

© 2016 Universities Federation for Animal Welfare  
The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead,  
Hertfordshire AL4 8AN, UK  
www.ufaw.org.uk

Animal Welfare 2016, 25: 69-71  
ISSN 0962-7286  
doi: 10.7120/09627286.25.1.069

## **Availability and use of designated hospital pens in Danish dairy herds**

*H Houe<sup>\*†</sup>, PT Thomsen<sup>‡</sup>, C Amdi<sup>†</sup>, MS Herskin<sup>‡</sup>, B Forkman<sup>†</sup> and MB Jensen<sup>‡</sup>*

<sup>†</sup> Department of Large Animal Sciences, University of Copenhagen, Grønnegårdsvej 8, DK-1870 Frederiksberg C, Denmark

<sup>‡</sup> Department of Animal Science, Aarhus University, AU-Foulum, Blichers Allé 20, DK-8830 Tjele, Denmark

\* Contact for correspondence and requests for reprints: [houe@sund.ku.dk](mailto:houe@sund.ku.dk)

### **Abstract**

---

*The objective of this study was to describe the availability and use of designated hospital pens in Danish dairy herds and to analyse the association between availability and use of hospital pens and the herd-level incidence of reported disease treatments. Hospital pens were divided into either 'individual hospital pens' designed for only one animal or 'group hospital pens' designed for two or more animals. Questionnaires were sent to 350 dairy cattle herd owners. These questionnaires focused on four animal categories: dairy cows, heifers, males six months or older, and calves younger than six months. Depending on the category of animal, between 50 and 82% of the herds had access to individual hospital pens and between 39 and 65% of the herds had access to group hospital pens. Between nine and 24% of the herds did not have access to any type of hospital pens. The availability of hospital pens was generally higher for dairy cows than the other animal groups. There were significantly more reported treatments for hoof/leg disorders in herds with one or more cows in hospital pens at the day of visit.*

---

**Keywords:** animal welfare, dairy cattle, Denmark, disease incidence, hoof/leg disorders, hospital pen