practice and community nurses. The purpose is not to sanction the GP but, like the situation with quality data, to establish a culture and organization to learn from these events and to ensure that it will not happen again. There will be no publication of the data at practice level. Once a year a report will be published, which in general terms describes the most common events countrywide.

Basic education

We used to have an internship of 18 months in Denmark. Last year the – now former – president of the young doctors in the Danish Medical Association and the Health Minister jointly agreed on a decision to reduce this to 12 months and named it Clinical Basic Education. The main argument was to reduce the length of specialist training, but other agendas also played a part. The previous model consisted of six months for each of the three specialties surgery, internal medicine and general practice. In the new model the regions create packages of two specialties for the roughly 500 medical students and there will be only six months in general practice in 80% of the courses. The students draw a number in order to choose a package and at a certain date they have 10 minutes to choose one of the available packages.

The system has been functioning for a year now and we have had both good and bad experiences. It is good that the electronic tool works and it is not good that 20% do not have any experience of general practice, but it seems even worse that many of the students have not been working on a surgical ward or in an

emergency department. In the commission's report on general practice it says that general practice should have the 24-hour responsibility for the out-of-hours service. This will give general practice more minor emergency department injuries, which the newly educated doctors are not able to handle appropriately.

It has already been decided that candidates who do not have general medicine in their package must spend an extra six months in an introductory post to general medicine and we are negotiating with the health authorities to find a solution for the candidates without surgery in their curriculum.

We hope to have these problems solved before the summer and then during the rest of the year we will try to plan and implement the new elements of the new contract so it will not be so hard to be a Danish GP!

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New Finnish Editor

In spring 2009 Helena Varonen became the National Editor for Finland. She works as a chief physician at Kirkkonummi Health Centre and also serves as adjunct professor at the Department of General Practice and Primary Care, University of Helsinki. Her own research has primarily been on respiratory tract infections and musculoskeletal disorders in primary care. For a number of years she has been medical editor at Duodecim Evidence Based Medical Guidelines.

Helena takes over from Elise Kosunen, who has become chairwoman for the Finnish Association of General Practitioners.

Jakob Kragstrup
Editor-in-Chief