



▼ **CLAUS UGILT ØSTERGAARD**
Development consultant on welfare technology for the Welfare and Handicap units at Esbjerg Municipality.

Åmoseparken tests OPUS 5



The initial measurements show that staff now have more time for other work using the OPUS 5 bed.

◀ **TINA OG BETINA**
Educational workers at Åmoseparken.

A development project in Esbjerg Municipality in Southern Denmark is focusing on whether the intelligent bed can make a notable difference in the area of handicaps. The preliminary result is a resounding YES!

On 27 May 2015, I visit Claus Ugilt Østergaard, who works as a development consultant on welfare technology in the Welfare and Handicap units at Esbjerg Municipality.

Claus is the coordinator for an exciting development project focused on studying and testing the intelligent hospital bed for the handicapped, primarily bed-ridden and severely handicapped citizens.

Esbjerg Municipality is currently testing two intelligent OPUS 5 beds at the Development Centre in Ribe and Åmoseparken.

Aim of the project

- To give citizens more opportunities for self-help.
- To improve citizens' quality of life.
- To give staff more time for other tasks.
- To assess whether an intelligent bed can support and facilitate care and rehabilitation tasks, as well as social education work.

Visit to Åmoseparken

I then visit Åmoseparken on the outskirts of Esbjerg. Here, I meet two dedicated social education workers from the branch for western Denmark: Tina and Betina.

It quickly becomes clear that these two are passionate about their profession and about making a difference in their patients' lives. At the same time, they face many physical and time restraints. It is hard work caring for residents who, for one reason or another, physically resist.

FACTS

Åmoseparken is intended for citizens who, because of significant and lasting physical mental impairment, require extensive help with daily ordinary tasks, care, or treatment.

"We have to take good care of our staff and care for our citizens. It is a well known fact that injuries from resident transfers can occur, and we want to prevent that, because in the end it is expensive in the form of sick leave and inconvenience for the person who is ill. With the right technology, you can do away with the physically demanding work procedures and create a better work environment and a life with more quality for the bed's user."

CLAUS UGILT ØSTERGAARD

The preliminary results are clear

Claus is currently performing measurable tests via five sensors mounted in different places on the bed. The measurements aim to show the staff's activity in and around the bed, measured over 24 hours. This is compared to the same type of measurement from the "old" hospital bed. The initial measurements show that staff now have more time for other work, because the work procedures change with the OPUS 5 bed.

But they also show that the time saved depends on citizens' need for help.

Since the OPUS 5 bed was moved into Allan's room, waking him in the morning has gone from taking over an hour to taking just 15 minutes - and now with just one educational worker.

The hard work of a caregiver

I ask Tina and Betina whether they notice how much the physically hard work of caregiver takes a toll on the body. "YES!", they exclaim. "I feel it every day in my back and in my arms; I also have some arm braces I use once in a while", says Betina, and continues "We often use so much physical exertion that the veins in my arms bulge after a difficult care task".

The good case regarding "Allan"

Allan is severely brain damaged and is the first person at Åmoseparken to test OPUS 5. He is 40, tall and physically strong. Allan does not like to get up in the morning, so it is a task that is both

time-consuming and resource-heavy. Tina and Betina talk about how they can spend over an hour each day just to get him out of bed and that, because of it, they have daily conflicts with him.

"I often have to climb up on the bed and push, because he resists." "It is both hard for me and indispensable for Allan."

TINA, EDUCATIONAL WORKER

Since the OPUS 5 bed was moved into Allan's room, waking him in the morning has gone from taking over an hour to taking just 15 minutes - and now with just one educational worker.

Allan also feels more secure now and thinks it is fun to get up. He is moved up into a sitting position and is allowed to wake up. At the end of the bed is a walker and his slippers. When Allan is ready, the bed helps him up the rest of the way and into a standing position, and then he can go out to the bathroom.

The caregiver work has improved significantly, and both Allan and educational workers start their day in a good way.

The bed is now ready to be passed on

Soon the bed will be moved in to a new resident with other needs, but Tina and Betina are clinging on tightly to the bed. They are now going back to a daily routine with an hour-long battle to get Allan up. On the other hand, it will also do a lot of good for the other resident, Bent. "If only we had more of these beds," exclaim the girls in chorus.

The good case regarding "Bent"

Bent is the next resident who will try OPUS 5. He suffers spastic paralysis and cannot speak. His condition deteriorates from day to day, and he can no longer eat and therefore is fed via a tube.

Bent prefers to stay in bed, where he feels most secure. He does not like to receive care and shows clear signs that he feels it is undignified and overwhelming.

Tina and Betina agree that the lateral tilt really makes a difference here in their daily work. With gravity, they can more easily and effectively finish their caregiver work, and the eating position, too, allows food to pass easier through the tube. ■