

# Common Visions and Goals

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Region Uppsala and Uppsala University have together identified a need to establish in a common policy document a common and coherent vision for work-integrated education for the healthcare professions, for clinical research, and for the development of the healthcare system. Goals are set based on this common vision. This document was approved by the University Medical Board on 27 November 2020.

According to agreements between the Swedish state and certain regions (formerly county councils) on cooperation concerning the education of doctors, clinical research, and development of healthcare, regional cooperation is to be based on jointly prepared visions and goals for work-integrated education of doctors, clinical research, and the development of healthcare. In view of the impending challenges for the healthcare system in the form of demographic trends in the county and financial constraints, these visions and goals are very much a burning issue.

## Background

Uppsala University is Sweden's first university, founded in 1477. Today, the University conducts research in a broad range of fields with clear objectives: To conduct research and provide education of the highest quality and to collaborate with the wider community in various ways to contribute to a better world.

Region Uppsala is an organisation with political governance responsible for healthcare, public transport, culture, and regional development. According to the Health and Medical Services Act, Sweden's regions are to be involved in the financing, planning and implementation of clinical and public health research efforts. The purpose of this is to develop and improve healthcare and health.

Region Uppsala is part of the Uppsala-Örebro healthcare region<sup>1</sup>. The overall goal is to offer the inhabitants of the Region a healthcare system on equal terms through collaboration. In addition, the healthcare provided is to be knowledge-based and suitable for its purpose, safe, patient-centred, effective and offered within a reasonable time frame.

University healthcare is part of the healthcare system that is designed to particularly take into account the needs of research and education. In order to collaborate within university health care, Uppsala

<sup>1</sup>As a consequence of the change in designation from county council to region, the regions that the country is now divided into for healthcare were designated collaboration regions. Govt. Bill 2018/19:162 *En ny beteckning för kommuner på regional nivå och vissa frågor om regionindelning* [A new designation for municipalities at regional level and certain questions about the division into regions]. Region Uppsala is part of the Uppsala-Örebro collaboration region, to be known in the future as Healthcare Region Middle Sweden, along with Region Dalarna, Region Skåne, Region Sörmland, Region Värmland, Region Västmanland and Region Örebro County.

University and Region Uppsala have established a collaboration body with three decision-making levels as follows:

<b>Collaboration body</b>	<b>Uppsala University</b>	<b>Region Uppsala</b>
University Medical Board	University Board and Chief Officers	Region Uppsala's administrative management
University Medical Board Executive Committee	Management of the Disciplinary Domain of Medicine and Pharmacy	Department Management
FoUU Council	Department	Area of activity or similar.

## Overall vision

Uppsala University and Region Uppsala promote the development of healthcare through an in-depth and expanded cooperation in healthcare, research, education and development in order to achieve the highest national and international quality. The University and the Region strive to improve coordination and optimisation of the resources available for the cooperation, and to jointly develop regional and national infrastructure and industry within the life science sector.

The University and the Region strive to facilitate collaboration for professionals working in university healthcare. An objective is that the staff within university healthcare, whether employed by the Region or the University, experience that they are working within a common and closely connected structure.

## Challenges and opportunities

Healthcare is facing a number of revolutionary changes in the next few years. Demographic trends are leading to greater numbers of elderly people and of children and young people, while the working age group is increasing at a considerably slower rate. For healthcare, this means that the groups more often in need of care (the young and the old) are increasing, while the group of working age people, which is the group from which the healthcare system recruits its staff, is not increasing to the same extent and it is therefore more difficult to satisfy healthcare's skills needs. Furthermore, there are challenges in retaining skilled healthcare staff, and from rapid developments in medical science and in digital technology. Precision medicine will have a greater and greater place in healthcare to prevent, cure and alleviate diseases in an individualised way, which will initially mean increased costs.

In parallel with this development, a major change in the structure of healthcare is under way, with simultaneous structuring at the national level and a transition towards a strengthened primary care and the development of care that is provided close to the patient. Elements of care provided close to the patient and in the home and through digital channels will increase. Technological development places new demands, but also offers new opportunities in a changing healthcare landscape.

Diseases that have previously been very rare in Sweden risk becoming more common due to increased travel, climate change, and resistance to vaccination. The development of antibiotic resistance risks making antibiotics ineffective. All these changes that we are facing will require communication efforts in the community, major investments in new categories of staff, continuing professional development for existing staff, investment in new technologies, and management of the

vast quantities of data that are generated in the healthcare system. This means that Region Uppsala, like many regions, will face major challenges in the future funding of healthcare.

These challenges for healthcare also present challenges for the universities in terms of clinical and health science research, education and the development of healthcare. In collaboration with Region Uppsala, the University is striving to develop its offering of courses and study programmes and their content in pace with developments in healthcare. Similarly, clinical medicine and health science research faces challenges when patients are no longer coming to the University Hospital for care. Clinical research needs to find new ways to recruit patients for clinical studies and drug trials, while developing infrastructures to make the most of data and specimens in all aspects of primary care. The conditions for conducting clinical research within all aspects of primary care are strengthened by the *Akademiska vårdcentraler* [academic health centres], but need to continue to develop. The continued expansion of academic health centres is of great importance for this development. All in all, these far-reaching changes in healthcare require strengthened leadership, where future leaders acquire knowledge of how the healthcare system is organised and governed in their undergraduate education. Skills that can support professional leadership in complex environments are more and more in demand in both healthcare and the life science industry.

Healthcare providers establish themselves in the Region within the framework of care choice systems, and through procurements of specific care. In order to conduct relevant clinical research and work-integrated education, research and teaching need to go with patients when they choose their care provider. There is also a need for knowledge about how the healthcare system as a whole functions and what processes lead to equitable care of high quality. The University conducts successful research and provides education on quality improvement and quality management, and the Region has good access to health data and quality registers. Through collaboration in these areas, care is improved for the benefit of patients.

Geographically, Uppsala is located in a metropolitan area with a number of top-ranked universities and university hospitals, but at the same time is peripheral in relation to more densely populated areas in Europe. The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences is located in Uppsala and already ongoing cooperation between the two universities and Region Uppsala, for example in the field of antibiotic resistance, needs to be developed and new cooperation initiatives facilitated. Close and frequent collaboration with the universities in Stockholm and also nationally, through initiatives such as the Science for Life Laboratory, must be safeguarded and given continued support, while our researchers need to be made even more aware of the well-developed research infrastructure available in the vicinity of Uppsala. In the region there are also successful businesses in the life science sector and researchers from both the University and university healthcare need to be given support to partner with these businesses. The Testa Center is an example of an important element in the life science sector and functions as a test bed for the development of biopharmaceuticals, but is also important for training students in skills of importance for the Swedish pharmaceutical industry.

In Uppsala there is a very successful, highly functional innovation system. Uppsala Innovation Centre (UIC) ranks as one of the world's top five public business incubators. Uppsala's innovation system results in significant added value, especially in challenge-driven innovation at the intersection between the University, business community and society at large. The challenge here is to provide good opportunities to utilise the innovation system for all those working within the University and the healthcare system, to develop good ideas for products and companies, and to offer the resources of the healthcare system as a motor for strengthening innovation in the county.

## Occupational health and safety and equal opportunities

Within both Region Uppsala and Uppsala University, systematic work is being done with occupational health and safety for both students and employees in order to achieve a good physical, social and organisational work environment. Region Uppsala and Uppsala University also work actively with equal opportunities and gender equality.

## First- and second-cycle education

In order to meet society's needs for well-educated staff who are well prepared to work in all areas of the healthcare system, high-quality education is essential. In order for the students to become familiar with their future occupational roles, the work-integrated education which is conducted in cooperation between the University and Region Uppsala must be of high quality. It is particularly important that students get practice in working in interprofessional teams.

## Goals

The goals for the period 2021-2024 are:

- To jointly create opportunities to educate students to an extent sufficient to meet the needs of the healthcare system, industry and government agencies
- To develop a study programme for occupational therapists
- To start the implementation of a 6-year Medicine Programme
- That students, who are equated with employees under the work environment legislation, are to have a good working environment throughout their education, including during work-integrated education
- To develop courses and study programmes so as to adapt them to the changes in healthcare towards a greater role for working in interprofessional teams; strengthening courses and study programmes with regard to the organisation, management and governance of healthcare; greater responsibility for all aspects of primary care, person-centred care, technological development including digitisation, and the analysis of big data through AI for example; and precision medicine
- To have appropriate facilities and equipment for clinical teaching in theory and practice
- That work-integrated education is run by well-educated supervisors and is of the highest national and international quality
- To provide work-integrated education of an adequate scale and of the highest quality. This requires resources beyond Region Uppsala, in particular in the healthcare region which is why well-developed cooperation to ensure the optimum use of internship places is essential.

## Clinical and translational research

Clinical research spans a broad field – from basic research deriving from clinical issues, through translational studies to point-of-care clinical medicine and health science research. In order to pool our resources, Uppsala University and Region Uppsala have chosen to join forces in a number of disease areas: cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental health and infectious diseases including antibiotic resistance. To be able to conduct high-quality research and clinical development in these and other areas, it is essential to strengthen certain areas of methodology; hence the aim is to achieve high-quality pathology, medical imaging, epidemiology, and a well-developed infrastructure for precision diagnostics and precision medicine (including all the omics). Data-driven life sciences are

an important part of this development, which is also a key focus for the Science for Life Laboratory. Uppsala University is a broad university and its activities range from behavioural science, psychology, medicine, and humanities to the development of materials and medical sensorimotor circuits. This provides excellent foundations for carrying out high-quality translational research.

To support clinical research, Uppsala University and Region Uppsala have a number of priority research infrastructures such as the Uppsala biobank, which is part of the national infrastructure Biobank Sweden (BIS), the Uppsala Clinical Research Centre, the Science for Life Laboratory, U-CAN and the national research infrastructure SIMPLER and other cohorts with data and saved biological material, positron emission tomography (PET) operations, the Genomic Medicine Centre, and EpiHubben.

As part of the work to structure the healthcare system into levels, a process is under way in which Region Uppsala can apply for assignments in competition with others to provide national highly specialised care. Strong research is essential in the areas in which Uppsala can compete. Research linked to the assignments won will also automatically be taken up as priority areas in clinical research.

## Goals

The goals for the period 2021-2024 are:

- To carry out translational and clinical medicine and health science research of the highest national and international quality, which will help to increase the chances of winning assignments for national highly specialised care
- To increase the number of high-quality scientific works in the areas of cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental health and infectious diseases including antibiotic resistance compared to the period 2016-2020
- That the number of high-quality scientific works in the fields of pathology, medical imaging, epidemiology, precision diagnostics and precision medicine compared to the period 2016-2020 is to increase
- To continue to increase external funding, from both national and international sponsors, by 5% annually
- To strengthen the conditions for conducting clinical research in all aspects of primary care
- To increase knowledge about and the use of high-quality local, national and international research infrastructures
- To jointly develop and support high-quality research infrastructure of importance for translational and clinical research.

## Development of healthcare

A task of all healthcare units is to continually develop healthcare. This is done using the PDSA cycle: Plan, Do, Study, Act. In accordance with Region Uppsala's Quality Policy, the quality of this work is measured as the Region's ability to meet the needs and expectations of patients and their support groups. University healthcare units are additionally responsible for contributing to evidence-based healthcare through translating their own and others' research findings into practice in providing care and continuously evaluating established and new methods, communicating the outcomes of their

activities to the other parts of the healthcare system, and interacting with the business community and patient organisations. Research into the management and governance of healthcare and the implementation of these research findings are important for the development of healthcare.

Through common priorities, Uppsala University and Region Uppsala are working to develop and strengthen the care that is provided as national, highly specialised care. The provision of staff with skills in healthcare, research and teaching is a joint responsibility and the needs for training and recruitment are jointly established. Work on knowledge governance, quality registers and the development of healthcare programmes are prioritised activities.

The University and the Region are involved in different, yet complementary aspects of systematic quality management and improvement. The University conducts successful research and provides education on quality improvement and quality management, and the Region has good access to health data and quality registers. The conditions exist for further strengthening this activity.

## Goals

The goals for the period 2021-2024 are:

- That activities within university healthcare, where relevant, systematically use data from quality registers and measures of patients' experiences of disease and health (Patient Reported Outcome Measures – PROM) and patients' experiences of healthcare (Patient Reported Experience Measures – PREM) in order to develop these activities in collaboration with patient and support group organisations
- That the staff within university healthcare are aware of and utilise Region Uppsala Innovation and Uppsala University Innovation
- That the number of journal articles by authors from Uppsala University or Region Uppsala that form the basis for national and international health programmes and guidelines is to increase
- That the number of courses given by Uppsala University and Region Uppsala and targeting health professionals increases, and that the staff within university healthcare complete continuing professional development courses
- That Mini-HTA is used when introducing or rejecting efforts or methods within the Region.

## Further work

The University Medical Board intends to supplement this document with a strategic action plan for the period 2021-2024. The Region and the University are currently engaged in a number of projects to develop goals and strategies:

- Uppsala University has established Goals and strategies for the University. Their implementation is ongoing within the University's disciplinary domains.
- Region Uppsala is currently developing a revised research strategy for healthcare, a regional strategy for skills development and education, and a quality strategy.
- University Hospital has started a project that is to lead to new goals and strategies from 2022.

The common vision and objectives are to be a key starting point for the University Healthcare Plans for 2022, 2023 and 2024. University Hospital and the Disciplinary Domain of Medicine and Pharmacy will also base their planning on the common vision and goals during the period.

The vision, and the goals, will be revised during 2023 for the period 2025-2028.

Defining a common vision and goals is a significant step towards achieving world-class university healthcare where the professionals experience that they are operating within a common and closely connected structure in which they are well placed to provide world-class healthcare, education and research. However, the work does not end with the establishment of a common vision and goals; it is in day-to-day clinical activities, and in the many small decisions that have an impact, that these intentions can become reality. That is the work that starts now!