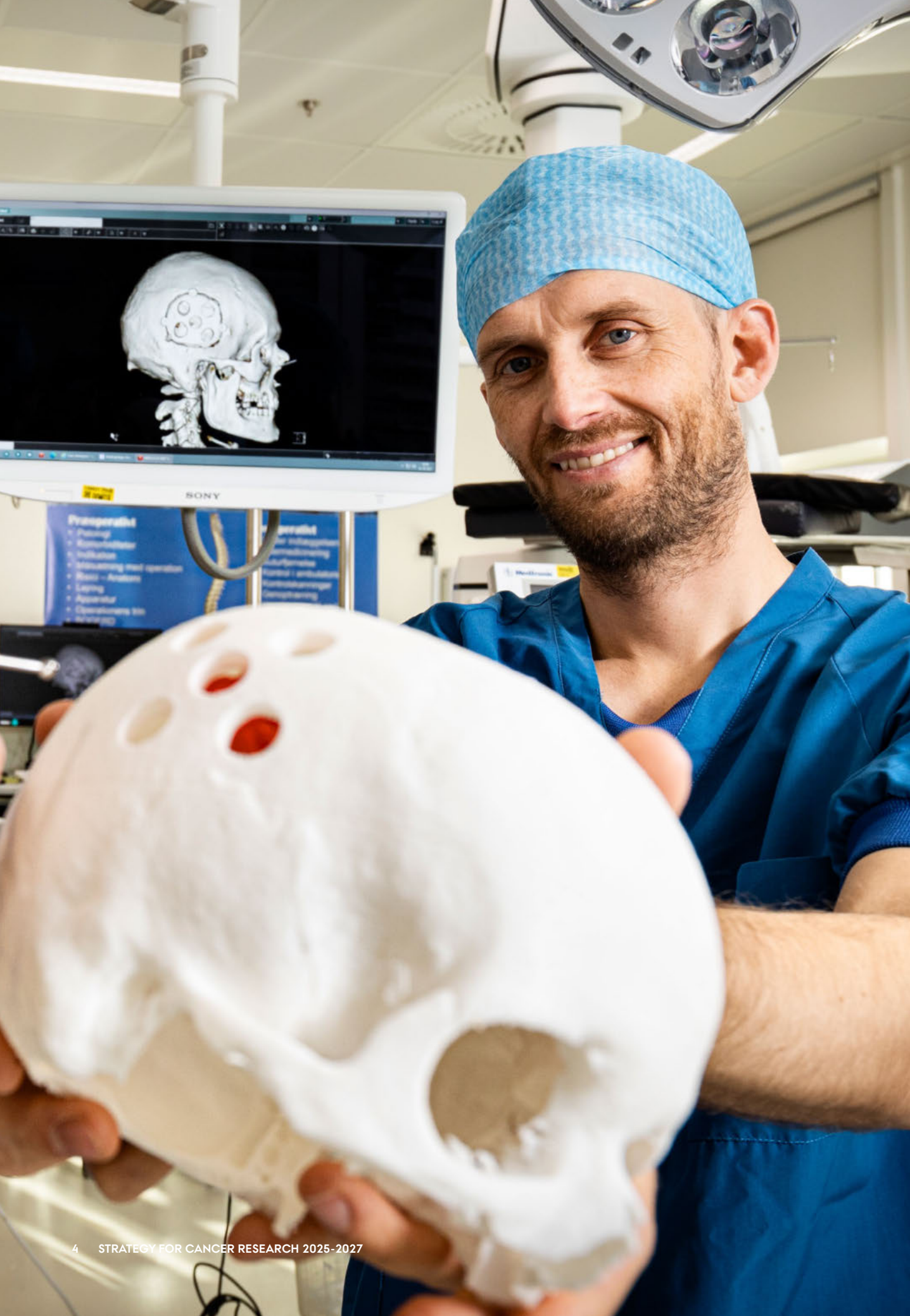
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Preface

Cancer is still a considerable health challenge. Cancer research is the ultimate key to improving treatment options and quality of life for patients. Prevention strategies and new treatments can save lives, and we achieve this through innovative approaches and a basic understanding of the disease. It is essential to see the whole patient with cancer and to continuously ensure coordination across and a multidisciplinary strategic collaboration between clinical practice, diagnostics and research.

It is with great pleasure that Aarhus Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC) presents this Strategy for Cancer Research, based on a collaboration between Aarhus University Hospital (AUH) and Aarhus University in AUH Research Council and CCC Research Council.

Our ambitions in cancer research 2025-2027 is to create the best conditions for a targeted strategic development. We will work to do even more systematic follow-up, analysis and communication of research data as well as prioritise increased collaboration and patient involvement in cancer research.

We aim to expand our influence, engagement and collaboration at European level, including strengthening of research collaborations, academic recruitment and allocation of funding.

We look forward to continuing this important work and are convinced that a joint effort will lead to considerable progress in cancer research to the benefit of future patients.



Michael Bräuner Schmidt
Chief Medical Officer,
Aarhus University Hospital



Pernille Tine Jensen
Senior Consultant/Professor
Chair, AUH Research Council

Strategy for Cancer Research 2025-2027 – in brief

Aarhus CCC has high ambitions in research, including cancer research and will in collaboration with Aarhus University, Health take research to the highest level to improve the lives and health of people.

The CCC Research Council represented in the AUH Research Council has been responsible for the drafting of this strategy. AUH Research Council consists of representatives from departments at the Faculty of Health at Aarhus University, Health collaborating with AUH in research: Department of Clinical Medicine, Department of Biomedicine and Department of Public Health.

The *Strategy for Cancer Research* was approved by the Hospital Management Board at AUH in October 2024. The CCC Research Council and the Hospital Management Board are responsible for implementation of the strategy.

To meet the Aarhus CCC ambition to become one of the leading hospitals worldwide in cancer treatment and cancer research, a strong focus is required on innovation supporting and strengthening research, daily running and development in addition to the CCC accreditation.

Innovation will contribute to support the development of new research projects and perspectives in cancer research as well as contribute to an overall strategy for cancer research, which will not only ensure groundbreaking results but also improve the patient experience and quality of treatment.

The work with this strategy is the basis for and a learning process towards drafting of the next *Strategy for Cancer Research 2028-2032* in which relevant departments and stakeholders will be involved.

Link to Central Denmark Region Strategy for Research in Health
The *Central Denmark Region Strategy for Research in Health* from 2020 outlines how research at all regional health institutions is conducted in close collaboration with Aarhus University, Health. AUH is the regional beacon in clinical research and has together with Aarhus University a special responsibility for regional health research including cancer research.

Read about the research strategy for Central Denmark Region:

 **Central Denmark Region Strategy for Research in Health 2020**

Link to Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research

This *Strategy for Cancer Research 2025-2027* is a cancer-specific supplement to the joint *Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027* between Aarhus University, Health and AUH.

The strategy works with implementation of four tracks:

- Together we create and lead national and international research projects
- Together we expand an excellent research environment across professions and specialties
- Together we conduct research with and for all patients
- Together we create the best possibilities for development for all talented researchers.

Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027 applies across AUH and thus also to the many departments conducting research in cancer.

Read about the *Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027* and its implementation.

 **Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027**

Link to the Aarhus CCC Cancer Strategy

As a part of the work with accreditation to become a CCC, a *Cancer Strategy 2025-2027* at AUH has been drafted.

Read the AUH CCC Cancer Strategy:

 **Cancer Strategy 2025-2027**

The Cancer Strategy includes four strategic tracks and one of them is research. This track is unfolded in this *Strategy for Cancer Research 2025-2027*.



Vision and ambition for cancer research

The vision for Aarhus CCC is: *As a highly specialised cancer hospital we want to be an internationally leading hospital in cancer treatment and research.*

The ambition in cancer research for Aarhus CCC 2025-2027 is to create the best conditions for a targeted strategic development of cancer research.

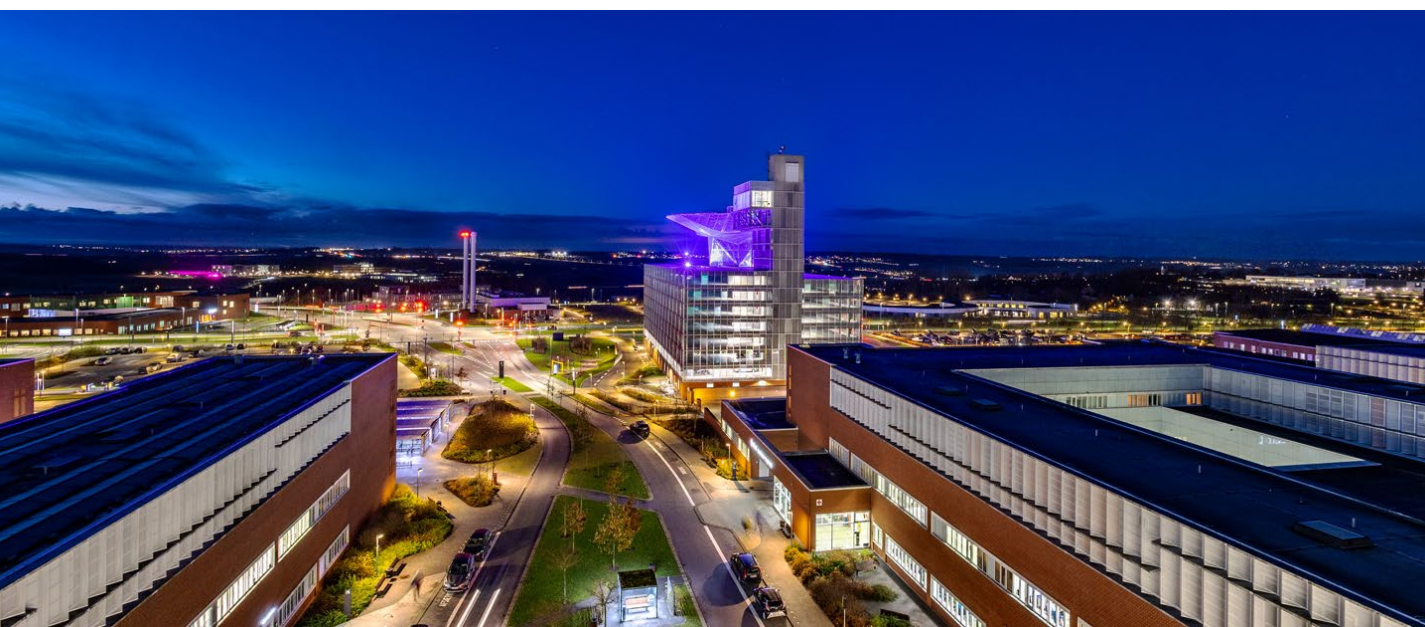
The focus will be to offer patient-centred treatment of the highest quality through multidisciplinary collaboration, state-of-the-art technologies and worldclass research.

A part of the vision to become one of the leading cancer hospitals in the world is to obtain a CCC accreditation by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI).

In addition to the accreditation, the *Cancer Strategy 2025-2027* has outlined several goals for research:

- Systematic follow-up, analysis and use of data to manage daily running, research and quality development
- Increased collaboration, focus and quality in cancer research
- Focus on patient involvement.

These three goals constitute the background for this *Strategy for Cancer Research*. In the following sections, the initiatives in cancer research 2025-2027 will be described in relation to these three goals.



Systematic follow-up, analysis and use of data

Research takes place at all AUH departments directly or indirectly involved in the treatment of patients with cancer. Current accessible data support the collaboration between AUH and Aarhus University, Health conducting extensive cancer research of high quality; however, a common overview of data is lacking.

Establishment of a common overview of research activity

- During the first half of the strategy period, we will establish a common overview of cancer research activities at AUH.

The data overview of cancer research activities will enable systematic follow-up and analysis of the development of cancer research activity to ensure quality and further development. The data overview will among other things contain:

- **Financial overview:** Current funding for cancer research at AUH, both internal and external funding administered by both Aarhus University and AUH
- **Organisational overview:** Cancer research groups at Aarhus University and AUH
- **Overview of trials:** Number of ongoing clinical cancer trials at AUH and number of patients included in these trials

- **Overview of staff resources:** Current number of researchers, PhD students as well as technical and administrative staff involved in cancer research both in numbers and in full-time equivalents.

Outline of goals for research performance

- During the second half of the strategy period, we will involve relevant researchers, departments at AUH and Aarhus University to outline goals for performance of cancer research at AUH.

When the data overview is established, performance goals for cancer research can be outlined. The performance goals could be related to publications, funding, clinical trials and patient inclusion, innovation, implementation of research results etc.

Drafting of annual/perennial research report in the field of cancer

- We will draft an annual report for cancer research at AUH.

This annual report on cancer research will in future be used as a communication tool and to follow the development of activity and performance at CCC level in preparation for further strategic developments in cancer research.

Increased collaboration, focus and quality in cancer research

External counselling on further development of cancer research

- We will set up a Scientific Advisory Board consisting of external and internationally acknowledged cancer researchers.

A Scientific Advisory Board is set up to ensure external and international counselling in addition to the internal councils and research dialogue meetings at AUH. The purpose of the Board is to review and evaluate cancer research as well as advise the CCC Research Council at AUH. The Scientific Advisory Board will also contribute to develop the next cancer research strategy.

Communication

- We will ensure that ongoing cancer research and results of completed research projects at AUH are communicated to professionals and international collaborators, also using social media.

Communication efforts in cancer research should be seen as a part of the work to meet the objectives in the *Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027* for AUH and Aarhus University, to make a communication strategy for use of social media.





Focus on patient involvement

Patient involvement and communication in research

- We will draft a plan to promote the possibilities for patients, relatives and citizens to contribute to further develop diagnostics, treatment and care of patients with cancer by participating in clinical trials, research projects and similar
- We will ensure information to patients, relatives and citizens on the ongoing cancer research and completed research projects at the hospital, also through social media.

Efforts in communication and patient involvement are linked to the *Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027*, where one of the objectives is to develop a communication strategy for use of social media and a policy for reporting of main findings to trial participants.

One of the four tracks in the Strategy for clinical health science research "*Together we conduct research with and for all patients*", is about involving patients and relatives in research.

As a result, a new knowledge platform has been developed with information to researchers on how to involve patients and relatives in research processes and how patients obtain the best conditions to be partners in research processes.

Right now, guidelines are being drafted to the departments outlining different methods to collect contributions from citizens/patients/relatives prior to development of new research projects, including a guide on how to set up patient panels.

As a part of the work to implement the *Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research 2023-2027*, several initiatives will be taken during the strategy period for this *Strategy for Cancer Research 2023-2027* to promote the contributions of patients and relatives in the development of new research projects and perspectives on the research. In this way, relevance from a patient perspective is enhanced.

Translational Cancer Network

In addition to the joint *Strategy for Clinical Health Science Research* and this *Strategy for Cancer Research*, clinical researchers from AUH/Aarhus University together with basic researchers from Aarhus University, Health join a cancer research network called the "Translational Cancer Network".

The purpose of the network is to contribute to promoting translation of the most recent results from basic research into clinical research and vice versa. This should make it

possible to create new and improved diagnostic methods and treatments for patients with cancer. Moreover, the purpose of the network is to strengthen multidisciplinary collaborations and to share knowledge of major projects in translational cancer research.

Read more about the network:



The Translational Cancer Network
(au.dk)





Aarhus University Hospital
Palle Juul-Jensens Boulevard 99
8200 Aarhus N, Denmark

E-mail: auh.ccc-funktionspostkasse@rm.dk

www.ccc.en.auh.dk