

JWGHS, Solovki Islands, 6-7/10/16

Current and future activities in Norrbotten County

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Bilateral agreement on collaboration

County Council Commissioner (Mr Glenn Berggård) visited the Ministry of Health in Murmansk in June to discuss the bilateral collaboration agreement between the Ministry and Norrbotten County Council. The parties agreed on three priority areas: e-health and telemedicine, prevention of unhealthy lifestyles and communicable diseases, especially antibiotic resistance. The County Council is currently discussing our contribution to the collaboration.

Nordic healthcare cooperation

On year ago (September 2015) the Chief Executives responsible for healthcare in northern Norway, Sweden and Finland signed an agreement on long-term strategic cross-border cooperation. A joint secretariat is established at the County Council of Norrbotten.

Work is in progress focusing on daily operations, benchmarking and cost efficiency. In future, it will be important to coordinate some of the work with the Joint Working Group to avoid overlapping activities and create synergy.

Structural changes of health and welfare sector

The Swedish government intend to limit the amount of regions in the country including governmental institutions and health care. One proposed region is "Norrland" which includes the counties of Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Västernorrland and Jämtland with 820 000 inhabitants and covers more than 52 percent of the surface in Sweden. The new organisation can come into force in 2019. The County Council of Norrbotten together with the other County Councils in Norrland has started to prepare for unification.

E-health

The County is sparsely populated often with long distances between healthcare providers. There is a need to find new solutions especially to secure the right of the elderly to specialist and cohesive care in remote areas. The County Council has decided to implement a broader use of E-health solutions in the County.

Prevention/control of communicable and non-communicable diseases

The Nordic healthcare cooperation has decided to establish a network between experts on prevention and control of communicable diseases. It is important to facilitate contacts and early warning to prevent antibiotic resistance and health-care related infections. If the Ministry of Health in Murmansk is interested in joining the network they are welcome to participate.

Furthermore, to avoid overlapping activities and create synergy our Head of department and Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, Mr Anders Nystedt will join the TB steering committee at the next meeting in St Petersburg.