



CANCER COUNSELING
IN THE SPOTLIGHT





WELCOME TO HEJMDAL

It is a well-documented fact that people in general get better when they are placed in beautiful and beneficial surroundings. Nevertheless, we have been better to accept this fact than to pursue it when it comes to the way in which we build and design within the health care area. Functionalism has been paramount.

With Hejmdal the Danish Cancer Society goes completely new ways. In the artistic hands of architect Frank Gehry the old porter building to the hospital in Aarhus (Århus Sygehus) has been transformed into an open-sky construction founded on old brick walls, but at the same time going through the roof of conventional thinking.

The result is overwhelming and unique. And what can be more necessary when you have to reach the very soul of a fellow human being.

Welcome to Hejmdal – the Cancer Patients' House

In the Nordic mythology Hejmdal is the God of sunlight and safeguards the good values in the world. Today his name is on the door of the new cancer counseling centre.



IT IS NOT OUR HOUSE – IT BELONGS TO EVERYBODY

The ceilings in Hejmdal are high in every respect. It has open rooms and open arms. No doors, no counters, no fixed boundaries. The House offers room for security and unpredictability. For big words and the small encounter. For crying and for joy. Hejmdal is built on the simple wisdom that life is full of contrasts. – which is clearly reflected in the architectural framework varying between what is foreseeable and not foreseeable at all, between the new and the old, between a homely and a private atmosphere.

The intention has been to design a house, which embraces the compassionate encounter in the widest possible sense – where cancer patients, relatives, professionals, and volunteers can meet heart-to-heart and without prejudice. Where the dialogue can be unfolded and generate a better understanding. Where you can be together or be yourself – without being alone.



WE ARE RIGHT HERE

When you are most vulnerable and anxious, waiting time and bureaucracy are experienced as immense barriers. Consequently, we have totally eliminated both, and instead left the door to Hejmdal wide open. So together we can address the most urgent subjects – not in a week or two – but right here and now.

The position of Hejmdal at the front line of the hospital in Aarhus (Århus Sygehus) also means that nobody has to feel the powerlessness and the confusion which often arises during the course of treatment. – Or the void which you may feel when you have been discharged. Assistance is within visible reach. And the earlier you get it, the easier you get to move on.

Whether you are concerned with great existential thoughts or minor practical problems, makes no difference to us. We will assist you with everything that may be useful and beneficiary to you. And if we do not have a ready answer, we always know where to find it.



IN HEJMDAL YOU CAN HEAR THAT LIFE DOES NOT STOP

Many people who have been in close contact with cancer experience that the illness and treatment have great costs – both socially and psychologically. At Hejmdal we will help give people the loving push which may enable them to act themselves and feel that they can manage their own life again.

Naturally, through counseling – but equally through the many possibilities offered by the House with respect to creative, physical and social activities. Open painter's workshop, meditation, relaxation, physical training, joint cooking in the kitchen, cosy small-talk in front of the burning stove, tranquil leisure in the garden... The idea is a house humming of life all day. People here can do all sorts of things – but there is also a quiet corner, if you want to be yourself.



LIGHT MAY COMFORT
ESTHETICS MAY INCREASE
LOVE OF LIFE
SENSES ARE INFLUENCED BY ROOM

It can be hard to express what Hejmdal is and what it can be before you enter the house. Hejmdal is more of a feeling – an atmosphere. The fundamental idea is to break with everything that obstructs the senses and instead create physical, aesthetic, and architectural environments talking to the soul.

With its bright, warm, and optimistic atmosphere the house makes you let down your guards, makes you able to ask questions – thereby helping you to overcome your situation and find new ways.

SOME MAY CLAIM THAT WE HAVE BEEN PRETENTIOUS, IMMODEST, AND MADE EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH DEMANDS CONCERNING HEJMDAL

WE TOTALLY AGREE

Is it not so that when your heart beats for something, there is nothing you will not do? This is our approach to cancer counseling. Yes, in the widest sense of the word we have punched the air and thought bigger. We have replaced pettiness with generosity and broken with the mindset that you had better hide or be content with humble surroundings because you have cancer.

On the contrary:

The fight against cancer must be open and impressive – just like Hejmdal.

Hejmdal – The Cancer Patients' House is the Danish Cancer Society's Cancer Counseling Centre in Aarhus.

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If you are interested in supporting the activities in Hejmdal, please use account No. 3001 4180021787



Kræftens Bekæmpelse