

**Address by Jón Atli Benediktsson, Rector of the University of Iceland,  
at the Nordic conference of medical students. Held in Hringssalur in  
the Icelandic Children's Hospital on Friday 1 November 2019, 12.30  
pm.**

Good afternoon, everyone.

It is my honour and pleasure to say a few words at this annual conference of Nordic medical students, which we are delighted to have here at the University of Iceland. Collaboration between medical students has been particularly strong in the Nordic countries and this wonderful conference is a clear testament to that. The aim of the conference is to allow medical students from the Nordic countries to meet, share ideas, advice and successful projects, as well as to learn more about the conference theme, which this year is cancer. In recent years, this collaboration has sparked many practical initiatives. Here at the University of Iceland we have formed by students, the mental health education association Húgrún, the first aid association Bjargráður and the sex education association Ástráður, which all play a very important preventative role in the Icelandic school system. These community projects run by medical students serve as a shining example of an outstanding service to society by students. In current international discourse on higher education, there is indeed a lot of focus on the social impact of universities and these student projects

are a vital contribution to the University of Iceland's active engagement with society.

Ladies and gentlemen. It is now my honour to present Linda Aagaard Thomsen, who will give an open lecture on the challenges involved in the costs of new cancer drugs and access to them.

Linda holds a PhD in pharmacy from the University of Copenhagen. She is an experienced researcher within pharmacoepidemiology, health economics, and quality improvement in health care. She has a great interest in pharmaceutical policy and is a member of the European Cancer League's taskforce on Access to Medicines and the European Fair Pricing Network, as well as advisor for patient representatives in the Danish Medicines Council. Before coming to the Danish Cancer Society, she was manager of R&D at the Danish College for Pharmacy Practice, where she was responsible for a number of intervention and improvement studies in medicines' use in primary health care. At the Danish Cancer Society, she has been manager of the Department for Documentation & Quality and today is head of Research Governance, Evaluation & Communication. She has been member of a number of advisory and scientific boards in the Danish Patient Safety Authority, the Danish Medicines Agency, the

Danish Society for Patient Safety, and the Danish National Board of Health.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you all for coming and I will now hand over to Linda Aagaard Thomsen.

Thank you.