

CUSTOMER CASE

"We knew that the image quality would be improved, but we didn't realize by how much. With the better image quality, we can see more in the images than ever before, which is extremely helpful in diagnosis."

*Dr. Torben Lindbjerg,
CEO and veterinarian specialized
in animal dentistry*



Familiedyrlaegerne, Hobro, Denmark

First **DX-D detector plate** for veterinary imaging installed in Denmark

Agfa HealthCare's DR brings top-quality images and greater collaboration for multisite practice

“Direct radiography offers good quality images, it is easy and it is quick. This makes it the technology of today for veterinary practices.”

*Dr. Torben Lindbjerg,
CEO and veterinarian*



In Denmark as in other countries, trends in veterinary care are evolving, fuelled by demand by pet owners. “People are investing more in pet care, to provide a good quality of life for their animals,” says Torben Lindbjerg, veterinarian and CEO of the Familiedyrlegerne. In response, veterinarians are increasingly specializing in specific care areas.

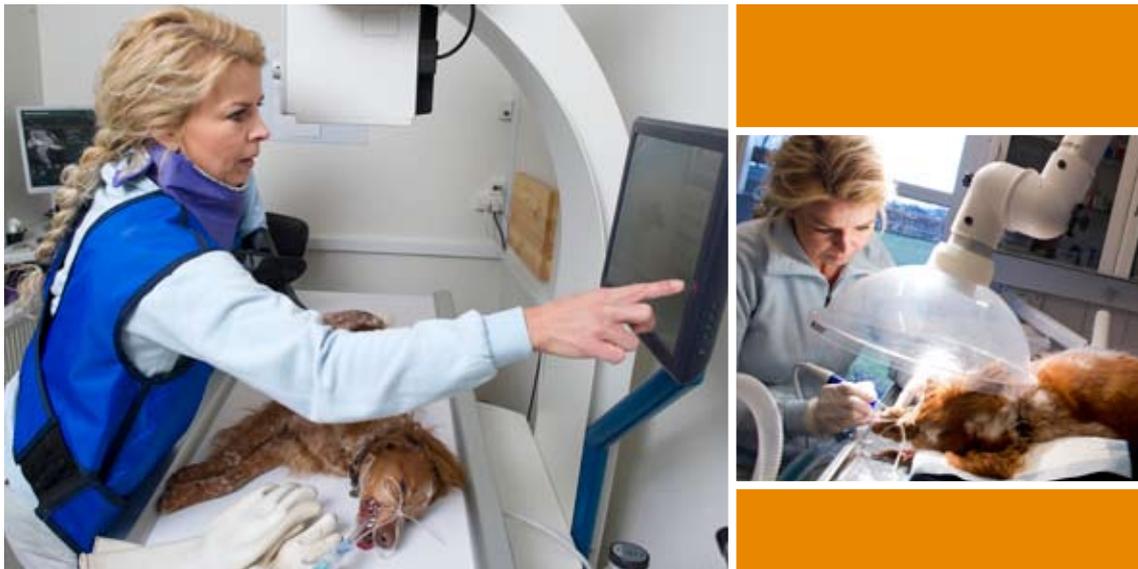
“This means a higher level of care for the animals,” he continues, “but collaboration also plays a bigger role.” So when Familiedyrlegerne decided it was time to invest in a new imaging system, moving from analog to digital offered clear benefits, both for image quality and for the ability to share images quickly and easily. In December 2010, this practice became the first in Denmark to install Agfa HealthCare’s DX-D detector plates for veterinary care – installing one in each of its three main locations. “The results have exceeded our expectations,” says Torben Lindbjerg.

Specialization requires more cooperation

Familiedyrlegerne works only with small animals, primarily family pets, treating between 15,000 and 20,000 each year. It has three animal hospitals, plus a small satellite clinic, all in the Himmerland region of Denmark. “The sites were picked strategically,” explains Torben Lindbjerg. “Each is some 30 to 50 km apart. This means that we can serve a much broader base of clients, but at the same time it’s

not too far for a client to take a pet from one of our clinics to another, to see a particular specialist.”

Familiedyrlegerne counts ten veterinarians in total, some of whom rotate between the four clinics, and some of whom always work out of one clinic. An additional 20 nurses and administrative staff assist them in providing the animal care. Specialization allows Familiedyrlegerne to give a full service to clients, says Torben Lindbjerg. He himself specializes in dentistry, and Familiedyrlegerne also has specialists in orthopedics, skin diseases, radiology and more. But specialization means collaboration has become even more critical. “To give a patient the best care, it may need to be seen by more than one vet, and those vets need to consult on diagnosis and care. Imaging of course plays an important role in this,” adds Torben Lindbjerg. With veterinarians spread over the multiple clinic locations, having digital images that could be shared easily became increasingly important.



Direct radiology a good fit for veterinary practice

In December 2010, Familiedyrlægerne replaced its analog film system with Agfa HealthCare’s DX-D portable detectors in all three of its main clinics. “We knew we wanted a direct radiography (DR) system,” says Torben Lindbjerg. “We did a lot of research, and saw it would fit into our type of practice. It would give us good quality, in a fast and easy-to-use system that is appropriate to use with small animals.”

“Price was of course an important consideration in the selection: we were buying three systems at once, so it was a big investment. If we had upgraded to digital a few years ago, we would have likely gone with computed radiography (CR). But now DR has the quality we need and is even faster than CR. DR is the system of today for vet clinics.”

Agfa HealthCare adapts products and service to vet clinic’s needs

After discussing with a number of other veterinary clinics in Denmark that had installed Agfa HealthCare’s CR solutions, Torben Lindbjerg chose the DX-D for veterinary imaging. “Agfa HealthCare is well-known among my veterinarian colleagues. The systems have been adapted for veterinary use – for example, for specific positions needed in animal imaging. And the service from Agfa HealthCare and its partner Kruuse is very good.”

The three DX-Ds were installed one by one in the three sites, over only a few days. “The first installation took the most time: two days,” recalls Torben Lindbjerg. “The other two only took a half-day each. And after a one-hour training, we could work on the new systems right away. We also have a helpdesk to call if we do need assistance.”



Agfa HealthCare’s contribution

- Three DX-D systems with MUSICA² image processing.



Did you know ...

- Familiedyrlegerne used to be part of a big animal care company, working with horses, farm animals and pets. Now, it specializes specifically in small animal pets, i.e. dogs, cats, rabbits and other rodents, birds and 'exotics'.
- Pet insurance is a growing trend in Denmark, as well as in other Western countries. In the US about 1 million pets have health insurance. In Sweden, some 80% of dogs and horses are insured, with other Nordic countries not far behind.

DX-D image quality exceeds expectations

Although the DX-Ds have only been operating for a few months, the veterinarians and staff are already seeing the difference. As required, sharing images between sites is now much easier. And the image quality definitely meets the practices' needs. "We knew that the image quality would be improved, but we didn't realize by how much," smiles Torben Lindbjerg. "My colleagues keep coming to me with the images and exclaiming over the clarity. We are actually taking more images now, because it is so quick and easy. If we think an X-ray would be useful, we can do it, with no delay. And there are no 'missed' shots. This will allow us to give better care to our patients."

And yet, despite the increased number of images, he says imaging is taking less time overall. "It takes very little time out of our busy day: just click-and-go." Clients are also impressed with the new system: "We can show them the very clear pictures, and can even give them a CD of images to take with them. And they can see that we have invested in top-level technology to care for their pets. We are proud to be the first in the country with Agfa HealthCare's DR solution."

Investment in quality systems pays off

Torben Lindbjerg is very clear about the benefits the multisite clinic sees from the new system. "The images are better, and we can share them between clinics immediately. We save a lot of time, so in the future we will be able to schedule more consultations each day. In addition, we no longer need to use space for developing film and storing images, and no more chemicals means less cost and harm to the environment. I know some clinics that try to cut investment costs by buying cheap systems. I can tell you, it's not worth it. It's better to invest in quality – it will pay off." •

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