

# Annual report 2021

## Greenland Centre for Health Research

Institute of Nursing and Health Research, Ilisimatusarfik -  
University of Greenland



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In this annual report, the advisory committee is presenting its scientific activities conducted in 2021. Greenland's Centre for Health Research aspires this annual report to serve as an overview of health research and to be an inspiration for future research projects in Greenland.

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## Preface from the Head of the Institute

The year 2021 has been another special year with many restrictions. That is why I am particularly pleased to present this thorough overview of the activities at the Greenland Centre for Health Research at the Department of Nursing and Health Research.

Despite the many Covid-19 restrictions, the centre has continued its development. I would also like to take this opportunity to present to you the Steno Diabetes Centre Greenland. We are very much looking forward to continuing our collaboration with them in the future. I also want to share my gratitude for the good collaboration we have with Greenland's health care system and the municipalities.

I am pleased to announce that the Institute is expanding. It is an honour for me that I can now announce that we are preparing our organization to house biology education thereby expanding the Institute. In March 2022, we will have a reception to mark the expansion of the Institute from the 'Institute of Nursing & Health Science' to the 'Institute of Health & Nature'.

We continue to focus on increasing this development and are looking forward to an exciting new year, hopefully with fewer restrictions, in collaboration with both internal and external partners.

With kind regards

Anna Kleist Egede

Head of Institution of the Institute of Nursing and Health Research

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## Letter from the chair

Our vision at Greenland Center for Health Research is to improve the health status in Greenland through initiation and coordination of health research. Building local capacity through PhD programs and mentoring is an important step forward. Currently, eleven PhD students are enrolled at Ilisimatusarfik with affiliation to Greenland Center for Health Research (GCHR).

This year has also been marked by the Covid-19 pandemic. The situation in the Arctic countries has been special in many ways. Several online sessions about the Covid-19 pandemic in the Arctic countries have been held throughout the year with participation from GCHR.

As the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe, Arctic Indigenous communities recognized the threat posed by the coronavirus to their communities. Action by Indigenous leadership averted the introduction of cases in many communities, aimed at protecting their vulnerable membership from the worst outcomes seen in other Indigenous communities globally. The effectiveness of these early responses, reflected in low infection rates, highlights important lessons for other global regions while underscoring the need to address persistent health disparities in Arctic Indigenous communities. Through Inuit Circumpolar Council reports have been delivered to the United Nations on dealing with the pandemic among indigenous peoples in the Arctic. The pandemic has also affected our work in the Lancet Commission on Arctic Health. The Commission will continue the work in 2022 on 'Urgently Accelerating Indigenous Health and Well-being identifies the health and wellness challenges experienced by Arctic Indigenous peoples'.

Ilisimatusarfik is UArctic partner and GCHR are leading the Thematic Network on Health and Well-being in the Arctic. The goal of the Thematic Network on Health and Well-being in the Arctic is to support sustainable development on health and well-being in populations in the circumpolar regions. The network will base its research and higher education activities on the contemporary needs and priorities of the circumpolar regions and aims to promote a multidisciplinary approach to improve social circumstances for the populations, both regarding health and well-being as well as delivery of health care and social services in the Arctic. As a Thematic Network activity, a PhD course on 'New technologies and local perspectives in Arctic health research' at Ilisimatusarfik was held in connection with Greenland Science Week.

As a member of the Inuit Circumpolar Health Steering Committee, the Virtual Health Summit was planned. One of the biggest outcomes was that youth very much appreciate the opportunity to connect as Inuit youth in a safe, inclusive space - a space where youth can connect and be comfortable and accepted as they are, which is very much needed.

As Inuit, we understand health as much more than an individual being physically well. Good health includes healthy families, healthy communities, a healthy environment and a vibrant culture. Health means: food security, living in safe housing, having access to culturally appropriate education, having income opportunities, speaking our language, and expressing ourselves in ways that are relevant and meaningful to us. Being well physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually is good health.

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The first steps have been taken in the planning of the Greenlandic medical conference NUNAMED 2022. The title of the 11th edition of NUNAMED is 'Culture, health and a good life / Kulturi, peqqissusseq & inuunerissuuner!'. The conference will be held from September 30th til October 2nd, 2022, in Nuuk. The purposes of NUNAMED is to present current Greenlandic medical research results, to put current Greenlandic medical research issues up for debate in an interdisciplinary forum, and to promote collaboration on health research between professional groups and between health districts. In connection with NUNAMED 2022, a PhD course will be held on September 27th - 29th, 2022.

**Gert Mulvad**, *Chairman*

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# Greenland's Centre for Health Research

## Our vision

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Improving the health status in Greenland through initiation and coordination of health research.

## Our mission

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- Increasing coordination among research institutions
- Developing, exchanging, disseminating and applying scientific knowledge
- Creating national and international networks
- Building local capacity through PhD programs and mentoring
- Improving community involvement and local partnerships

## Our objectives

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The aim of the Centre is to enhance cooperation between researchers from other countries and health professionals in Greenland, to facilitate research cooperation within Greenland, and to facilitate the interaction of researchers from other countries with the Greenland community at large. The Centre is active in teaching at all levels from classroom teaching of nursing students to supervision of PhD students. In a longer perspective, the Centre will work for the establishment of data archive and archive of specimens collected in Greenland.

## The Centre's history

On the 28th of May 2008, Greenland's Centre for Health Research (GCHR) was established. Back then a number of research-interested professionals working in Greenland's health care system had been discussing how a health research institute physically placed in Greenland was lacking. The ambition was that such an institute could facilitate the transfer of competencies to Greenland, be the base for PhD students, provide affiliated researchers with a Greenlandic identity for their international research network, and provide evidence-based content for the nursing education, health professionals' training and perhaps at some point arctic MPH and PhD educations. Since 2008, seven PhD students have graduated from the Centre and currently, eight PhD students are affiliated with the Centre.

## Our partnerships & networks

The Centre works to forge links between research centres, independent scholars and students as well as health professionals in Greenland. GCHR is organised within the Institute of Nursing and Health Research at the University of Greenland. We collaborated with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources on a building project for the Centre. The Centre has signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Canadian Institute for Circumpolar Health in Yellowknife (North West Territories) and the UArctic.

The Centre cooperates with:

- *Centre for Care Research at the Arctic University of Norway (UiT)*
- *Arctic Transatlantic Telehealth Research Network*

Furthermore, GCHR is a co-organisation of NUNAMED, part of Thematic Network on Health and Well-being in the Arctic under the University of the Arctic, and a member of the Circumpolar Health Research Network.



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## Advisory Board

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- **Gert Mulvad**, MD, GP, Dr. h.c. (Chairman)
- **Anna Kleist Egede** (Vice chairman) Head of institute - Institute of Nursing and Health Science
- **Berit Bjerre Handberg**, Chief physician - Board of Health and Prevention
- **Sten Lund**, Research coordinator at Department of Research and Environment
- **Henrik L. Hansen**, National Doctor at the national doctor's Office
- **Lene Seibæk**, Professor - Institute of Nursing and Health Science
- *Appointed:* **Michael L. Pedersen**, MD, GP, PhD, Dr. Med. - Greenland Centre for Health Research

### Researchers

- **Anders Koch**, MD, PhD, Professor, MPH
- **Aviaaja L. Hauptmann**, PhD, Postdoc
- **Christina VL Larsen**, PhD, cand.scient.-soc., Senior Advisor, Director of Centre for Public Health in Greenland
- **Carsten Juul Jensen**, PhD
- **Eva C. Bonfeld-Jørgensen**, PhD, Professor, Director of Centre for Arctic Health & Molecular Epidemiology
- **Gert Mulvad**, MD, GP, Doctor h.c.
- **Ingelise Olesen**, Research Coordinator
- **Jette Marcussen**, Postdoc
- **Karen Bjørn Mortensen**, MD, PhD
- **Karsten Rex**, MD, GP, PhD
- **Lene Seibæk**, PhD, RN, Professor
- **Lise Hounsgaard**, PhD, RN, Professor
- **Marie Balslev Backe**, PhD, Research Coordinator SDCG
- **Marit E. Jørgensen**, MD, PhD, Professor
- **Michael Lynge Pedersen**, MD, GP, PhD, Dr. Med. Associate Professor
- **Nils Skovgaard** PhD
- **Preben Homøe**, MD, PhD, Dr. Med., Professor

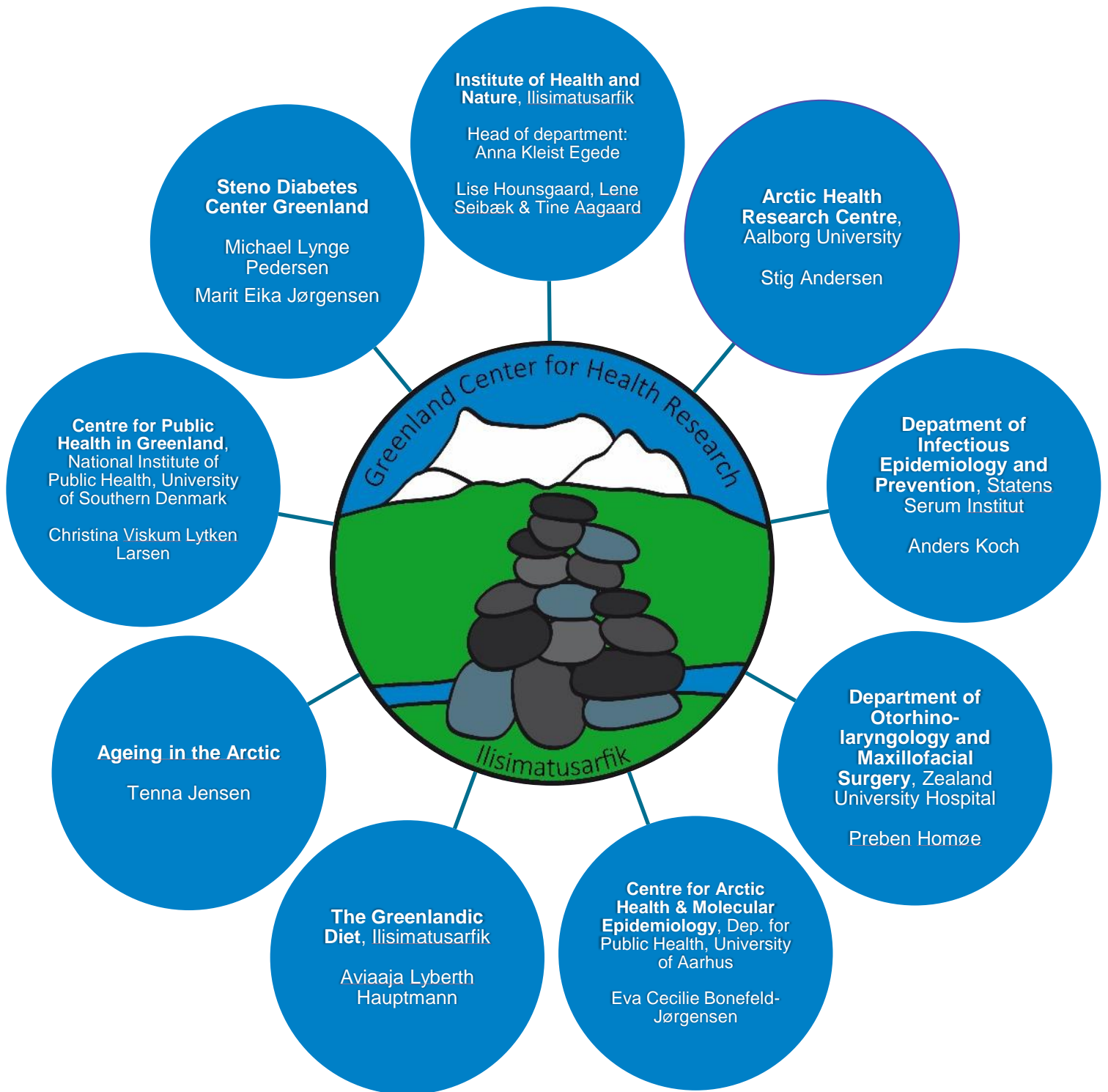
- **Stig Andersen**, MD, PhD, PGCME, Clinical Professor, Department Head
- **Tenna Jensen**, PhD, Associate Professor
- **Tine Aagaard**, PhD, Senior Researcher
- **Stine Byberg**, PhD
- **Ninna Senftleber**, Postdoc

### PhD students

- **Anna Maria Anderson**, MD
- **Christine Ingemann**, BScN & (Res)MSc Global Health
- **Hjalte Erichsen Larsen**, MD
- **Ivalu Sørensen**, MSc Public Health
- **Julie Flyger Holflod**, PhD student
- **Mette M. Schlütter**, MA Anthropology
- **Mie Møller**, MD
- **Nadja Albertsen**, MD
- **Nick Duelund**, MD
- **Paneeraq Noahsen**, MD
- **Trine Jul Larsen**, BScN & MSc Public Health
- **Mads Mose Jensen**, MD
- **Marie Mathilde Bjerg Christensen**, MD

Contact information and biographies of the researchers associated with GCHR can be found on our homepage ([www.uni.gl](http://www.uni.gl)).

# Collaborative relationships





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## Centre activities in 2021

### **PhD course on ‘New technologies and local perspectives in Arctic health research’ at Ilisimatusarfik – University of Greenland**

Despite corona being persistent, the Greenland Centre for Health Research at Ilisimatusarfik – University of Greenland again succeeded this year in completing an international PhD course. There was a total of 18 participants on the course. The participants came from Canada, Russia, Denmark, Norway and Greenland. Half of the students were present at the University’s auditorium, while the other half tuned in from the rest of the world via the course's virtual platform.

The UArctic provided a grant, which made the course possible. It was planned in collaboration between the three research environments Steno Diabetes Centre Greenland, Department of Health and Nursing (Ilisimatusarfik) and Centre for Public Health in Greenland (Ilisimatusarfik and the National Institute of Public Health, SDU), who all are affiliated with the Centre for Health Research in Greenland.

“We are facing a landmark in new technological opportunities in Arctic health research through the use of telemedicine and artificial intelligence. It requires a series of very basic discussions across environments and disciplines with a particular focus on citizens’ and patients' perspectives and user involvement in health research. It has therefore been a pleasure to discuss precisely these topics with the course participants”, says course coordinator and adjunct senior researcher at Ilisimatusarfik, Christina Viskum Lytken Larsen. "The hybrid course format with both online and physical participation from teachers and students worked exceptionally again this year," concludes Christina VL Larsen.

The course focused on the implementation of health-promoting initiatives, diabetes research, user involvement, complex interventions and the use of artificial intelligence in health research. The course also coincided with World Diabetes Day, why a walk before lunch was cooperated into the program as part of the worldwide initiative on the day Global Diabetes Walk 2021.

### **Research forum**

A research forum for researchers related to GCHR has been held twice in 2021. The meeting has enabled dialogue between researchers related to the centre and works as a platform for discussion and to turn ideas into practice. Future Research forums will be held every 6 months.

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## PhD Students

### Nick Duelund, MD

In June 2021, Nick Duelund, an MD specializing in ophthalmology, started a 3-year PhD, double enrolled at the University of Greenland and University of Copenhagen. The PhD project is titled "Vision Screening of Greenlandic Children". Sight is the most important sense for learning and development and therefore it is essential for any child to have the best possible visual sight. Vision screening is recommended in Greenland, but as it is an option for the parents to get their child screened not many children are screened before school age. The goal of the project is to create a new screening method for 4-year-old children using existing resources, like the local optometrist. By examining children at the age of four Nick will receive data for a cross-sectional study to estimate the prevalence of visual problems among children in Greenland. This prevalence is to this date unknown in Greenland. Another new method being tested in the project is whether the vision screening can be performed in the kindergartens so more children can be screened compared to an invitation to be screened at the local hospital. The second study will focus on vision screening in school children. Here Nick will analyse already collected data from the pilot project to create a recommendation on how the school nurses can perform the screening.

Nick is working as a Medical Doctor at Queen Ingrid's Healthcare Center in Nuuk with one clinical working day as part of the PhD employment.



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## Mie Møller

Mie Møller, a MD, was double enrolled as a PhD-student in August 2021 at Ilisimatusarfik and the University of Copenhagen. She is conducting a PhD project called Aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic in Greenland as a response to the many challenges and changes the COVID-19 pandemic has given the country. The project consists of four individual studies which aims to evaluate specific prevention strategies and possible aftershocks of the pandemic. The first study will estimate the effect of the pre-travel COVID-19 screening program on travellers to Greenland since March 2020. The second study is going to determine the antibody response over 12 months in a cohort of COVID-19 vaccinated individuals born and living in Greenland as an expression of vaccine effectiveness. So far, 430 participants have had their antibody response measured. The third study will estimate to what extent COVID-19 travel and other restrictions and precautions have affected the patterns of upper and lower respiratory tract infections in Greenland in the years 2020-22. And lastly, the fourth study will examine the frequency and severity of post-COVID-19 sequelae in Greenlanders.



At the moment Mie is situated in Denmark, where she works at Statens Serum Institut as part of her PhD program. She will return to Nuuk later this year to complete the two final years of her PhD.

## Anna Anderson

Anna Maria Andersson, a MD and a Ph.D.-student at the University of Greenland and Copenhagen University, is currently on maternity leave and will return to her PhD in June, where she has 7 months left to complete her PhD-thesis *Atopic dermatitis among children in Greenland and Denmark*. During 2019 and 2020 she visited daycare institutions in Nuuk, Sisimiut and Qaqortoq. In August 2021, the last and final field trip to Eastern Greenland was conducted by her colleague Morten Bahrt Haulrig. In total 941 children participated in the study and was examined for atopic dermatitis. We found that atopic dermatitis among children aged 0-6 years was highly prevalent and being of Inuit descent, being of high social class and parental atopic disposition appear to increase the risk of AD.

In 2022, Anna Maria Andersson will together with a group of researchers and dermatologists, initiate a study in the adult population. The aim of this study is to examine the prevalence, genetic risk factors and clinical characteristics of common inflammatory skin conditions among adults in Greenland. In May 2022 they will perform a pilot study in Tasiilaq to gain experience before conducting a larger cross-sectional study across Greenland.

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## **Paneeraq Noahsen.**

Paneeraq Noahsen, an MD and a part-time PhD-student at the University of Greenland and the University of Aalborg, enrolled in November 2017 and has until November 2024 to complete her PhD-thesis "Thyroid function and autoimmunity among populations in Greenland with 10 and 20 years follow-up".

The second article of the PhD project has been published in a well-esteemed endocrine, peer-reviewed journal. The article described that the pattern of hyper- and hypothyroidism among iodine replete Greenlandic Inuit was comparable with the thyroid disease pattern seen in populations with iodine deficiency. The findings are intriguing and suggest that Inuit may have adapted to excessive iodine intake over centuries, causing a need for a higher iodine intake to prevent iodine deficiency.

The next papers in the pipeline are thyroid autoimmunity in Greenland, the effect of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) on thyroid function, and 10 and 20 years of follow-up on thyroid function and autoimmunity from data collected in Nuuk and Ammassalik district in 2018 and 2019.

The postponement of courses worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions has affected the general course attendance. The long anticipated EEPE course was first postponed with a year and later on completed online. The course was successful, but it was rather disappointing to sit alone in an office for 3 weeks when the original plan was Firenze.

Paneeraq is working at The National Board of Health in Nuuk as a doctor specialising in Public Health and will complete her specialist training in spring 2024.

## **Nadja Albertsen**

The ph.d.-project "Cardiac Arrhythmias in Greenland" was initiated in 2020 on a grant from Karen Elise Jensen's Foundation. The project consists of 6 studies, mainly focusing on the kind of arrhythmia known as atrial fibrillation (AF) as it predisposes to serious conditions such as stroke and dementia. AF is relatively unexplored in the Greenlandic population and has mostly been studied among stroke patients.

In January 2022, the first manuscript based on diagnose classification codes for AF and medication prescriptions for anticoagulative treatment was published, finding a prevalence of AF of 1.4%, which is comparable to most of the Western countries. A second manuscript based on measurements with a handheld ECG device is currently in review, and a manuscript is being prepared based on data from stroke patients and Holter registrations from 2016 to 2020.

The clinical part of the PhD-project will commence in April 2022 after being postponed due to COVID-19. This part of the PhD focuses on the prevalence of AF among Greenlanders not previously diagnosed with an arrhythmia and the tests consist of ECG recordings, questionnaires and measurements of the autonomic nervous system. The measurements are scheduled to take place in Nuuk from April to June 2022 and will hopefully include 200 Greenlanders.

Nadja is the author of the first manuscript based on data from eight care homes in Greenland which was published in 2021. A second paper with Nadja as first author is currently in review. In addition, Nadja co-supervised two master-theses on topics relating to Greenland. Manuscripts from both projects are currently being readied for publication

## **Inspiring research stay at UiT in Tromsø and Finnmarken**

With financial support from UArctic's North2North program in relation to the Thematic Network on Health and **Well-being** in the Arctic and financial support by Ilisimatusarfik - University of



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Greenland I got the opportunity to take a four week research stay at the Arctic University of Norway (UiT) in Tromsø.

During my stay, I had exciting conversations about qualitative methods, discussed research projects in Greenland, and experienced and learned about the Sami culture. I am a PhD student at Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland) and the Center for Public Health in Greenland at the University of Southern Denmark. In my PhD project, I follow the implementation process of Greenland's national parenting program MANU, where I have interviewed professionals and parents about their experiences with MANU and their perspectives on parenting.

At UiT in Tromsø, I was in close contact with my co-supervisor Siv Kvernmo, who taught me a lot about the Sami history and culture, and we discussed how this could relate to my results. Siv put me in touch with several exciting researchers, whom I had the opportunity to meet and discuss qualitative methods, research and health services in Arctic areas, as well as values among the Sami and Inuit. I was also invited to give a guest lecture to the Master in Public Health students on public health and research in Greenland.

I was also able to visit Karasjok and Kautokeino in Finnmark. Here, I visited SANKS – the Finnmark Hospital, where I was warmly welcomed and possible areas for collaboration found. Siv Kvernmo also put me in contact with the Sami researcher Asta Balto, who is known for her research into Sami knowledge, values and ways of life with a focus on values in child rearing. I learned a lot from Asta Balto, and we discussed my results about Greenlandic parents' values in child rearing and how comparable they are with Sami values.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to take such an inspiring research stay.

*Christine Ingemann, PhD student*

## **Research stay at Steno Diabetes Centre, Aarhus**

As part of my PhD project in heart failure in Greenland, my family and I moved to Aarhus for 2 months. My girlfriend, Naduk, had maternity leave so we had the opportunity to visit Aarhus with our little girl.

At Steno diabetes Center, Aarhus I experienced a different research life compared to that in Nuuk, Greenland. The office was huge and, despite Covid-19 still influencing daily living, numerous researchers were elaborating together on all sorts of different research. It was interesting to learn about how research is conducted at a danish research centre compared to what I have experienced in Nuuk. Furthermore, I was able to receive guidance on my approach to data management and handling regarding my current study.

The stay was learning full and I sensed a positive interest in Greenland and Greenlandic research. I would like to thank Steno Diabetes Center Aarhus for the stay. I would also thank the Ketty & Ejvind Lyngbæks foundation and the A. P. Møller foundation for financial support.

*Hjalte Larsen, PhD student*

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## **PhD enrolment at the University of Greenland**

The PhD School at the University of Greenland/Ilisimatusarfik offers international research education in three different programs: 1) Arctic Studies - Health and Social Conditions, 2) Arctic Studies - Pedagogy and the Science of Education, and 3) Arctic Studies - Culture, Language and Social Conditions. The aim is to qualify the student to perform research, development and instructional tasks and to transmit scientific problems and issues in the Arctic. All PhD students must be assigned to one of the programs.

It is possible to make partnership agreements between the PhD School and other research institutions and foreign universities e.g. regarding double enrolment (double /joint degree). The application to apply for enrolment as a PhD student at Ilisimatusarfik is available at the university website [www.uni.gl](http://www.uni.gl)

Please feel free to contact the chair of the PhD Committee, Institute for Nursing and Health Sciences at Ilisimatusarfik Lene Seibæk [lese@uni.gl](mailto:lese@uni.gl)



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## Newly assigned researchers

### Jette Marcussen - Postdoc in Loss and Bereavement



In May 2021 Jette started as a researcher at the Institute of Nursing and Health Sciences. Beside her own research, Jette will work with a continuing creation of building the research environment and research-based nursing education at Ilisimatusarfik.

Jette's area of research will be to promote mental health throughout loss and bereavement during critical illness, death and grief concerning children, young adults and their families. She wants to develop knowledge about loss, bereavement and grief and interventions targeted at supporting health professionals and other professionals to promote well-being in children, young adults and families having different kinds of family structures. At Ilisimatusarfik she is interested in developing knowledge about students' experiences with loss, bereavement and trauma and how we can support the nursing students' mental health and their competences supporting others when they become nurses themselves.

Her source of central area is based on her PhD in which she investigated children and young adults' double bereavement of parental divorce and parental death, and how health professionals can support these children, young adults and their families, when a divorced parent is critically ill and die of cancer.

She is interested in both qualitative and quantitative research methods, and her work is inspired by research methods such as ethnographic fieldwork, interviews and survey. Currently, she is cooperating in a project with Steno Diabetes Center Greenland.

Jette is in a part-time position at Ilisimatusarfik since she also works at OPEN, Department of Clinical Research, University of Southern Denmark and as a Senior Lecturer in Nursing at the Department of Applied Health Research, University College Lillebaelt, Odense, DK. She is also educated as a Master in Educational Psychology and as a Registered Nurse (RN) and she has worked many years with education and research.

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## Carsten Juul Jensen, PhD



Since August 2021, Jensen has been employed as an associate professor at the Institute of Nursing and Health Science at Ilisimatusarfik, the University of Greenland, where he teaches courses in fundamentals of care, mental health, methodologies, professionalism, and collaborative care in nursing. His research field covers the working life of health professionals, mental health, and inequality in health. Currently, he is publishing working life studies on newly qualified nurses and on social nurses who provide care for vulnerable patient groups in Danish hospitals. Furthermore, he is working on establishing a project about improving the training and retention of nurses. His main research approach is institutional ethnography and qualitative interviews focused on the participants' everyday life.

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## News from researchers

### Aviaja Lyberth

Through the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources Aviaja Lyberth Hauptmann has been granted 10 mio DKK from the Aage V. Jensens Foundations. The grant will support a new research group in Greenland led by Aviaja (the ASI Inuit Microbiology Lab) including two new PhD students. Through Aviaja, the grant will also support Ilisimatusarfik's goal of establishing a biology bachelor program in collaboration with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources. As part of this process, the Institute of Nursing and Health Science will establish a new department and change its name to the Institute of Health and Nature.

*Aviaja Lyberth Hauptmann, PhD*

### Steno Diabetes Center Greenland

In corporation with Greenland Center for Health Research in Greenland (GCHR), Steno Diabetes Center Greenland (SDCG) aims to improve health research activities, strengthen a strong and sustainable research network, and increase local research skills in Greenland. This year, Professor Marit Eika Jørgensen was employed at SDCG and several additional research projects has been included in the local research activities. As a result, additional researchers have been affiliated to SDCG and the mutual research network based in SDCG and GCHR. Together with the other researchers employed or affiliated to SDCG, several projects and students are supervised at all levels from medical students' thesis, PhD students, to postdocs. In addition to supervision, SDCG was responsible for a PhD course day November 14, Global diabetes Day, celebrating the 100th year of insulin discovery. Also, a week-long research training course was held in October for medical doctors as a part of their training for specialist. The research network involves researchers from Universities including KU, AU, SDU, AAU, and other institutions. In particular, SDCG aims to use research to improve care for patients including prevention, health care service, treatment options, and outcome. Quality of care including patient-reported outcome and satisfaction, relevant clinical outcomes, organisation and cost of care is a general scope. An overall insight into health care delivery and the burden of chronic diseases in Greenland is underway supported by several register-based projects using up-to-date data collected in the health care system in Greenland.

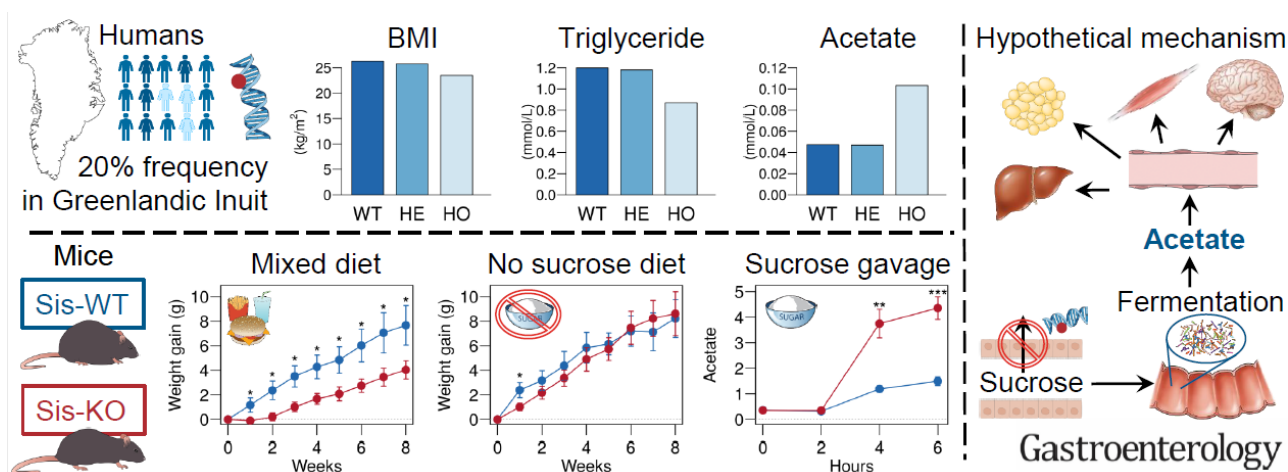
*Michael Lynge Pedersen, Md, GP, PhD, MSc, Chief Physician SDCG, Associate professor GCHR*

### Cardiometabolic research and activities in 2021

Research within the field of metabolism in Greenland is still taking place in close collaboration between Steno Diabetes Center Greenland, Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen and the University of Copenhagen. Four PhD studies are ongoing in the field of diabetic retinopathy, monogenetic diabetes, heart failure, and diabetic neuropathy among Greenlanders.

Based on the population surveys of Greenland, a sucrase-isomaltase (SI) c.273\_274delAG loss-of-function variant specific for Arctic Inuit was discovered. The SI variant causes congenital sucrase-isomaltase deficiency, an inability to break down and absorb sucrose and starch. Interestingly, homozygous carriers of the variant have a markedly healthier metabolic profile with lower BMI, fat percentage and lipids, and we believe the health benefits are mediated by reduced dietary sucrose uptake and possibly also by higher levels of circulating acetate from intestinal fermentation.





Ninna Senftleber is taking this knowledge to the next level, conducting a cross-over dietary intervention comparing metabolic effects and intestinal microbiota among homozygous SI variant carriers and controls, after a traditional Greenlandic diet vs a western diet rich in sucrose and starch. Prior to this, a user study has been conducted to get input to the study design, and participants have been recruited for the study initiation in Maniitsoq in January 2022.

As part of a PhD study conducted by Marie Mathilde Bjerg Christensen on autonomic- and peripheral neuropathy, normative reference material for cardiac autonomic neuropathy has been published for clinical use.

Finally, we recently received a grant from the Novo Nordisk Foundation focusing on obstructive sleep apnea in high-risk individuals with diabetes, obesity or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The study will be carried out in collaboration with Steno Diabetes Center Greenland, Steno Diabetes Center Zealand, and the University Hospital of Zealand.

*Professor Marit Eika Jørgensen*

*Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen, Ilisimatusarfik & University of Southern Denmark*

## Ageing in the Arctic (AgeArc) – research and activities 2021

As AgeArc is closing by the end of March 2022 we have focused on completing tasks and minor projects. The project has published the book *Eqqaamaviuk? Atuagaq Oqaloqatigiissutissaq Nunatsinneersunik Assiliartalik/Husker Du? En Samtalebog med Billeder fra Grønland* and peer-review articles.

The primary project activity was planning and conducting National Conference about dementia in collaboration with the Department of Health and the Department of Social Affairs, Labour and Domestic Affairs. The 2-day conference brought together municipal employees from the entire country working with dementia care. The programme was a mixture of presentations and group work sessions. Short videos about the conference are currently available on

<https://naalakkersuisut.gl/kl->

[GL/Naalakkersuisut/Naalakkersuisoqarfiit/ISNNN/Socialomraedet/Konference/konference\\_2021](https://naalakkersuisut/Naalakkersuisoqarfiit/ISNNN/Socialomraedet/Konference/konference_2021)

During spring 2022 presentations and printed materials from the conference will also be made available in Greenlandic.

The sub-project (Moving in nature) was funded by Tips og Lotto and will be finalized this spring. It is conducted in collaboration with GIF and Center for Folkesundhed i Grønland (SDU and GCHR) and is a pilot study exploring how nature is used for activities by people who depend on others to

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get out. The project was kicked off with an open workshop in the autumn discussing what nature is and how it is used by daycare, after school centers and nursing homes.

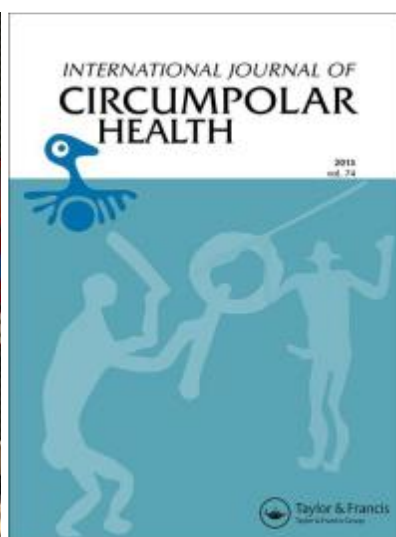
The project Kinguariit Innunerisut in which we develop intergenerational camps with focus on health, nature and cultural identity had the first summer camp with youth and elders in Nuuk and a follow-up meeting with the participants and facilitators in the autumn. The project is based at Center for folkesundhed i Grønland ved Statens Institut for Folkesundhed (Syddansk Universitet) and GCHR and conducted in collaboration with Qeqqata Kommunia and Kommunqarfik Sermersooq. It is funded by Karen Elise Jensens Fond

We have also continued our activities in the network NORRUS-Age where we work with partners from Norway, Finland and Russia to investigate practices for healthy ageing across the Arctic.

In the coming year Age Arc will close. We will focus on completing an updated version of our website which will be transformed into an online archive and exhibition and complete the final publications. Moreover, we work to continue our research on ageing by developing new projects.

*Tenna Jensen & Kamilla Nørtoft*

## Patient involvement in Greenland hospital care



*Queen Ingrid's Hospital in Nuuk*

The project is now in its final phase, including dissemination of the findings.

We investigated in what way patient involvement can be understood and implemented in a Greenlandic hospital context. Data were generated in 2019, via semi-structured research interviews with patients and health professionals, along with field observations of bedside care situations and interactions between health professionals and patients.

One of the main findings was that personal expectations, confidence in the quality of hospital care, language skills, conditions around family support, and taboos concerning not being able to take care of oneself, significantly impacted patients' opportunities for involvement. On this background, we concluded that patient involvement cannot be accomplished by simply focusing on patients' health competencies. To ensure that hospital care is provided in partnership with patients and families, it is equally important that 1) health professionals develop new skills around sharing information and decisions, and that 2) the healthcare system is re-organised towards a more patient-oriented approach.

*Lene Seibæk, Helle Mougaard-Frederiksen and Lise Hounsgaard*

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## Children with otitis media and their parents – Improving treatment efforts through parental involvement

Peqataasunut ilisimatitsissut

/ Deltagerinformation



*”Meeqqat siulluttut –*

*Katsorsaanermik pitsannngorsaaneq*

*tusilalertoqarnissaanillu pinaveersaartitsineq*

*”Børn med mellemørebetændelse –*

*Forbedring af behandlingsindsats og forebyggelse af*

*høretab”*

Based on a previous study among Greenlandic families with children suffering from frequent and prolonged episodes of otitis media, the aim of this study is:

To develop and test parent-based initiatives for improved care and treatment of children with otitis media in terms of 1) implementation of the right care and treatment 2) cooperation, support and information for the affected children and their families.

The data collection, consisting in research interviews with parents from six different places in Greenland, took place during 2021 and the analysis is ongoing.

*Monica Nedergaard Ejning, Malene Nøhr Demant, Preben Homøe & Lene Seibæk*

### Research at Centre for Arctic Health & Molecular Epidemiology 2021

Researchers at Centre for Arctic Health & Molecular Epidemiology (CAH-ME) from left:



Eva Cecilie Bonfeld-Jørgensen, Professor, Centre Director; Manhai Long, Associated professor; Gunnar Toft, Associated professor; Maria Wielsøe, Assistant professor.



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## Update on the Greenlandic geographic Birth Cohort ACCEPT

The ACCEPT birth cohort was established during 2010-2015 in a collaboration between the Greenlandic Health Care, Greenland Centre for Health Research, Ilisimatusarfik and CAH-ME, Aarhus University.

ACCEPT includes approximately 600 pregnant Inuit women and their children from five regions (North, Disko Bay, West, South and East) with a participation reflecting the population density. The pregnant women belongings were set to where they had lived longest (more than 50% of their life).

We published twelve ACCEPT related papers in the period 2015 – 2021(22): (Knudsen et al. 2015, Long et al. 2015, Terkelsen et al. 2017, Bjerregaard-Olesen et al. 2017, Knudsen et al. 2018, Bank-Nielsen et al. 2019, Hjerimitslev et al. 2019, Rasmussen et al. 2019, Wielsøe et al. 2021, Grouleff et al. 2021, Kornvig et al. 2021, Long et al. 2022).

The ACCEPT follow-up project BioSund-ACCEPT has been ongoing from 2018 and expected finalized in November 2022. The project is a collaboration between CAH-ME, Aarhus University, Greenland Centre for Health Research, Ilisimatusarfik and Health Care, Nuuk.



### 2021

BioSund-ACCEPT includes 101 ACCEPT families (mother, father, and child) with follow-up on the ACCEPT including biomonitoring and child health and development at 3-5 years of age, follow-up on the mother's lifestyle and health and also the father's data. During 2019 and 2020, we sampled questionnaire, blood, hair, nails, and urine from 101 ACCEPT mothers, 76 fathers and their children (102) in Nuuk, Ilulissat and Sisimiut.

We have published three BioSund-ACCEPT papers in 2021 and one paper is in revision for publication:

1. Dietary habits among men and women in West Greenland: follow-up on the ACCEPT birth cohort. *Maria Wielsøe, Dina Berthelsen, Gert Mulvad, Silvia Isidor, Manhai Long & Eva Cecilie Bonfeld-Jørgensen*. BMC Public Health (2021) 21:1426; <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11359-7>

The proportion of traditional and imported food was 14 and 86%, respectively. Intake frequency differed by gender (vegetables, fruits, fast food), the living town (terrestrial animals, vegetables, fruits), and age (fish, meat products, fruits, fast food). Socioeconomic and lifestyle factors significantly correlated with the intake frequency of several traditional and imported foods. Few changes in the mother's dietary habits from inclusion (during pregnancy) to follow-up (3–5 years later) were found, showing less frequent intake of seabirds and fruits and more frequent meat intake.

In summary, we identified several factors that could affect dietary habits, and the results may be used to target future food recommendation for relevant population groups.

2. Anthropometric measures and blood pressure of Greenlandic preschool children. *Magnus Kok Grouleff, Maria Wielsøe, Dina Berthelsen, Gert Mulvad, Silvia Isidor, Manhai Long & Eva Cecilie Bonfeld-Jørgensen*. IJCH 2021, VOL. 80, 1954382 <https://doi.org/10.1080/22423982.2021.1954382>

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We found significant increases in anthropometrics from 3.5 to 5.5 years including weight, height, head circumference (HC) and hip circumference, whereas ratio for height/weight, waist/hip and waist/height decreased. Boys had significantly larger HC than girls. The prevalence of overweight and obesity was similar (35.1%) between genders. Mean systolic and diastolic Blood pressure (BP) were 104 and 68 mmHg, respectively. Children of mothers smoking during pregnancy had higher hip circumference, lower waist/hip ratio and higher diastolic BP.

The study present updated anthropometric data and BP of Greenlandic preschool children and effects of maternal smoking during pregnancy. The prevalence of overweight and obesity was higher than previously reported and maternal smoking during pregnancy affected the child data.

3. Prenatal exposure to persistent organic pollutants, metals, and problematic child behavior at 3–5 years of age: a Greenlandic cohort study. *Simon Kornvig, Maria Wielsøe, Manhai Long & Eva Cecilie Bonefeld-Jørgensen. Scientific Reports | (2021) 11:22182 | <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-01580-0>*

We found, in the adjusted analyses, positive association between Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores and the medium tertile of hexachlorobenzene ( $\beta = 3.06$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ),  $\beta$ -hexa-chloro-cyclohexane ( $\beta = 3.58$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ) and trans-nonachlor ( $\beta = 2.06$ ,  $p = 0.082$ ). Moreover, the continuous cis-nonachlor (OR = 1.09,  $p = 0.079$ ), dichlorodiphenyl-dichloroethylene (OR = 1.01,  $p = 0.077$ ), trans-nonachlor (OR = 1.01,  $p = 0.091$ ), and sum Organochlorine-Pesticides (OR = 1.00,  $p = 0.094$ ) were positively associated with abnormal SDQ score. The continuous mirex (OR = 1.28,  $p = 0.096$ ), oxychlorane (OR = 1.04,  $p = 0.066$ ), and transnonachlor (OR = 1.02,  $p = 0.071$ ) associated with abnormal hyperactivity score. In contrast, we found no consistent evidence of associations between polychlorinated biphenyls, perfluoroalkylated substances and heavy metals and problematic behavior. Thus, prenatal organochlorine pesticide exposure associated significantly with problematic behavior in 3–5 year old children.

4. Persistent Organic Pollutant exposures among Greenlandic adults in relation to lifestyle and diet: new data from the ACCEPT cohort (in revision for publication in Science of the Total Environment). *Maria Wielsøe, Manhai Long, Rossana Bossi, Katrin Vorkamp & Eva Cecilie Bonefeld-Jørgensen.*

This new data collection in 2019-20 included blood samples for measurement of Persistent organic pollutant (POP) concentrations and lifestyle and food frequency questionnaires from 101 mothers and 76 fathers aged 24-55 years living in Nuuk, Sisimiut, and Ilulissat, Greenland.

The mothers' intra-individual median percentage decrease in POP concentrations from inclusion to this follow-up (3-5 years later) were 16-58%, except for mirex (0% change). Median concentrations of POPs were 1.4-4.6 times higher in fathers than in mothers. The POPs differed by residential town with generally higher concentrations in Ilulissat compared to Sisimiut and Nuuk. We report, for the first time, novel halogenated flame-retardants (HFRs) in human samples from Greenland. However, concentrations were low and only dechlorane plus (with its anti-isomer) was detected in >50% of the samples.

Most POPs correlated positively with age and the biomarker of marine food n-3/n-6 fatty acid ratio. The lipophilic POPs correlated positively with the percentage of life lived in Greenland, whereas few POPs correlated positively with BMI, income (personal and household), education, and alcohol intake.

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The POPs generally associated positively with the intake of marine mammals, seabirds, and dried fish, while few POPs associated positively with Greenlandic fish intake. In contrast, POPs generally associated negatively with imported meat products intake.

The study findings may be of interest for future dietary recommendations in Greenland. We discuss the potential explanations for the findings and suggestions for future research.

The BioSund-ACCEPT project is still ongoing, and we are planning to elucidate the data for exposure to environmental chemicals and effects on child immune defense/infection frequency, child motoric capacities and preschool performance.

In addition, currently we ( in collaboration with Chief Physician Jakob Hjort Bønløkke, Aalborg) have started up conducting the project, "Udgør eksponering til svært nedbrydelige miljø-kontaminanter en risiko for udvikling af allergi og luftvejssygdomme" / Does exposure to highly non-degradable environmental contaminants a risk of developing allergies and respiratory diseases?).

The project aims to investigate the relationship between exposure to Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP) and the risk of allergies and respiratory diseases among 372 Greenlandic adults (16-68 years old).

Several studies have shown that there may be an association between exposure to both PCBs, OCP and PFAS and allergies and asthma, but the majority of the studies have been conducted among children and adolescents. The project will make a significant contribution to research into the relationship between POP exposure and allergies and respiratory diseases. The applied project will contribute with results from Greenlandic adults in a wide age range who live in both towns and villages.

In addition, the study will contribute to the continued biomonitoring in Greenland (2016-2018) and trend analysis of POP levels in the Greenlandic population. Since 2010, Greenlandic biomonitoring has primarily been performed on pregnant women (ACCEPT mother-child cohort 2010-2015). Except from the BioSund-ACCEPT biomonitoring data (2019-2020), the latest biomonitoring data for Greenlandic men are from the Inuit Health Transition study 2005-2010 and Inuendo 2002-2004. Data from the applied project will thus contribute with new biomonitoring data from both sexes for a broad age group which.

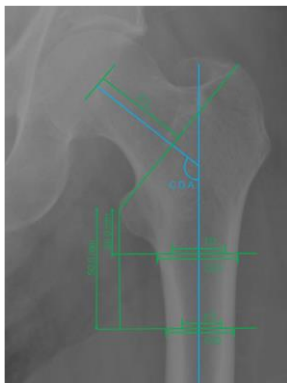
*Eva Cecilie Bonefeld-Jørgensen  
CAH-ME Professor & Centre Manager*

## **Collaborations with Arctic Health Research Centre in Aalborg 2021**

Topics covered in the collaboration with Aalborg University over the past year have focussed on thyroid diseases, hip geometry, cognitive function and dementia, medicine list, and a description of nursing home residents in Greenland.

The collaborative PhD-students at Ilisimatusarfik and Aalborg University have contributed interesting reports. 1) Paneeraq Noahsen has reported an atypical disease pattern with the dietary iodine nutrition level in Greenland conforming to an adaptation to higher iodine intake levels. Possible mechanisms suggested sets the scene for follow-up papers by Paneeraq. 2) Nadja Albertsen produced the first report on cardiac arrhythmias among the general population covering 96% of the population in Greenland. This contributes to her joint PhD study at Ilisimatusarfik and Aalborg University in collaboration with the Department of Internal Medicine at Queen Ingrid's Hospital and the Clinic for General Medicine in Nuuk. Additionally, Nadja has reported on key descriptive parameters among nursing home residents covering two thirds of Greenland.

Additional researchers comprise 3) Inuuteq Fleischer reporting on hip geometry among hip fracture patients in Greenland in *J Ortho Surg Res* informing both methods for operating hip fracture patients in Greenland and evaluation of osteoporosis risk.



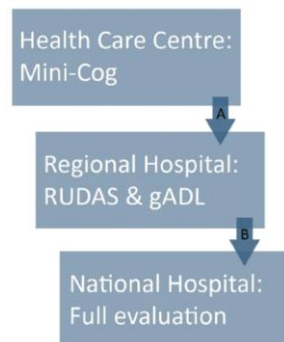
4) Inaluk Kleist completed her project on work-up of dementia in Greenland providing tools to fit the Greenlandic context and a pathway for dementia screening. In addition, Inaluk compared medicine lists in the EMR, pharmacy delivery recordings and patient acknowledgement to support

optimising medicine compliance in Greenland. 5) Karsten Rex and co-workers continued the work on hepatitis B virus infection among the populations in Greenland with additional evaluations supporting his everyday clinical commitment. Finally, 6) Simun Nicklassen defended his Master's thesis on lactose persistence among Greenlanders and finalises the work for publication.

In conclusion, everyday health issues inform the research questions and collaborative research with Arctic Health Research Centre at Aalborg University, which extend into and beyond 2021 with promises for continuing developments in 2022.

*Stig Andersen MD, PhD, PGCME*

*Professor, Head of Department, Aalborg University Hospital; AAU Arctic & Ilisimatusarfik*



## Research Training

Course in Research Training held in October 2021, led by Michael Lyng Pedersen, and with teaching by Ninna Senftleber, Hjalte Larsen, Marit Eika Jørgensen and Marie Backe. The course was intended for medical doctors and consisted of both teachings combined with hands-on research, where the participants initiated a register-based cross-sectional study of a topic of interest. The participants are to send in an abstract of the study to NUNAMED 2022.

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## Planned activities for 2022

### **Continuation of research forum discussions**

With the remaining funding from the 'UArctic – Networking Activities on Arctic Research and Education' GCHR received in 2020, we will continue the discussions we had during our researcher seminar. We will follow up on ideas and discussions to establish working groups and turn ideas into practice.

### **NUNAMED 2022 – Greenlandic medical conference and PhD course**

In 2022, the 11<sup>th</sup> Greenlandic medical conference NUNAMED will be held from 30<sup>th</sup> of September to 2<sup>nd</sup> of October. The conference aims to provide a national forum for health professionals and researchers to share their knowledge and collaborate interdisciplinary, but in the latest year the conference has become increasingly international. As on the past conferences we expect international participants and there will be English, Danish and Greenlandic keynotes and thematic sessions. You can find more information on NUNAMED's website: [www.nunamed.org](http://www.nunamed.org)

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Maria Wielsøe, Manhai Long, Rossana Bossi, Katrin Vorkamp & Eva Cecilie Bonfeld-Jørgensen. Persistent Organic Pollutant exposures among Greenlandic adults in relation to lifestyle and diet: new data from the ACCEPT cohort (*in revision for publication in Science of the Total Environment*).

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Maria Wielsøe, Dina Berthelsen, Gert Mulvad, Silvia Isidor, Manhai Long & Eva Cecilie Bonefeld-Jørgensen. Dietary habits among men and women in West Greenland: follow-up on the ACCEPT birth cohort. BMC Public Health (2021) 21:1426; <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11359-7>

### *Other publications*

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### *Oral & poster presentations*

Arctic Science Summit Week 2021 19TH MAR - 26TH MAR Lissabon, Online panel session: One Health, Arranged by UArctic TN Health and Wellbeing in the Arctic

One Health, One Future from April 6-11, 2021 virtually from Fairbanks, Alaska, Food, Culture, and Change in Environment.

UArctic Congress 2021 May 15-18 primarily online with limited local participation in Reykjavik, Iceland, One Health: Emerging Themes in the Circumpolar North: Nature, Nutrition, Culture and Well-being

Grønlands medicinsk selskab Onsdag den 26. maj 2021, via Zoom link, Grønlands nye forskningskib – TARAJOQ – er søsat!

Grønlands Medicinsk Selskab 50 års Jubilæumsmøde 27.nov Et tilbageblik fra 1980erne

INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL VIRTUAL INUIT HEALTH SUMMIT 26. Oktober, Culture and mental well-being

Transkulturel Journal Club 8. December 2021: Mental sundheds og etiske problemstillinger I en lille befolkning

# GRØNLANDSMEDICINSK SELSKAB 50 ÅR

Den 4. juni 2020 fyldte Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab 50 år. Selskabet, hvis første formål var at *'fremme den human-biologiske forskning i Grønland gennem information, koordinering og rådgivning'*, blev dannet ved et stiftende møde torsdag d. 4. juni 1970 på Medicinsk-Anatomisk institut, Nørre Allé 63, København. På det tidspunkt hed Selskabet Dansk Selskab for Medicinsk Forskning i Grønland.

Bestyrelsen bestod af seks personer med solid grønlandserfaring:

- Jørgen Balslev Jørgensen (formand), kirurg, antropolog
- Ole Berg, embedslæge, tidligere distriktslæge Narsaq
- Arne Østergaard Hansen, assisterende Landslæge for Grønland, tidligere distriktslæge Uummannaq
- Bent Harvald, prof. intern medicin Odense, tidligere overlæge Dronning Ingrid's Hospital, Nuuk
- Rigmor Rørdam Holm, kasserer, Ministeriet for Grønlands medicinalkonsulent, tidligere distriktslæge Ammassalik
- Carsten Schmidt, overlæge ØNH Næstved, tidligere konsulent Østgrønland



Formandsbilledet, malt olie på lærred af Harald Moltke, Hænger til den til enhver tid siddende formand. Billedet bærer på bagsiden teksten: 31.1.1983: Til Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab. Billedet er givet til min kone, Lis, f. Storm, af hendes skolekammerat og gode veninde Jette Bang, ca. 1945. Sign. Sven

Som medlemmer kunne optages *'...enhver med interesse for medicinsk, socialmedicinsk, odontologisk, veterinærmedicinsk og anden biologisk forskning'*, men der blev samtidigt lagt *'...vægt på, at ikke mindst sygeplejersker og tandlæger i Grønland blev gjort bekendt med selskabets eksistens'*.

Ved Selskabets stiftelse var der 60 medlemmer, heraf 45 læger, 4 tandlæger, 2 franske antropologer og 10 studerende, sekretærer og teknikere med grønlandsmedicinsk interesse.

Ved mødet blev holdt syv State of the Art-foredrag:

1. Robert Gessain: Franske antropologiske undersøgelser i Østgrønland
2. Hans Olof Bang: Lipidundersøgelser i Grønland (med Jørn Dyerberg)
3. Ole Berg: Bolig og sygdom
4. Eivind Gudmand-Høyer og Allan McNair: Disaccharidmalabsorption
5. Inge Lynge: Psykiatrisk epidemiologi
6. Finn Prætorius: Mundhulemetaplasier
7. Viggo Clemmesen: Glaukomundersøgelser (med Poul Helge Alsbirk)

Flere af disse oplægsholdere har i de efterfølgende årtier været særdeles aktive i selskabet, og er fortsat medlemmer. Siden da har selskabet naturligt nok udviklet sig:

Ved årsskiftet 2020-21 var der 184 medlemmer; 212 i 2015-16. I dag opgøres medlemsskaren ikke i helt så specifikke faggrupper, men i ordinære medlemmer, pensionister, studerende, udlandsboende, ekstraordinære og ikke-lægelige medlemmer. De ordinære medlemmer er de fleste (57%), mens de ikke-lægelige medlemmer udgør 13%.

Selskabet er også med et nutidigt begreb blevet mere inkluderende. Fra at være et selskab, der fokuserede mest på forskning, er det nu blevet til et selskab omhandlende grønlandsmedicin i bredeste forstand. I 1997 skiftede selskabet navn til Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab, og formålsparagraffen skiftede til *'...at virke for oplysning og debat om arktisk medicinske forhold og at fremme den sundhedsfaglige forskning i Grønland gennem information, koordinering og*

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rådgivning'. Medlemmer kunne være 'alle med interesse for arktisk medicin og sundhedsfaglig forskning i Grønland', uanset faggruppe.

I 1997 dannedes også en lokalafdeling i Nuuk, som har egen bestyrelse, og som er tiltagende aktiv.

Men vigtige elementer af selskabet er uændrede.

Ved 25-års jubilæet i 1997 skrev den daværende formand Lars Gehlert Johansen, '*Ærlig interesse, dybt engagement og ofte langvarig deltagelse er termer, der karakteriserer forfatterne til denne publikation og vel også Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskabs medlemsskare i Danmark og i Grønland. At drive videnskab i og om Grønland kræver meget. Det samme gør det at løfte opgaven omkring sundhed i Grønland, både hvad angår behandling og forebyggelse*'. Den samme ærlige interesse, det samme dybe engagement og den samme langvarige deltagelse kendetegner også selskabets medlemmer i dag.

Ligesom det første møde indeholdt syv videnskabelige foredrag, er medlemsmøderne med videnskabelige oplæg kernen i selskabets virke. I vedtægterne står, at der skal holdes mindst ét videnskabeligt møde om året. Det bliver fast til fire møder, to i København og to i Nuuk. Oplæg er stadig *State of the Art*-oplæg om grønlandsmedicinske emner, men et fast element er oplæg om andet end sundhed og sygdom, blot de er relateret til Grønland i bredeste forstand. Der har således inden for de senere år været afholdt oplæg om så forskellige emner som grønlandshajen, der bliver 500 år; kartoffelavl i Sydgrønland; krydsning af indlandsisen (ved et medlem af Selskabets bestyrelse) og Lauge Koch-striden i Grønland 1935-38.

I alt er til og med 2020 afholdt 189 videnskabelige møder i selskabet, alle med gode oplæg, hyggeligt selskab og sædvanligvis god mad!

Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskabs medlemmer er også medlemmer af The International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH) som arbejder for at fremme forskningen i det cirkumpolare område. IUCH er bl.a. observatør i Arktisk Råd. Hvert 3. år er Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab, som medlem af IUCH, medarrangør af den store ICCH-konference, International Conference on Circumpolar Health, der finder sted på skiftende lokaliteter i det cirkumpolare område. Denne konference er den største konference om cirkumpolare sundhedsforhold og tiltrækker deltagere fra hele det cirkumpolare område og andre dele af verden, f.eks. så langt væk fra som Australien.

Forskudt af dette, men stadig hvert 3. år, afholder selskabet sammen med Grønlands Lægekredsforening, Grønlands Sygeplejerskeforening og Grønlands Center for Sundhedsforskning 'NUNA MED'-konferencen, som er Grønlands svar på ICCH-konferencerne. Her fokuseres specifikt på Grønlandske sundhedsforhold, men tiltrækker også, udover mange deltagere fra Grønland og Danmark, et stigende antal deltagere fra andre lande, primært i det cirkumpolare område.

Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab søger aktivt at fremme forskningen i Grønland og har bl.a. i 2015 udgivet Vejledning om God forskningspraksis i Grønland

Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab udgiver nyheder om videnskabelige resultater i form af Kvartalets Tal, om begivenheder af interesse for Selskabets medlemmer, PhD-forsvar mv., og har udarbejdet vejledninger, som f.eks. 'Vejledning om god forskningspraksis i Grønland'. bl.a.

Endeligt støtter Selskabet International Journal of Circumpolar Health, det eneste tidsskrift dedikeret til sundhedsforskning i Arktis.

Selvom selskabet efterhånden har en del år på bagen, er det fortsat levende og aktivt. Alle interesserede er velkomne i selskabet. Vi tør godt love, at man som medlem vil få mange gode oplevelser i godt selskab, også i de næste 50 år!

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I anledning af selskabets jubilæum, der fysisk blev afholdt på Københavns Universitet 27. november 2021 er udgivet et jubilæumsskrift 'Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab 50 år'. Dette skrift, som også indeholder et genoptryk af 25-årsjubilæumsskriftet, kan downloades på Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskabs hjemmeside [www.gmsnet.dk](http://www.gmsnet.dk), hvor man også kan læse mere om selskabet og fremfor alt – melde sig ind i selskabet. Alle med interesse for sundhedsforhold i Grønland er mere end velkomne, både som medlem i selskabet og til medlemsmøderne.

*Anders Koch, formand for Grønlandsmedicinsk Selskab  
Adjungeret professor, Ilisimatusarfik*

**VEL MØDT I GRØNLANDSMEDICINSK SELSKAB!**