

– **Social inequalities in health is a global phenomenon.** We find them in all countries, including Norway.

This is the opinion of leader of the Health Committee in Østfold County Council, and board member of HEPROGRESS, Inger Christin Torp. Torp represents a country where differences have increased in recent years. She hopes that the HEPROGRESS project plays a role in reducing social inequalities in health in Østfold.

– It is very important that university colleges and universities are participating in the project. In Østfold we see a need for political and administrative leaders to build competence on how to reduce inequalities if we want to succeed. One of the biggest social problems with clear health inequality consequences in Østfold is **drop out from upper secondary schools**. We need to build bridges between politicians and researchers in order to make our plans and strategies more evidence-based, Torp says.

Torp promises to fight for a just community and to put health inequalities on the agenda in Østfold community also in the future.

– **HEPROGRESS will give us new knowledge about social inequalities in health.** We intend to use this improved understanding to make better plans and initiate specific preventive and health promotion projects. But first and foremost, I think it's important that we reduce health inequalities through the public services we have already established. These are, after all, already in place and financed. However, we need to tailor them in a way that they work as we want. Then, increasing the competence of public employees is crucial. Here, HEPRO-GRESS and the centre of competences must play a role, she says.

Social inequalities in health are not genetically determined; they are socially created and maintained during the whole life course.

– This is partly due to the way we have organized our society. Thus, it is also possible for us to reverse the trend, she says.

Torp is also concerned about the ethical aspects of the field.

Reducing inequalities is our responsibility

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 13 December 2011 08:43

– Based on, for example, the living conditions and welfare of the parents, we can predict that many children have smaller chances than others to stay in a good health in adulthood. We cannot accept such injustice! **Everyone deserves an equal chance – Torp concludes.**