A design-thinking approach to identifying needs in a Danish healthcare setting

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The Danish healthcare system is often hailed as a pioneer in quality health services and initiatives. However, there are still gaps in this system despite an impressive effort by stakeholders. To address this, it is essential to identify and specify unmet needs in this space. The biodesign process of innovation is a well-documented multi-disciplinary approach used to identify unmet healthcare needs and produce sustainable solutions fit for society. Adopting this concept, the BioMedical Design Novo Nordisk Foundation Fellowship programme has been established in Denmark to create value for the Danish healthcare system. This program follows the process of needs-finding, needs screening, concept generation, concept screening, strategy development, and business planning. In this study, we report the application of the needs-finding step in action at a public hospital in regional Denmark over a 2-month period. A total of 57 observations were recorded, resulting to the identification of 109 needs in this setting. Future work should follow through the next steps in the biodesign process beginning with needs screening to prioritise areas requiring urgent action. This study advocates for an inclusive and interdisciplinary approach to improvement and innovation in the Danish healthcare system.