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Programme for *The Good Hospice* in Denmark

The realization of hospices is worked at persistently in many places in the country. So far no tools for optimal programming and designing have been available, with the purpose of creating life quality and positive conditions for patients, relatives, employees and volunteers. Now the Realdania Foundation in Denmark publishes a new report, which describes how The Good Hospice in Denmark can look and function, using the physical framework as a focal point. The report has been prepared by SIGNAL architects in cooperation with a steering group of interested parties, for the project.

The report with the programme for The Good Hospice highlights the potential within the intentional shaping of the physical framework so this works as an active element, contributing to an improved quality of life for the patients and their relatives at the end of life. At the same time the physical framework can also support the knowledge intensive work performed by the employees at hospice and in the palliative teams.

The programme for The Good Hospice is aimed at consultants, decision makers, architects, engineers, project leaders and steering groups for local hospice projects, and the intention is that it serves as inspiration, as a manual and a checklist for future hospice projects in different parts of the country.

The report contains concrete examples of how the physical framework can be shaped in a hospice, when the design principles outlined in the programme are used. For example it is important that the arrival at hospice gives a friendly and positive impression. This can be promoted by having one communal entrance in the middle of the hospice, which consists of a garden, a green yard environment or an atrium. In a similar way the patients' lounge should be a secure base with a warm and homely atmosphere. This can be created by keeping the colours in a warm palette and light shades. Also the form language and architectural elements of the building itself can be shaped so that big surfaces are broken into smaller parts, creating small 'pockets' for social contacts between patients, relatives and staff.

Anne Nissen, chairperson for the steering group and head of department in Kræftens Bekæmpelse says about the project: "Hospice is an institution and a part of our hospital system, but with a different focus. Therefore the form should be different. Contents and form must interact in a new way to reach the goal, - quality in the last part of life, both for the dying and for the relatives."

“*The Good Hospice* is a wish to create renewal within the Danish building of institutions. A wish to create a synthesis of form, contents and needs, which supports the users of hospice, from the human , professional, and architectural angle, “ says Hans Peter Svendler, director Realdania. “ We intend to transfer this message and the other recommendations of the programme to the hospice demonstration projects which we are initiating in the near future.”

The report “Programme for The Good Hospice in Denmark” can be downloaded from the website of Realdania: www.realdania.dk

Further information

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FACTS

Steering group

The steering group behind “Programme for The Good Hospice in Denmark “ consists of :

- Anne Nissen (Chairperson), Head of Department, cand.scient.soc., Kræftens Bekæmpelse
- Helle Tingrupp, Head of Hospice, Chairperson for the union of heads of hospice, palliative teams and palliative departments in Denmark
- Lisbet Due Madsen, Nurse, cand.cur., member of the executive committee for the Association for Palliative Effort – Care at the end of life
- Knud Ole Pedersen, Nurse, previous head of KamillianerGaardens Hospice
- Lise Pedersen, leading chief physician, dr.med., Chairperson of Danish Society for Palliative Medicine
- Marianne Kofoed, Project manager, Fonden Realdania
- Ole Bang, Business consultant, Chairperson of Hospice Forum Denmark

Consultants:

Gitte Andersen, Director SIGNAL architects
Hospice Innovation DK

Project Manager :

Patrik Mattias Gustavsson, SIGNAL architects

The Realdania Foundation wishes to implement the programme for The Good Hospice in a number of demonstration projects in the course of the coming years. More than 40.000.000 dkr. (equivalent to 4.000.000 £) have been earmarked for development and qualification.

“ Programme for The Good Hospice in Denmark” - RESUME

The shape of the physical framework has considerable influence on the quality perceived by patients, their relatives, employees and volunteers, who work and stay at hospice.

This is the main conclusion in this report, which describes how *The Good Hospice in Denmark* can look and function, with the physical framework as a focal point.

The report highlights the potential within the intentional shaping of the physical framework so this works as an active element, contributing to an improved quality of life for the patients and their relatives at the end of life, while supporting the knowledge intensive work performed by the employees at hospice.

The goal with the project *The Good Hospice in Denmark* was to work out a programme which can serve as inspiration for future hospice projects in different parts of the country and as a tool in the planning of new hospices or in extending already existing ones.

The report is aimed at consultants, decision makers, architects, engineers, project leaders and steering groups for local hospice projects; it is intended as inspiration, as a manual and a checklist to ensure that sufficient thought has been given to the purpose, function and expression of the physical framework.

The programme for *The Good Hospice* highlights eight focal areas, which are essential to focus on in order to create optimal conditions for patients, relatives, volunteers and the employees at hospices in Denmark.

1. To 'new think' and professionalize the phase of creation so this to a higher degree involves the users early on in the process, gathers already existing information and ensures that the initial intentions are considered, right from the first phase of ideas through to the realisation of the new hospice building.
2. To create a powerful culture where the particular hospice philosophy serves as a platform for the palliative effort at hospice and contributes to creating the spirit which forms the backdrop for a good stay for the users of hospice.
3. To improve and develop cross-organisational and cross-disciplinary cooperation, as this is a condition for patients and relatives to experience the palliative offers as a unified whole.

4. To new think the patients' lounge so this supports the differences, wishes and needs of individual patients.
5. To work with the hospice building as an agent for active support and promotion of the desired atmosphere, which adds to the creation of a better stay for patients, relatives, volunteers and employees at hospice.
6. To allow the physical framework to facilitate social relations between patients, relatives, volunteers and employees at hospice, to a larger degree.
7. To activate the volunteers to a higher degree, as these fill an important social function for patients and their relatives and build bridges between the surrounding local community and the hospice.
8. To improve the framework for the knowledge intensive work processes so the hospice building supports and promotes sharing of knowledge, exchange of experience and cross-disciplinary cooperation, to an even larger degree.

The focal areas and the related recommendations are used as a foundation for a group of design principles, which offers a direction for the construction of the physical framework for *The Good Hospice*.

The principles are intended as tools for the programming/ planning of a new hospice and deal with the functional demands, the mutual relations of the different parts and the varying types of ambience and expressions which some of the central spaces should promote.

The programme is to be seen as a living and dynamic document, which will be updated and adjusted continually, in tandem with the gaining of new experiences in the field, in the coming years.