



Norway  
Health Tech

Annual report 2020





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# Norway Health Tech's 2020 in retro-spec and looking ahead —

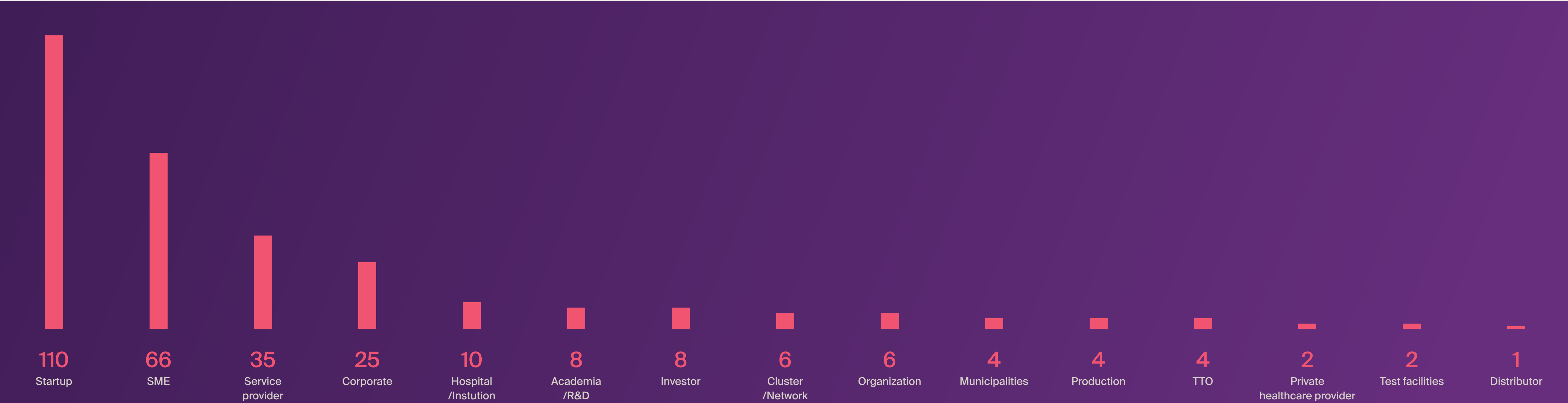
**2020 took us all by surprise.** It was a year that for most of us turned things up-side-down, and we had to really be innovative and think differently. As a cluster that value networking highly, we needed to find new ways of connecting and interacting with our members and partners.

Covid did not only change the way we work, but also what we were working on. The hospitals and municipalities needed help identifying the solutions that could help and find help to create neutral spaces to learn and communicate. We made sure that we were up and running as a digital communication platform within 4 days after the shut-down.

As Norwegian healthcare solutions were recognized throughout the world, we wanted to make it easy for our members to reach foreign markets. We ran several activities where innovative companies presented their solutions. It resulted in collaboration and global sales. Read Epiguard's story later in the report.

Norway Health Tech finds itself as a mature cluster; 11 years running. The cluster is certified ECEI Gold Label, first in 2016 and re-certified in 2018. **The ECEI GOLD Label “Excel in Cluster Excellence”** is awarded to cluster management organizations that demonstrate a high level of professionalism and sophisticated cluster management. It gives us a motivation to strive for the highest quality standard. /

↓ Our members



# Norway Health Tech's 2020 in retro-spec and looking ahead —

As the cluster is mainly funded by projects, the activity is high all year round. The report will give examples of the projects we work on, the activities they create and the results they provide.

We would not be able to keep the pace we have, had it not been for our financial supporters:





# The team

The team changed through the year as well. Some left and some joined. The most significant change was that the CEO of 11 years, Kathrine Myhre, left the cluster and our new CEO Lena Nymo Helli came on board.

Let us present the team as it was at the end of 2020, full and part-time resources:



**Lena Nymo Helli**  
CEO



**Katrine Halvorsrud**  
Finance Manager



**Anita Moe Larsen**  
Head of Communication



**Trine Radmann**  
Head of International Affairs



**Chalisse Fortson**  
Project and Communication Assistant



**Mara Diaconu**  
Senior EU Advisor



**Sergio Ferreira**  
Senior Innovation Advisor



**Mette Aastad**  
EU Program Coordinator



**Joanna Lane**  
EU Advisor



**Jeremy McCrohan**  
Head of Investor Relations



**Kami Faust**  
Regulatory Advisor



**Bent-Håkon Lauritzen**  
Senior Innovation Advisor



**Odd Arild Lehne**  
Senior Innovation Advisor



**Siri Stabel Olsen**  
Senior Innovation Advisor



**Haakon Skar**  
Senior Innovation Advisor and  
Head of Trondheim office



**Dmitrii Rodionov**  
EU Advisor



**Jonas Jeppesen**  
Project Advisor



# The Board

The board also went through changes when the chairman of the last 10 years, Carl Christian Gilhuus-Moe, stepped down and Iacob Mathiesen took over. The board consist of the following:



**Iacob Mathiesen**  
Otivio



**Erik Fosse**  
OUS Intervensjonssenteret



**Kari Kværner**  
C3 Centre for Connected Care



**Kjell-Are Furnes**  
Ably



**Heidi Blengsli Abel**  
Checkware



**Hilde Nebb**  
UiO



**Asbjørn Lilletun**  
NorInnova



**Cornelia Mender**  
GE Vingmed Ultrasound

## Observers:



**Richard Aastrand**  
Oslo kommune



**Ellen C. Andersen**  
EpiGuard



**Rune Siemensen**  
Helse SørØst



**Tom Skyrud**  
Forskningsrådet



**Olav Bardalen**  
Innovasjon Norge

With a solid staff and support from a board that represents all member categories, we are well equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities that lies ahead.

**Lena Nymo Helli**  
CEO Norway Health Tech



# Mobilize the market to answer to Covid-challenges —

**There is no doubt** that 2020 was a year out of the ordinary. When Norway closed on March 12<sup>th</sup>, Norway Health Tech had already established infrastructure to host webinars and digital meetings. We reached out to Sykehusinnkjøp and other public institutions, offering our help. We hosted our first webinar on March 17<sup>th</sup> on behalf of Sykehusinnkjøp who reached out to the industry to help cover the most burning issue, supply of PPE (personal protective equipment). More than 5000 responses were received over the next months.

Through extra-ordinary grants from Oslo municipality, we started a project to mobilize Norwegian industry domestically and internationally. Our early engagement gave us visibility and through the project, we capitalized on this. We started up in August and for the next 5 months we introduced companies in 8 international markets, hosted demo days for domestic hospitals, municipalities and institutions based on their needs and helped companies prepare pitches for demanding markets.

We learned a lot and especially through one of the US match making sessions, where the Norwegian companies got pretty tough feedback on their pitches. We were told (in no unclear terms) that we needed to step up and sell the solutions we were offering. A lot of the companies took this to heart and went home to improve. The next time we had a US match making session, the Norwegian companies shined and received great feedback. There is a silver lining in all – this time in learning from mistakes.

Covid-19 sent challenges our way, but it also represented opportunities. We have never had so many experts and key-people share their experiences and advice. Everything can be done digitally, and it takes down barriers for participation. We have built network and connections, preparing us for when the world opens again. Norwegian healthcare solutions are getting international attention and we need to capitalize on it also in the future. /

Covid-19





# Norway Health Tech in Trondheim —

**Norway Health Tech** has recently started a “node” of the cluster in Trøndelag. This was made possible when Trondheim Municipality contributed funding for the node to be established in October 2020. We were excited to have Haakon Skar as our head of office and spearheading our efforts locally.

Trøndelag is home to a small but rapidly growing cluster of companies, many started in or around NTNU, SINTEF and St. Olavs. The local healthcare providers are internationally leading in several areas, and Norway Health Tech is excited to contribute to its growth. Our goal is to contribute to the creation of more innovative companies. Our medium-term goal is the doubling of the number of local health tech companies, and rapid growth in sales nationally and internationally.

Another area where we want to succeed is making the Operating Room of the Future could become a test facility in Nordic Proof - the Nordic network of the test facility, as well as more cooperation on the EU side.

The opportunities are there, and the network is benefitting and contributing as Norway Health Tech now also has its first office outside Oslo. /



**Haakon Skar**

Senior Innovation Advisor and  
Head of Trondheim office

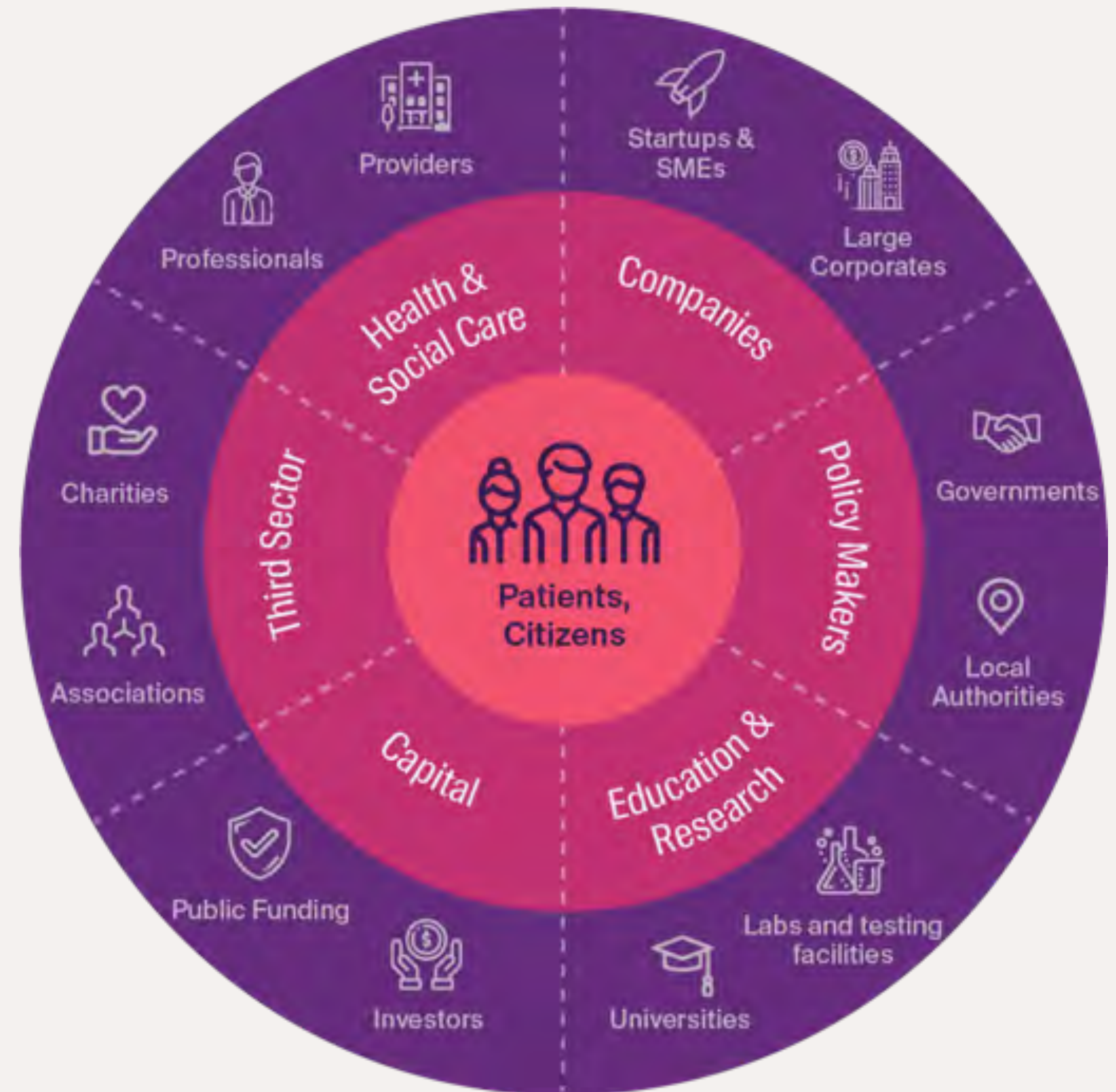
Trondheim





# Way of work —

To create value and sustainability, the full value chain must be involved and addressed in the innovation life cycle. The model that Norway Health Tech base our work on shows the landscape where we operate. Inclusiveness and collaboration are key words in all we do. /





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Jeremy McCrohan announcing while Anita Moe Larsen celebrating the winner of 100 pitches Health Track during Oslo Innovation Week in 2020 – Bulbitech. Photo: Oslo Innovation Week 2020



# The bottlenecks of capital —

## Getting the private investors interested and help companies get ready for private investments —

One of the pillars of Norway Health Tech is helping our members access private capital. As such, several activities have been initiated to assist our members with this challenging aspect of starting and scaling a business, particularly within the health sector. These activities center around educating the investment ecosystem on the risks, rewards, and opportunities of investing in health, and companies on how to prepare for investor interactions.

One key initiative has been to help catalyze the establishment of the [Norwegian Health Investor Network \(NHIN\)](#) – an online investor platform for health focused companies and investors to interact with one another. The network currently has over 100 companies and 100 investors in the various communities. The Norway Health Tech community currently makes up 51 of those companies. The aim of the network is to increase access to private capital for emerging and growing companies, and to make it easier for investors to access, assess and build relationships with those investment opportunities both pre and post investment. As far as we are aware, we have directly assisted companies with securing more than NOK 30,000,000 from private investors, and we believe we have assisted many more indirectly.

Private capital is not as easy piece of the puzzle for companies to get right, and Norway Health Tech plays an important role for both companies and investors in helping to create awareness of the opportunities available across the sector. We are proud of the results we have achieved thus far and expect our impact to continue to grow into the future. →



# The bottlenecks of capital —

## EU Funding: We strive to bring the right funding and program to your organization! —

Norway Health Tech has a long track record of supporting companies when applying for, preparing, and running EU funded projects. Over the past 6-7 years, a large group of members were supported and was granted EU funding for their projects. Examples include Cardiaccs, Otivio, Hy5, Respinor – just to mention a few. The process to get to EU funding is challenging and the chances of success are slim. Therefore, Norway Health Tech's team put emphasis on the early stages of the process to ensure there is a good fit and a good potential of success.

### In 2020, we secured two research Horizon 2020 projects for our members:

- SMILE (coordinated by Innlandet Sykehuset, with NHT, SINTEF and TELLU as Norwegian partners) with the aim of supporting ageing in place for older people by combining an innovative smart living environment (SLE) ecosystem and eHealth solutions co-created with older people
- CareMatrix PCP (project partners from Norway Vestre Viken HT and NHT) aiming to develop innovative technology that enables more predictive care for future buyer of the solutions hospitals from Norway, Sweden, and Spain.

Many of Norway Health Tech's members have been successful and are now running their EU-funded projects. This is, no doubt, a great opportunity to advance research or innovations, enhance your credibility and expand your network across Europe and the world through EU funding. But it does not come without a cost.

Though EU financial support is mostly equity free, there are requirements and obligations attached to it. Our EU team at Norway Health Tech is daily engaging with our members to facilitate the understanding of the “EU language” and way of working, support in project writing and project management on a variety of levels. We are working together with our members and taking the journey together! Our members bring the innovation, science and knowledge and we assist with expertise, experience and understanding of what makes a proposal and project successful. /



**Mara Diaconu**  
Senior EU Advisor



**Sergio Ferreira**  
Senior Innovation Advisor

Teamwork





# Collaboration between R&D and industry —

**Norway Health Tech** has been a broker for the project ForRegion for several years. The purpose is to facilitate collaboration between R&D institutions and industry, advice and support the collaboration and finally speed up time to market for innovations based on research.

The project had its final year in 2020. It started as VRI and grew into ForRegion. It was funded by Oslo and Akershus, and in 2020 big restructuring was taking place making it the last year for the funding scheme in its current form. It has contributed to making research more of a focus in many companies, facilitated more collaboration across sectors and support through advice and guidance. It has also helped facilitate student projects such as internship and PhD in the industry.

ForRegion from Oslo and Akershus has given value to all companies, research institutions and academia that have been involved, and been an accelerator for a research-based industry.

ForRegion has been replaced by “Kompetanse-megling”, which differ between the Norwegian counties. /



**Trine Radmann**  
Head of International Affairs





# Public advocacy – changing the framework of the health-care sector —

**Our role as a voice for the ecosystem** of health innovation became clearer and more prominent through 2020. First with the involvement in the Akson debate where we facilitated discussions and contributed with insight from the both the users through collaboration with KS, municipalities and other organizations, and the industry.

We also engaged in the law on E-health, and a collective voice from the ecosystem lead to the law not being passed.

The 5th report on the Value of Healthcare services and industry was launched in April and as previous years, stimulated the discussions on many levels. The consortium behind the report encompasses the leading organizations, clusters, TTOs and public funding institutions. The collaboration was initiated by Norway Health Tech, and we remain a strong partner.

We also commented on hearings and engaged in the political discussions that our members expect us to be engaged in. →



**Lena Nymo Helli**  
CEO



**Anita Moe Larsen**  
Head of Communication

Torbjørn Røe Isaksen, then Minister of Trade, visiting the Intervention Centre at Oslo University Hospital





# Working together across sectors is a key ingredient to success —

**Innovative procurement** has become very important tool to facilitate and stimulate collaboration and innovation. Norway Health Tech has contributed in five innovative partnerships so far, assisting in writing applications, facilitating dialogue and match making. We are not part of the procurement process, only in the mobilizing phase.

We support also other calls and projects with writing applications and identifying partners. For 2020 we were granted the “Kontrolltårn” with OUS and CareMatrix with Vestre Viken (and other European partners).

We continue to support Indre Østfold, Drammen, Lier, Asker, Lillestrøm, Ullensaker and Gardermoen with innovative processes and projects, bringing innovation into the core of the processes and work. /

Collaboration. Photo: iStockphoto



**Bent-Håkon Lauritzen**  
Senior Innovation Advisor



# Innovative rehabilitation in Indre Østfold municipality —



Photo: Indre Østfold



**Since the start of the project** in 2016, the municipal rehabilitation services have been strengthened at both the service and user level. The project work has contributed to coherent, coordinated, and holistic processes.

The municipality can thus take increased responsibility for rehabilitation and more rehabilitation can take place in the home. The service strengthens individuals' ability to maintain and/or regain their physical and / or mental coping ability. Cost-benefit analyzes show that the overall service helps to prevent and postpone the need for compensatory services.

Society-based rehabilitation has contributed to a holistic approach and emphasizes the person and society perspective. The personal perspective as a core value has increased user participation, provided more person-centered goals and measures, and contributed to increased participation from the person in their own rehabilitation process. →



# Innovative rehabilitation in Indre Østfold municipality —

Interdisciplinary assessment team (TVT) ensures that more interdisciplinary rehabilitation with high intensity can take place in the home. TVT ensures coordination and contributes to good transitions in the process. TVT connects relevant actors from the health service and the local community and supports coping and participation. Speech therapist, job specialist, services for mental health and substance abuse, nutritional physiologist, and resources in the local community, are examples of actors we can now ensure access to and connect to in a rehabilitation process. Collaboration with the GP has been strengthened through increased use of electronic messages and participation in collaboration meetings.

The people who have been followed up by TVT will have an increased level of function. Retests 3, 6 and 18 months after the end of the course, show that the functional level is maintained. Everyday rehabilitation (HVR) has been initiated and is still being tested. HVR also connects resources in the local community and uses technology. TVT and HVR's role vis-à-vis other existing services has been clarified. TVT and HVR have a joint team coordinator who participates in a weekly case meeting with Coordination & Admissions, and admission meeting in the unit Rehabilitation, Learning and Healthy living. Beds for intensive rehabilitation will be established in June 2021, and the day care (individual services and learning and mastery groups) will be continued. The day, learning and coping services now provide services to groups that previously did not have satisfactory services, such as people with long-term pain. →

Photo: Indre Østfold





# Innovative rehabilitation in Indre Østfold municipality —



Photo: Indre Østfold



New innovative technologies relevant to rehabilitation have now been implemented. These support the rehabilitation and contribute to increased intensity, motivation and increased self-effort.

The interaction with the specialist health service and other actors has increased. Competence among employees in Indre Østfold municipality in rehabilitation has been strengthened. Knowledge-based measures have been implemented and have ensured increased quality of the measures.

The project has delivered annual follow-up evaluation reports and shared experiences and results in many arenas over five years. Rehabilitation works, provides benefits for the person himself and for the service. A future correct dimensioning and prioritization of rehabilitation will contribute to a sustainable health service, where people are enabled to improve their level of function and master everyday life in the best possible way.

The project was a collaboration between organizations, researchers and academia, user organizations, key personell in the municipalities (Indre Østfold consisted of several municipalities when the project started), hospitals and industry. Norway Health Tech had a coordinating role in the project. /

Text from Summary

- **Final report by Kari Anne Dehli**



# Building a sustainable industry —



Studio - Webinar



**A lot of the projects** that Norway Health Tech runs are targeted towards building an industry and helping companies succeed. There are several ways of work, from introduction to international markets, collaboration with hospitals and municipalities, building competence, advising and so on.

## **Building competence to strengthen the companies' competitiveness —**

The Norway Health Tech Academy was established to build knowledge among members and collaborative partners and the healthcare ecosystem throughout Norway and the Nordics and was funded by Innovation Norway. The Academy has brought in experts from all over the world to give training and experience to companies facing challenges in bringing their ideas and solutions to market.

Over the last year the Academy has held 7 paid courses focusing on medical device regulation compliance and 10 complementary course giving valuable regulatory guidance. These courses combined have touched on all regulatory requirements for companies and devices needing to comply to

the new EU regulations, (EU) 2017/745 Medical Device Regulation and (EU) 2017/746 In Vitro Diagnostic Regulation.

The Academy has supported approximately 50 one to one meetings with different members of Norway Health Tech's cluster to discuss regulatory matters. These sessions have been geared to give companies a platform to ask pertinent regulatory questions and get advice on compliance to the MDR. From those meeting the Regulatory Services has established 20 contracts for project ranging in short contracts consisting of Regulatory Strategy Reports, Gap Analysis and Internal Audits (10 hours – 40 hours) to larger long-term contracts that assist in Regulatory Advising, Quality Management System implementation and MDR documentation compliance writing (40 hours – 400+ hours).

Regulatory compliance is one of the most important aspects in the development of medical devices, without compliance and certification in the MDR/IVDR a manufacturer cannot market their device, also keeping in mind having this competence is a requirement under the MDR/IVDR. Therefore, providing members with regulatory competence or advising from competent professionals is a key factor within the Academy and should be seen as a great asset to Norway Health Tech going forward. →



**Kami Faust**  
Regulatory Advisor



# Building a sustainable industry —

## Going Global is a long-term project, but every step on the way matters —

The most important factor for enabling us to launch acceleration programs to selected international markets were the financial support from Stiftelsen Teknologiformidling. Through this funding we were able to introduce market entry programs focused on two markets; Japan and UK.

We started in January 2020 with mapping, planning og connecting. Then Covid hit and all plans had to be reevaluated. Even though we had made good connections to Japan, we decided that it was difficult to build the relations and make the introductions necessary in a market so far away, and so different from ours without being there. So, Japan was put on hold and the focus shifted to Germany. However, in the two first months of the year we did build some good relations and the Japanese equivalent of Innovation Norway, Jethro, the embassy, and key experts continued working with a couple of companies, answering questions, and clarifying important issues. We will restart the scaling program to Japan once travelling is allowed. →

Panel during Oslo Innovation Week discussing successes and failures when going international. Photo: Oslo Innovation Week





# Building a sustainable industry —

↓ Trine Radmann ready for a panel debate during Oslo Innovation Week 2020. Photo: Oslo Innovation Week



So, after shifting our focus to Germany, where we had a good network to start with, we hired a resource with medical background that are a native German speaker. This has sped up the program considerably and we have great expectations for 2021.

UK has always been an interesting market, Brexit making it even more so. Several companies are part of the acceleration program, and they are getting valuable insight into the second largest healthcare market in Europe. We are working closely with AHSN, the academic health network in England, Scotland and Wales. It is a timely process but gives us introductions to experts, hospitals, care homes, municipalities, and procurers. The companies are matched based on the needs, and we see things are happening. Hospitals in East Suffolk & North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, ESNEFT, have expressed interest in Checkware and SmartCrowding's solutions, so things are happening. But it takes time, we need to spend time connecting, finding the right people, and building the network. And the UK is not centralized.

One company to highlight is VAR Healthcare. Their solution is the one that is most asked for in the UK of the companies attending the market entry program. VAR Healthcare's representative has a nursing background, this creates trust as she understands the needs and challenges. We are very excited to follow VAR Healthcare in the UK.

To succeed in any market, we need to address the issues that always come up: reimbursement, regulatory compliance, and financing. It goes for both sides; the procurers need to know that the solutions have a reimbursement code so they will get it financed, they need to know that it is compliant and approved according to the regulations they adhere to, and that the company is solid enough to still be around after a few years. The companies need to have the competence and knowledge to answer and deliver on this.

The funding from Stiftelsen Teknologformidling has allowed us to make the first very important step into these markets and is invaluable. Each step is important and brings us closer to the goals, but it is not enough. To succeed in international markets, we need to think long term. The results do not materialize until two to four years down the line. /



# Interview with EpiGuard —

Photo: Keewatin Air



2020 was a robust year for EpiGuard. Despite challenges encountered during the pandemic, more than 4x the expected amount of EpiShuttle units were sold and that number is still growing. CEO Ellen Andersen and VP Marketing and External Affairs Hanne Børke-Fykse shared their experiences and reflected on a very different 2020.

On one of the last days of 2019, 7 EpiShuttles of a total of 16 sold that year were sold in one day. We understood that something was going on but did not know what caused it. But it was a clear indication that 2020 would be different. Soon signals from China of the outbreak of an unknown virus materialized in requests and questions that we had not prepared for. We did not have the regulatory approval for China and did not know how to proceed. We connected with Norway Health Tech for advice.

We decided that the Chinese market was complex and difficult with a lot of uncertainties, so we concentrated on the European market. The first sales came from customers where the relationship was established, and where trust had been built. First the English NHS purchased, followed by NHS Scotland, North-Ireland, and Wales. →





# Interview with EpiGuard —

During the pandemic it was discovered that the North of Norway was not prepared well enough for such a situation, so the Air Force manned all their 330-stations with EpiShuttles. The Air Force used their communication channels demonstrating their way of work and adaptability, and the EpiShuttle was used and hence, given visibility. This gave us a lot of attention from other countries and units where we did not have contact before.

With the new purchases came challenges to deliver on time. The world shut down and we needed parts to assemble the products. When we faced these hurdles, we contacted Norway Health Tech and by using the network with help from Team Norway, we were able to open factories in Italy and the Czech Republic to supply the needed parts. This would not have been possible if not for the support from the international team at Norway Health Tech.

Another challenge was to go from physical to digital training. EpiShuttle is a physical product and of course the training had involved touching and trying. But the EpiGuard training team turned around quickly and made it work. The effort is not less than impressive.

**«We do not deliver just a product, but the expertise and competence that is needed to use the product as well. When training has been provided, we ensure that the usage will be done safely and correctly for personnel and patients»**

— Ellen Andersen, CEO

A customer story I would like to share is the feedback we got from the Peruvian police. Peru was hit hard by the pandemic and had to transport patients over the Andes to a place of treatment. They purchased the EpiShuttle to protect their team and patients. We got an e-mail from the coordinator Maria saying that thanks to the Epi-shuttle, their team had stayed out of quarantine, and remained healthy and in operation the whole time. It is motivating to hear stories like that, Ellen says.

We always say that we must train during peace time. All EpiShuttles that had been sold before 2020 were bought to be prepared if something happened. In 2020 we were certainly put to the test. Everyone that was open to doing things differently, to start using innovation, and what it involved, were more successful in handling a situation that no one has ever been in.

EpiShuttle has delivered. We have not had any incidents reported where it did not live up to the promises and for that we are both proud and thankful. The pandemic has made it possible for us to scale up, grow fast, and prove that we can meet high demand under pressure. We are now a robust company in the black, ready to look at new markets.

Being part of a community like Norway Health Tech is very important to us. It certainly helped us through difficult times in the early months of the pandemic. We can ask for advice and help, be part of programs and events (we have EU-funding thanks to Norway Health Tech), and expand our network. We know that by asking Norway Health Tech we get answers from people that see our success as their success. We are a part of something bigger.

We will always need safe ways to get contagious patients to a point of care with minimal risk for the patient and personnel. That is why we are here, closed Ellen. /



Ellen Andersen. Photo: Fredrikstad Blad





# Thank you and Well Done —



Carl Christian Gilhuus-Moe and Kathrine Myhre



**2020 was a year of change.** After starting the cluster in 2009 and leading it since, Kathrine Myhre was ready to hand over the CEO baton. In addition, our chairman since 2010, Carl Christian Gilhuus-Moe stepped down. The two have been driving forces within health technology. They made sure that Norway Health Tech contributed to building a sustainable health industry and facilitated innovative collaborations with hospitals, municipalities, health trusts, academia, research, and industry.

Initially, Norway Health Tech started as Oslo Medtech and had 43 members when it was founded in November 2009. Some of the members then are still members today. The starting point for the cluster was medical technology which was soon followed by diagnostics and e-health. Today, it encompasses all areas of human health technology. Then, as now, the most pressing challenge was regulatory compliance. The first ever seminar was about quality assurance and the technical file. →



# Thank you and Well Done —

From the start, the dynamic duo of Kathrine and Carl Christian ensured that health innovation and technology were priority. Carl Christian utilized his vast network globally to introduce Norwegian health technology, making sure that our acceleration programs and market introduction programs had a landing spot. His knowledge and know-how have been shared in abundance, and he always had time to support the CEO. He has been an important part of developing the cluster.

Kathrine provided the voice for the industry as spokesperson in political issues. She was advocate for increased public-private collaboration, setting the stage in major national and international arenas, and built up the cluster from its modest start into the largest health cluster in Norway today. In 2019 she received the HIMSS Future50 European Achievement Award, based on the results her work has produced over the years.

Kathrine took the reigns at the Norwegian Industrial Property Office from January 1st, 2021, and we have no doubt she will make her mark there as she has for the Norwegian health industry and for health innovation in Norway.

Thank you for the remarkable effort and the results it has produced! /

Kathrine Myhre at HIMSS





**“Every once in a while, a new technology,  
an old problem, and a big idea turn into a great  
innovation.”**

— Dean Kamens



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