

# CANCER STRATEGY

2025-2027



**midt**  
Central Denmark Region

**AH**  
AARHUS  
UNIVERSITY  
HOSPITAL

**Aarhus  
Comprehensive  
Cancer  
Centre**





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The quality will be high across all parts of the cancer pathway from diagnosis and treatment to rehabilitation and palliation, which is ensured through the close connection between research and clinical practice; this connection will be strengthened by the accreditation. Many of the hospitals we compare with, e.g., in the Nordic countries are accredited or are well into the accreditation process. That is why I am convinced that the internationally acknowledged accreditation of Aarhus University Hospital will make a difference to patients with cancer.

Jesper Fisker, Chief Executive Officer,  
The Danish Cancer Society

## Preface

Aarhus University Hospital (AUH) has the ambition to be one of the leading cancer hospitals in the world. As a Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC) we will continue to work to ensure that patients with cancer will experience coherent and coordinated pathways with focus on collaboration and patient involvement.

The Hospital Management Board and the CCC Board at AUH are happy to present the goals and ambitions in the *Strategy for Cancer 2025-2027* for Aarhus CCC.

**Hospital Management Board**  
Aarhus University Hospital

**CCC Board**  
Aarhus Comprehensive Cancer Centre



The international accreditation of Aarhus University Hospital as a Comprehensive Cancer Centre will benefit all patients with cancer in Central Denmark Region. The accreditation will further strengthen the already well-functioning interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary competencies the region is known for. This will create a thorough overview of the cancer field and help to identify development potentials and opportunities for improvement.

We expect the accreditation will improve patient treatment through evidence-based standards which are integrated in the daily practice. We also believe the accreditation will strengthen the influence, engagement and collaboration at national and European level for both Central Denmark Region and Aarhus University Hospital.

Thomas Larsen, MD, Head of Corporate Management,  
Central Denmark Region



# Aarhus University Hospital – in brief

AUH is geographically located in Central Denmark Region with a population of 1.4 million people. AUH is the emergency hospital for about 350,000 citizens in Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark. AUH offers specialised treatment to citizens in the entire Central Denmark Region and highly specialised treatment to citizens in the western part of Denmark and to parts of the entire Danish population.

AUH employs more than 10,000 people across 53 departments.

AUH's core tasks comprise treatment, education and research; AUH is the primary driver of regional research and education efforts. There is about 3,300 students and trainees at AUH.

The Hospital Management Board at AUH consists of a CEO, a Chief Medical Officer and a Chief Nursing Officer.

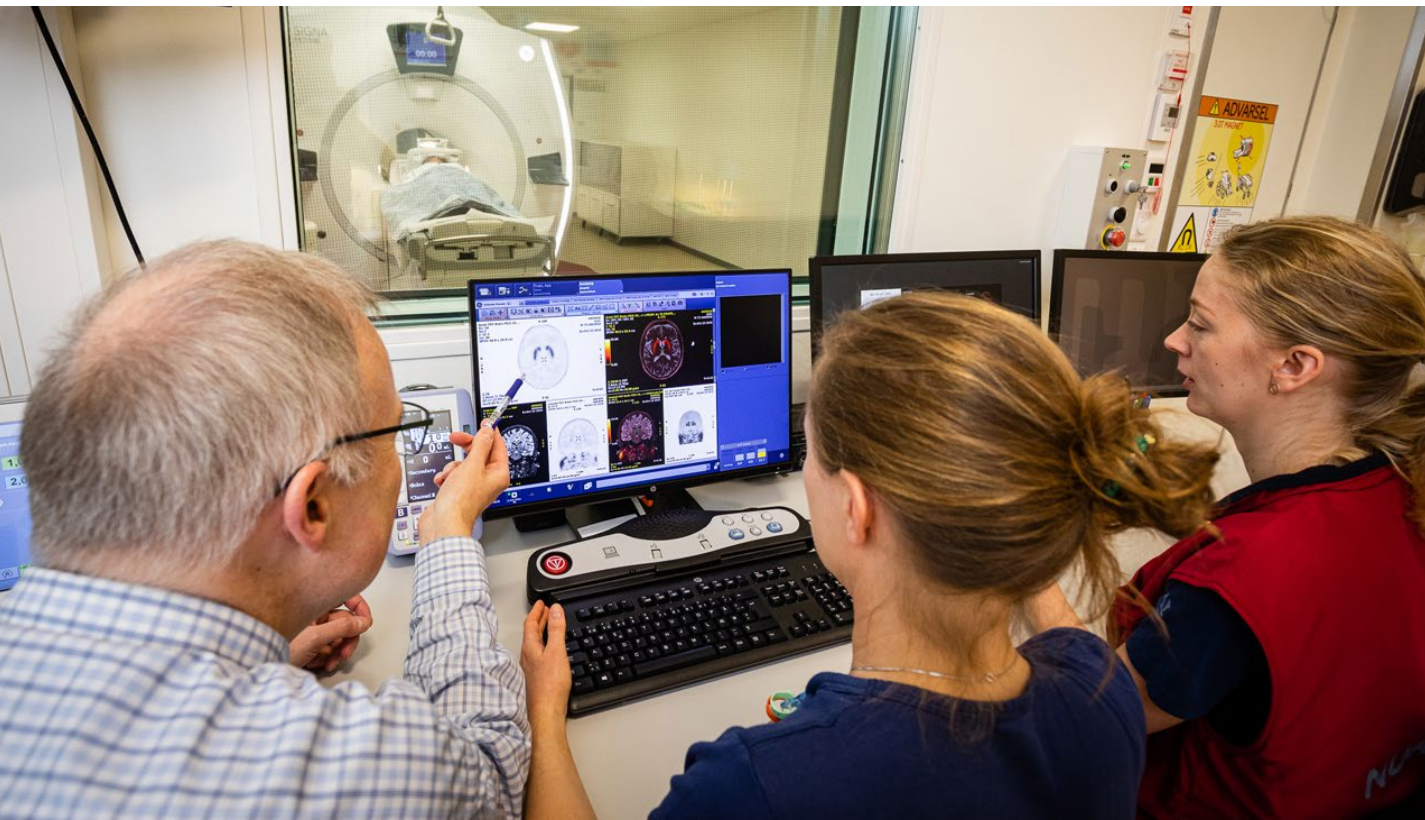
Clinical departments are typically managed by a Clinical Director, MD, a Clinical Director, RN (or other relevant professional background) and a Clinical Professor, Department Chair.



[www.en.auh.dk](http://www.en.auh.dk)







# Strategic ambition for AUH

Extracts of the strategic ambition for AUH:

- At AUH we engage patients with a whole-person approach and with the highest level of professionalism. We offer citizens a cohesive and reputable service throughout life no matter the difficulty of the treatment.
- The strategic ambition for AUH can be boiled down to one statement; we want to cover all medical specialities at the highest international level.
- The strategic ambition sets the direction for the development of our hospital evolving around the needs of our patients across specialities and disciplines.

## Strategic ambition for AUH

The strategic ambition for AUH; we want to cover all medical specialities at the highest international level



**Aarhus University Hospital**  
covers all medical specialities at  
the highest international level

**We have a  
whole-person  
approach**

**We create  
results through  
collaboration**

**We have the  
highest level of  
professionalism**

We are leading in  
patient involvement.  
We make it easier for the  
patient to make difficult  
decesions.  
We create a workplace  
characterised by safety,  
involvement and  
commitment.

Aarhus University Hospital  
builds communities across  
professions and departments.  
We ensure smooth and safe  
transitions in patient pathways between  
colleagues in the healthcare system  
locally, regionally, and nationally.  
We contribute to develop a  
world-class healthcare  
system.

We educate, develop,  
and attract the most  
competent staff.  
We ensure optimal  
conditions for research  
creating breakthroughs and  
improvements for patients.  
We focus on, prioritise  
and develop professional  
strongholds.

Cross-organisational management close to clinical practice  
Working environment - Work life - Innovation - Data  
Digitisation - Well-run hospital

**In the best hands throughout life**



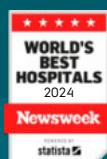
# National and international elite

AUH will continue to be in the national and international elite.



## Denmarks Best Hospital

AUH was Denmark's Best Hospital in 2024 and Denmark's best hospital in cancer treatment 2024 according to the Danish specialist newspaper of healthcare sector news "Dagens Medicin".



## World's Best Hospitals

AUH ranks as number 23 in the world among more than 2,400 hospitals according to the American Newsweek magazine and as the 10th best hospital in Europe in 2024.



## World's Best Smart Hospitals

Newsweek also ranks the world's best hospitals in digitalisation. AUH is the Best Smart Hospital in the Nordic countries, the second best in Europe, and number 12 in the world.



## European University Hospital Alliance

In 2022, AUH was accepted as a new member of the European University Hospital Alliance (EUHA). Only one hospital from each European country can join the EUHA.

## National Survey of Patient Satisfaction

The survey from 2023 showed that patients at AUH were very satisfied with their hospital treatment. The National Survey of Patient Satisfaction is questionnaire-based, and 32,201 persons reported their experiences in either outpatient visits, planned or acute admissions, emergency department visits or their experiences giving birth at AUH.

# Cancer strategy at Aarhus CCC – an introduction

As part of the desire for and work with the accreditation as a CCC, a process of preparing a cancer strategy at AUH started in March 2024.

The work with the *Cancer Strategy 2025-2027* is both a foundation for and a learning process towards the drafting of the next and broader *strategy for 2028-2032*.

To succeed in making progress in the development of the best cancer pathways at AUH and to obtain accreditation to become a CCC, it has been pivotal in the work with the cancer strategy to set a common direction for Aarhus CCC.

Patients with cancer constitute the biggest group of patients and amount to a fourth of all patients at AUH.

Most hospital departments are involved in the diagnostics and treatment of patients with cancer. This is AUH's first strategic plan across the hospital for a specific major group of diseases. It is important to ensure cross-departmental coordination and multidisciplinary collaboration across diagnostics, treatment and research to ensure smooth clinical pathways and a common strategic development for this complex group of diseases.

AUH already has a well-established cross-departmental collaboration and multidisciplinary competences as well as a well-integrated clinical and basic research collaboration with Aarhus University.

Aarhus CCC has the ambition to deliver the highest standards in cancer pathways and AUH expects that the CCC accreditation will contribute to further develop and support this ambition.

The CCC Board is responsible for the drafting of *Cancer Strategy 2025-2027*, approved by the Hospital Management Board at AUH in October 2024.

The Hospital Management Board and the CCC Board have the overall responsibility to implement the strategy.

## The four strategic tracks in the *Cancer Strategy 2025-2027*:

- Patient-centred focus
- Professional development
- Quality and data
- Research

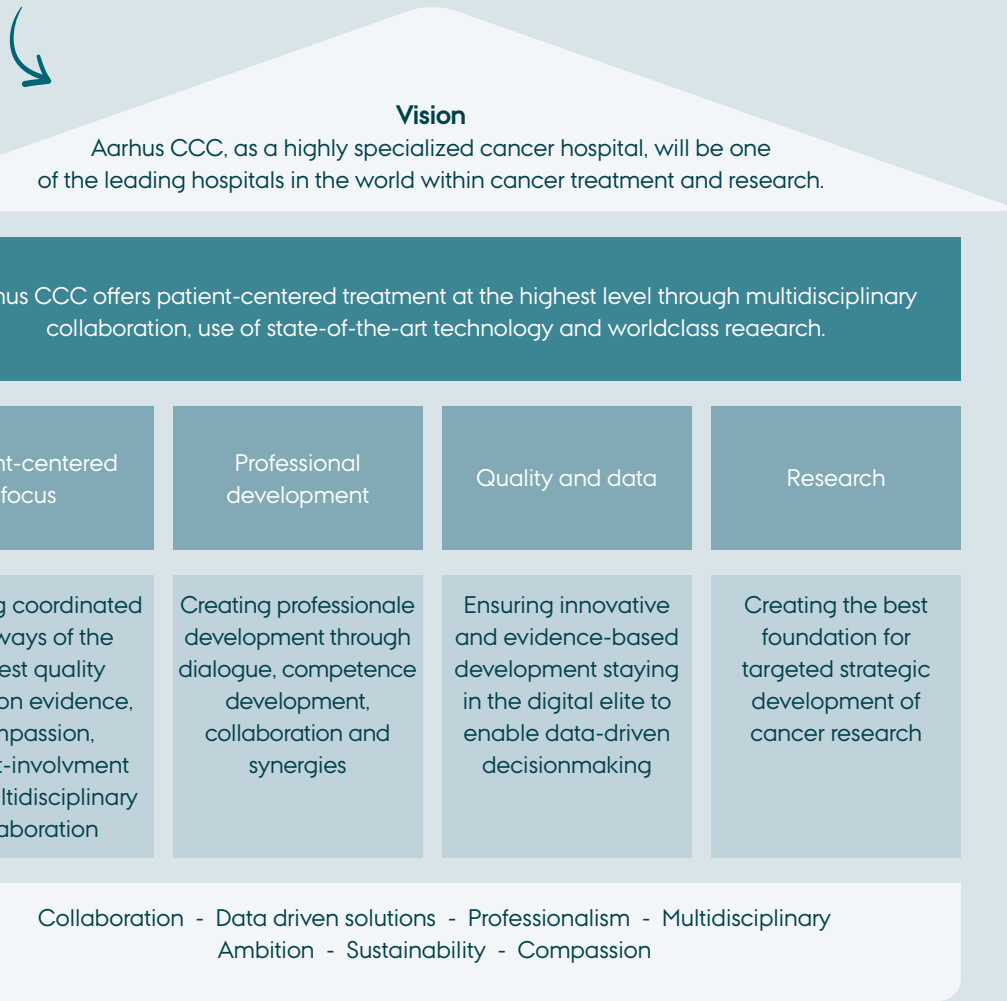
# Vision and ambitions for Aarhus CCC

The vision for Aarhus CCC is: *As a highly specialized cancer hospital, we aim to be one of the leading hospitals in the world within cancer treatment and research.*

### Goals for Aarhus CCC

- Systematic follow-up, analysis and communication of data to manage daily running, research and quality development
- Ongoing and systematic focus on development and improvement of cancer treatment by following-up on action plans for accreditation
- Prioritisation of resources and optimisation of workflow
- Increased collaboration, focus and quality in cancer research
- Strengthening of internal collaboration, network and knowledge-sharing
- Focus on quality assurance and patient involvement.

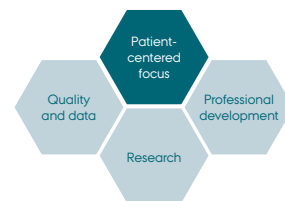
### Strategy house Aarhus CCC



## The four strategic tracks for Aarhus CCC 2025-2027



# 1. Patient-centred focus



At Aarhus CCC we meet the whole person with compassion, and we put the patient's needs first.

We continue building relations where treatment and care is planned together with and considering the resources and needs of the patient and relatives, aiming at creating as many healthy life years as possible with a high quality of life. Through communication, patient involvement, coordination and continuity we strive to create safe and efficient patient pathways.

## Patient-centred treatment

- Increase focus on precision medicine and targeted therapies to ensure efficient cancer treatment with fewer side effects and late effects
- Focus on systematic psycho-oncology screening of patients with cancer to uncover psychological challenges and needs for support
- Palliative treatment is a central part of the treatment offer to patients with incurable cancer to focus on improving quality of life
- Continue the development of offers to cancer survivors with focus on late effects in close collaboration with other stakeholders in health
- Diagnostics, treatment and follow-up are planned to do what is necessary and adequate.

## Coherent patient pathways

- Support prevention and early detection of cancer through screening programmes
- Continued strengthening of the role of the patient responsible doctor and the role as pathway coordinator to ensure well-coordinated patient pathways
- Annual evaluation at multidisciplinary team (MDT) conferences to ensure all relevant specialists participate and collaborate to create the best treatment plans for patients
- Focus on further improving the relational coordination between hospital departments and external stakeholders to ensure that cancer treatment is perceived as coherent.

## Patient involvement

- Increase use of patient-reported outcomes to strengthen the dialogue, promote health literacy and avoid unnecessary hospital visits
- Increase use of shared decision-making and systematic communication in the dialogue with patients and relatives
- Guidelines on staff responsibility for patient education
- Explore the extent of involvement and collaboration with patients and patient associations when developing, planning and organising new initiatives for patients
- Drafting of an annual report on patient complaints to identify areas for improvement
- Explore possibilities for establishing a patient board in the field of cancer.



# 2. Professional development



At Aarhus CCC, we strive to bring professions together and gather the right team to manage the task at hand. We insist on creating new standards to benefit patients by maintaining education, development and research at the highest international level.

## Ownership and motivation for Aarhus CCC

- Professional development is driven by dialogue, knowledge, insights, and synergies across initiatives
- Continued focus on dialogue and knowledge-sharing across the hospital through appointed CCC ambassadors at clinical and paraclinical departments across AUH.

## Management of the transformation

- Data-driven professional deselection and collaboration on professional prioritisations
- Differentiated offers for each patient.

## Talent programme and development of competencies – an international perspective

- Systematic, professional and evidence-based approach to competence development in a monodisciplinary and multidisciplinary perspective to ensure robustness and a high level of professionalism in both research, clinical practice, education and training as well as management
- Uncover possibilities and incentives to international exchange across professions to ensure access to and development of the highest level of professionalism.

## Cross-disciplinary collaboration

- Development of best practice for MDT conferences with ongoing evaluation
- Strengthen the roles as pathway coordinators and patient responsible doctor to obtain improved coordination of quality, logistics and integration of treatment, research and education across departments/AUH
- Continue development of collaboration across professions.

## Development of education and training – overview and analysis for implementation of best practice

- Map the area of pre- and post-graduate level of education and training and further education
- Uncover best practice on how to integrate education initiatives in clinical practice focus-ing on how to optimize collaboration between research and educational institutions/units.

## Technological development

- Focus on integration of advanced digital tools, including automation and use of robots to improve diagnostics and treatment
- Increase the effort to use digital solutions in the treatment and monitoring of patients in different phases of the pathways.



# 3. Quality and data



Quality and data play an important role in Aarhus CCC, as precise and reliable data constitute the foundation for development of efficient treatments, improved patient pathways and for making informed decisions in clinical practice. To develop and evaluate the quality, efforts will be made in the coming years to create a common overview of the cancer field and to focus on increased systematic follow-up and evaluation of data.

## Overview of the cancer field

- Development of a common data dashboard to focus on quality, risk and patient safety.

## Follow-up and monitoring

- Systematic follow-up and analysis of data to ensure data-driven running and quality development.
  - Monitoring and annual evaluation of incidence and prevalence of tumour types and staging at hospital and MDT level
  - Ongoing quality assurance for treatment, complications and adverse events
  - Continued monitoring of maximum waiting time and cancer packages in accordance with Danish legislation
  - Continued monitoring of the health professional quality of treatment in clinical databases.

## Quality assurance and quality improvement

- Drafting of a data-based annual report in the field of cancer and a quality improvement plan
- Impact of quality improvement initiatives is measured and reported at least once a year
- Drafting of an annual report on patient complaints
- Focus on data-supported evaluation to strengthen overview of quality data in the field of cancer.

## Strengthening of quality initiatives in patient involvement

- Increased focus on use of aggregated patient-reported data (PRO data) to improve treatment pathways and patient experiences
- Systematic use of patient-reported quality and satisfaction (national survey of patient-reported experiences in Danish hospitals).

## Participation in quality initiatives/programmes

- Active participation in national and international quality programmes to ensure benchmarking, continuous improvement and implementation of best practice in cancer treatment.



# 4. Research



Aarhus CCC has high ambitions in research and cancer research.

AUH together with Aarhus University, Health will take research to the highest level to improve the life and health of people. Aarhus University, Health and AUH have drafted a joint *Strategy for clinical health science research 2023-2027*, which covers research across the AUH and thus also including cancer research.

## Strategy for cancer research

In addition to the overall research strategy, Aarhus CCC has a dedicated Strategy for Cancer Research where the strategic tracks in this Cancer Strategy concerning research are unfolded.

The ambition for research in the period 2025-2027 is to create the best conditions for continued targeted development of cancer research.

## Focus areas of dedicated research strategy for cancer 2025-2027:

- Overview of all research activities in cancer
- Goals for research performance
- External counselling on further development of cancer research
- Communication about research
- Patient involvement in research



Further details are available in **Strategy for Cancer Research 2025-2027**.



# AUH as a CCC

## – what does it mean?

AUH is currently in an accreditation process to become a CCC within the framework of the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI). The accreditation programme focuses on multidisciplinary integrated cancer treatment and research specifically within organisation, quality, involvement and education.

OECI distinguishes between two types of centres: OECI Cancer Centre (CC) and OECI Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC). Both types of centres require a high degree of multidisciplinary, and high-quality cancer treatment. All accredited hospitals are obligated to have:

- an identifiable organisational unit with a clear management structure
- high-quality cancer diagnostics and treatment targeted to the needs of each individual patient
- a learning culture and dedication to improve treatment quality.

### A CCC must demonstrate

- a high level of infrastructure, expertise and innovation in cancer research, especially in translational and clinical research including basic science
- either strong university or research institute links or a university partnership as a part of the CCC
- a comprehensive international network.

### Advantages and impact for AUH of becoming a CCC

- The major advantages and impact for AUH to be accredited as a CCC are:
- Ongoing and systematic focus on development and improvement of patient pathways and treatment of patients with cancer through follow-up of action plans and patient involvement
- Increased influence on, engagement in and collaboration within Europe, including expanded research collaboration, academic recruitment and allocation of funding
- Strengthening of the external and internal collaboration as well as staff competencies and staff retention.

### Challenges and points to pay attention to for AUH becoming a CCC

The most important points to pay attention to for AUH becoming a CCC are:

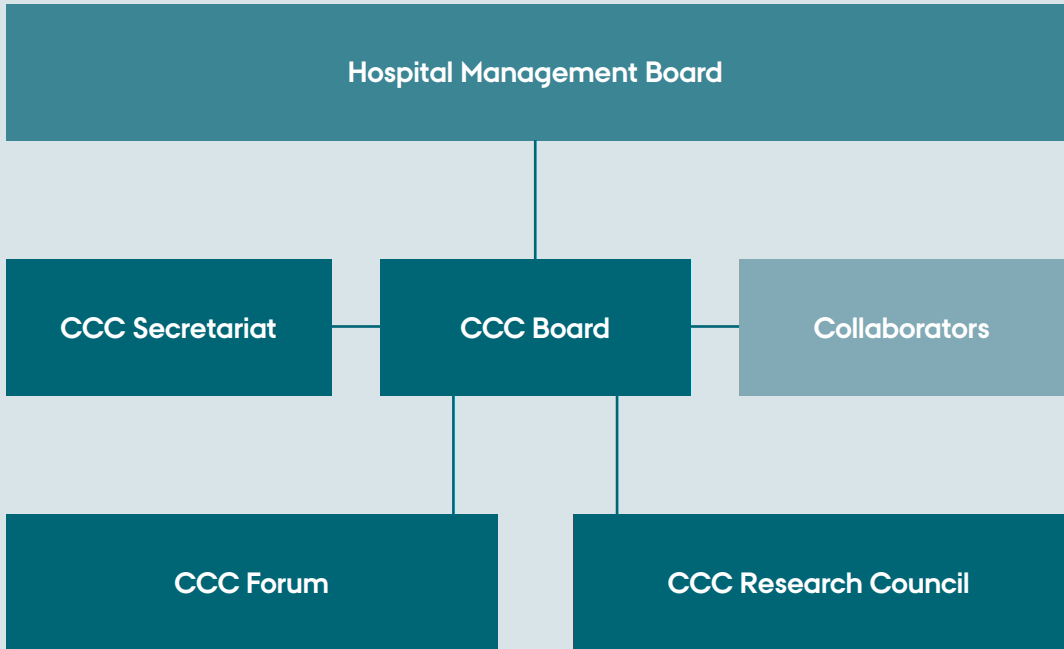
- Continuous management support and engagement at all levels
- The comprehensive work for department managements and contact persons in departments to report data and documentation, drafting of action plans, meetings etc.
- Ongoing motivation and involvement of staff.





# Organisation of Aarhus CCC

The multidisciplinary collaboration and the process towards accreditation as a CCC has led to the establishment of this CCC organisation:



## CCC Board

The purpose of the CCC Steering committee is to ensure unified decision-making across the hospital and contribute to continuous discussions, decisions and initiatives at AUH in the field of cancer and Aarhus CCC. The CCC Steering Committee will focus on the collaboration to establish joint pathways for patients with cancer and contribute with ideas and agreement on new initiatives and development potentials within the field of cancer at AUH. The CCC Steering Committee is responsible for the overall management and running of Aarhus CCC. The CCC Steering Committee ensures support, dialogue and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. The CCC Steering Committee is appointed by the Hospital Management Board, and it has been decided that the committee holds a representative from Department of Oncology, Department of Haematology, the medical departments, the surgical departments, the paraclinical departments and the CCC Research Council, Department of Quality and the CCC Secretariat.

## CCC Secretariat

The purpose of the CCC Secretariat is to ensure process management of the accreditation programme, implementation and the daily running of the accreditation. The CCC Secretariat is responsible for ensuring coordination across the hospital

and collaboration with departments about the accreditation and new initiatives. The Secretariat must ensure the internal and external communication for Aarhus CCC.

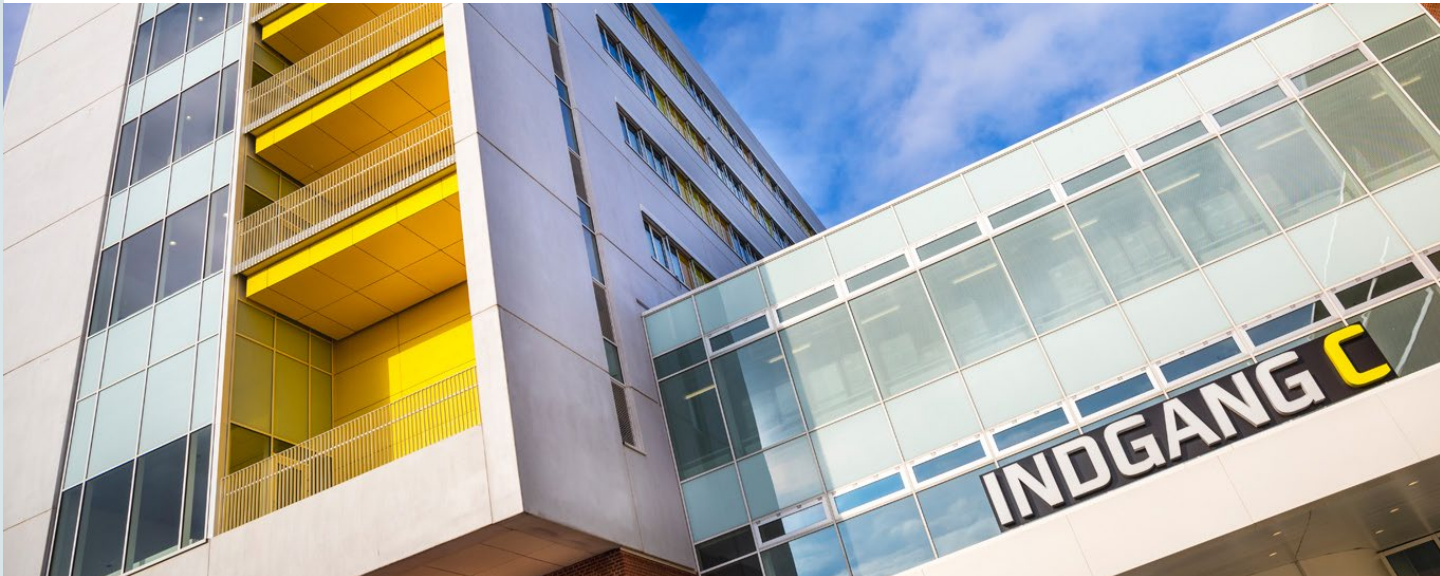
## CCC Forum

The purpose of CCC Forum is to ensure ownership of the accreditation in the organisation. CCC Forum contributes to facilitate easy access to dialogue and knowledge-sharing across the hospital through CCC ambassadors appointed from 38 clinical and paraclinical departments at AUH.

The CCC Forum must ensure that relevant departments are involved in the accreditation process and subsequently work with ongoing and systematic focus on development and improvement of cancer pathways and treatment. Initiatives are spread through CCC Forum and CCC Forum helps to integrate the accreditation in current practice to ensure that the accreditation programme is experienced as meaningful and creates value for patients and staff.

## CCC Research Council

The CCC Research Council is represented in the AUH Research Council and with cancer as a fixed item on the agenda, including CCC accreditation and cancer research strategy.





# Data, follow-up and evaluation

We follow these variables:



## Annual number of patients with cancer at Aarhus CCC

- Number of unique patients with cancer
- Number of new patients with cancer
- Activities (diagnostics, treatment, consultations etc.)



## Research

- Number of publications
- Number of publications with an impact factor above 10
- Number of PhD theses and PhD studies



## Clinical studies

- Clinical studies according to type of study
- Number and share of patients participating in clinical studies



## Treatment

- Treatment (systemic, diagnostic imaging, surgery, endoscopy)
- Infections related to treatment
- Complications related to treatment
- Mortality



## Patient involvement and patient satisfaction

- Patient satisfaction (national survey of patient-reported experiences in Danish hospitals)
- Patient-reported data (PRO data)
- Patient complaints



## Quality

- Quality databases in cancer The Danish Clinical Quality Program – National Clinical Registries (RKKP)
- Compliance with maximum waiting times
- Compliance with cancer packages
- Adverse events





# The role of Aarhus CCC in society

Aarhus CCC plays a decisive role in society to effectively ensure specialised treatment for patients with cancer. Education plays a central role in Aarhus CCC and collaboration with local, national and international educational institutions has a high priority. Aarhus CCC collaborates with many different stakeholders both nationally and internationally.

## National level

In close collaboration with the other hospitals in Central Denmark Region and the primary sector, including general practitioners and municipal health services, Aarhus CCC works to ensure that patients with cancer receive a coherent and coordinated treatment.

Aarhus CCC will contribute to drive cancer treatment forward across Central Denmark Region and participate actively in the Danish Clinical Quality Program – National Clinical Registries (RKKP) covering well above 80 quality databases. RKKP contributes to support data-driven knowledge used by frontline health professionals to develop the quality of cancer pathways.

Aarhus CCC has a good dialogue with interest groups, the Danish Cancer Association in particular, to promote research, develop new treatment methods and ensure that the patients' voices are heard. This collaboration is decisive to improve quality of life and treatment results for patients with cancer.

Moreover, Aarhus CCC collaborates with Danish Multidisciplinary Cancer Groups (DMCG). The core task of the DMCG is to

promote cancer treatment in Denmark and the 25 DMCGs run the clinical quality databases and draft clinical guidelines for diagnostics and treatment.

Aarhus CCC participates in the Danish Comprehensive Cancer Center, a national and formalised collaboration on research and development in the field of cancer across Denmark. The center has a solid and differentiated professional foundation and has strong ties to the management levels in both regions and universities.

Aarhus CCC will be an active part of the political agenda, and the ambition is to be a relevant and important voice in the debate on cancer treatment in Denmark. Aarhus CCC actively participates in a formalised collaboration with the other university hospitals in Denmark to ensure patients have access to the same cancer treatments of highest quality across Denmark.

## European/international level

It is of major importance to Aarhus CCC to play a role in the political Europe and Aarhus CCC works to gain a respected footing in Europe by actively participating in European and international networks such as:

- EU Joint Action Networks of Expertise on Cancer (JANE)
- EU Joint Action EUnetCCC (JA EUnetCCC)
- Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OEI), including the Nordic-Baltic Network
- European Reference Networks (ERN)

# Closing

Aarhus CCC emphasises our commitment to fight cancer by targeting early diagnosis, innovative treatments and quality of life for patients with as many healthy life years as possible.

Our strategy builds on strong multidisciplinary collaboration and a bench-to-bedside approach to ensure the best cancer pathways for our patients. We are determined to create a future where cancer to a higher extent is preventable, can be treated effectively and where more people survive a cancer disease. Together we continue the work to make a difference to all who are affected by cancer.

“

As Denmark's Best Hospital in cancer treatment, we are already do well and we have competent and committed staff. As a university hospital, we must ensure that the treatments of tomorrow follow European standards. With Aarhus Comprehensive Cancer Centre we want to highlight our position in Europe and contribute to the development of cancer treatment for the benefit of both patients, staff and the hospital.

Michael Braüner Schmidt,  
Chief Medical Officer, AUH.





#### Members of the CCC Board

**Tine Meyer**, Clinical Director, BLS, Department of Pathology. **Jesper Skyttehave Rytter**, Clinical Director, RN, Department of Plastic and Breast Surgery. **Pernille Hauschildt**, Clinical Director, MD, Department of Respiratory Diseases and Allergy. **Gitte Aarøe Dam**, MD, Senior Consultant, Department of Hepatology and Gastroenterology. **Signe Borgquist**, Clinical Professor, Department Chair, Department of Oncology. **Niels Frost Andersen**, Clinical Director, MD, Department of Haematology. **Louise Elkjær Fløe**, MD, Department of Oncology. **Marie Lass**, Special Administrative Consultant, Department of Quality. **Lisbeth Kallestrup**, Quality Director, Department of Quality. **Pernille Tine Jensen**, Senior Consultant/Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.



#### Hospital Management Board, AUH

**Thomas Balle Kristensen**, Chief Executive Officer. **Susanne Lauth**, Chief Nursing Officer. **Michael Bräuner Schmidt**, Chief Medical Officer.







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