

## Press release

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### Basic information

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Department of: Clinical Medicine

Main supervisor: Professor Charlotte Ulrikka Rask

Title of dissertation: "Group-based Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for adolescents with multiple functional somatic syndromes"

Date for defence: August 10th at (time of day): 2pm Place: Samfundsmedicinsk Auditorium, Bartholins Allé 4, Aarhus University, building 1262/room 101  
and can due to corona restrictions advantageously be accessed on Zoom,  
<https://aarhusuniversity.zoom.us/j/63532833587>

Press release (Danish)

Specialiseret behandling til unge med multi-organ funktionel lidelse

"Gruppe-baseret Acceptance and Commitment Therapy til unge med multi-organ funktionel lidelse" - et nyt ph.d.-projekt fra Aarhus Universitet, Health. Projektet er gennemført af læge Karen H. Kallesøe, der forsvare det d. 10. august 2020.

Et stigende antal unge kontakter sundhedsvæsenet med uspecifikke fysiske symptomer, som ikke kan tilskrives en veldefineret fysisk sygdom. Ca. 4-10% af unge er så belastede af deres symptomer, at de opfylder kriterierne for en funktionel lidelse. Forskning viser, at psykologisk behandling, specielt baseret på kognitiv adfærdsterapi, er effektiv til behandling af unge med specifikke symptomklager. Behandlingstilbud til de potentielt sværest påvirkede unge med mange forskellige samtidige typer af symptomer er dog begrænsede.

Under hendes PhD studier har læge Karen H. Kallesøe forsket i at:

- 1) Udvikle og evaluere en generisk gruppe-baseret psykologisk behandling til unge (15-19 år) med multi-organ funktionel lidelse - (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Health in Adolescents (AHEAD)).
- 2) Beskrive specifikke karakteristika ved disse unge, det vil sige deres symptomprofil, sygdomsopfattelse, sygdomsbekymring og tilknytningsstil sammenlignet med en populationsbaseret gruppe af unge på samme alder.

Forskningen bidrager til den sparsomme viden om behandling af unge, der er alvorligt syge af en funktionel lidelse med multiple symptomer fra forskellige organsystemer. Studierne understøtter, at disse unge kan behandles sammen i en generisk psykologisk intervention. Samlet set kan dette være et vigtigt skridt fremad indenfor et område, hvor mange patienter tøver med at acceptere psykologisk behandling for deres lidelse, og hvor specialiserede behandlingstilbud til de unge, som har en svær funktionel lidelse, er sparsomme.

Forsvaret af ph.d.-projektet er offentligt og finder sted den 10. august kl. 14 i Samfundsmedicinsk auditorium, Aarhus Universitet, Bartholins Allé 4, Aarhus Universitet bygning 1262/lokale 101, Aarhus og kan pga. corona-restriktioner med fordel tilgås via Zoom på linket <https://aarhusuniversity.zoom.us/j/63532833587>.

Titlen på projektet er "Group-based Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for adolescents with multiple functional somatic syndromes". Yderligere oplysninger: Ph.d.-studerende Karen H. Kallesøe, e-mail: [karkal@rm.dk](mailto:karkal@rm.dk), tlf. 78464310.

Bedømmelsesudvalg:

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Press release (English)

Specialised treatment for adolescents presenting with multiple functional somatic syndromes

"Group-based Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for adolescents with multiple functional somatic syndromes" - a new PhD project from Aarhus University, Health. The project was carried out by MD Karen H. Kallesøe, who is defending her dissertation on August 10th 2020.

An increasing number of adolescents present to the health care system with physical symptoms not adequately explained by organic pathology. Approximately 4-10% of adolescents are substantially affected and may receive diagnoses of functional disorders, e.g. functional somatic syndromes (FSS), somatoform disorders or somatic symptom disorder (SSD).

Research shows efficacy of psychological interventions, particularly based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) principles, on single-syndrome FSS in youth. However, treatment offers for the potentially most severely affected adolescents presenting with multiple FSS are scarce.

The overall aims of MD Karen H. Kallesøe PhD studies were to:

- 1) Develop and evaluate a generic group-based psychological intervention for adolescents (15-19 years) presenting with multiple FSS - (i.e. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Health in Adolescents (AHEAD))
- 2) Describe specific clinical characteristics of these adolescents in terms of symptom profile, symptom perception, illness worry and attachment style as compared with a population-based sample in a similar age range.

This dissertation adds to the sparse knowledge of specialised treatment for adolescents presenting with multiple FSS. Our findings support that adolescents with multiple FSS can feasibly be treated together in a generic psychological intervention. Overall, this may be an important step forward in a field where many patients are reluctant to accept psychological treatment for FSS and where treatment offers for youth are scarce.

The defence is public and takes place on August 10th at 2 pm in Samfundsmedicinsk Auditorium, Aarhus University, Bartholins Allé 4, Aarhus University, building 1262/room 101 and can due to corona restrictions advantageously be accessed on Zoom, <https://aarhusuniversity.zoom.us/j/63532833587>.

The title of the project is "Group-based Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for adolescents with multiple functional somatic syndromes". For more information, please contact PhD student Karen H. Kallesøe, email: [karkal@rm.dk](mailto:karkal@rm.dk), Phone +45 78464310.

Assessment committee:

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