



## **COPENHAGEN** CENTER FOR DIABETES

The first centre of its kind in Denmark, the Center for Diabetes plays an important role in the management of diabetes in Copenhagen.

### **Partners**

- Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen
- Danish Diabetes Association
- University of Copenhagen
- City of Copenhagen



# The Center for Diabetes supports lasting lifestyle changes

### **Navigating life with diabetes can be challenging**

Despite universal healthcare in Denmark, societal inequalities make certain communities in Copenhagen more vulnerable to developing diabetes and diabetes-related complications<sup>1,2</sup>. Individuals from these vulnerable communities are also less likely to receive the care and support they need.

In Copenhagen, primary care practitioners provide individuals living with diabetes with information on how to lead healthy lives and initiate medical treatment. Additional support for people with type 1 diabetes or complex cases of type 2 diabetes can be found at specialised care centres such as the Steno Diabetes Center. However, this support focuses on the medical aspects of diabetes and many people require help to establish sustained lifestyle changes as they navigate life with diabetes.

“The success of this centre is based on the political priority of the diabetes problem, highly skilled and engaged healthcare professionals, collaborations within the healthcare sector and researchers, and finally strong leadership.”

– Charlotte Glümer, Head of the Center for Diabetes Copenhagen

### **An opportunity for support and connection**

The Center for Diabetes is accessed via a referral from a local doctor and provides supportive services and facilities for people living with diabetes in Copenhagen. Patients at the centre have access to a multidisciplinary

healthcare team that includes nurses, physiotherapists and dieticians. The services offered by the centre include group and individual diabetes education, indoor and outdoor fitness classes, daily activities and cooking classes.

### The right kind of peer pressure

One of the key interventions run by the Center for Diabetes is a peer-mentoring programme. Cities Changing Diabetes research in Copenhagen found that unemployed men over the age of 40 with limited social networks are particularly vulnerable to developing diabetes. In July 2017, the peer-mentoring programme launched to help build a peer-to-peer social network for vulnerable men so that they feel more motivated to make lasting lifestyle changes. The programme recruits

and connects mentors and mentees based on their proximity to one another.

### Effective care and patient satisfaction

Since opening in 2016, the Center for Diabetes has been visited by approximately three-quarters of the individuals newly diagnosed with diabetes in Copenhagen. 82% of patients have been satisfied with what they have accomplished with the centre. The average long-term blood sugar levels of patients have dropped by more than 10%, and diabetes stress among patients has reduced from 38% to 22%. The centre has proven to be so successful that the city is set to build a new diabetes centre in order to double capacity.

