

Address of Bertel Haarder, the Danish Minister of Health

Excerpt

“One of the big challenges in our health systems today is the *increasing demand for services from our citizens*. This is partly due to changing demographics – the fact that we all grow older and therefore suffer from more diseases – and partly to the fact that we are able to treat more diseases, and the fact that people want to be treated for things they not necessarily needed to be treated for some years ago. ...

“And at the same time we are challenged by low economic growth rates. The overall result is a growing pressure on the health system in all countries. In the future it may not be possible to fulfill all the demands for treatment. We therefore need to find new ways to treat patients e. g. in their own homes or with shorter stay at the hospital.

“One of the ways to meet the challenge is the fact what you are doing in this Association. A substantial move from inpatient stay in hospital for several days to a stay in a Day Surgery unit for a few hours has helped very much to minimize the pressure on the resources in the health care sector.

“One thing that also makes me happy with this congress is to see the multi specialty cooperation not only between medical specialties within surgery and anesthesia but also with nurses and other health professionals from the day surgery facilities. I believe that such a cooperation where the work is done as teamwork and where established ways of doing things are challenged is useful for the whole health service system. ...”