

## Reply to the Commentary by Larkö et al.

It is not very surprising that the four colleagues from Gothenburg reacted strongly to my article, as they are all highly specialized in dermatological surgery. It is more problematic though that my message is misinterpreted. I am pro dermatology, not against. I salute new diagnostic principles, an early involvement of dermatologists in the screening of skin tumours and collaborations with other researchers in the field of cancer. I also believe strongly in diversity among the university clinics, rightfully choosing different profiles of dermato-venereology, like the Gothenburg clinic has done within dermatosurgery. Larkö et al., however, sweepingly criticise other clinics for "the low standard of tumour treatment" without presenting data to support their accusation (what matters is of course the final outcome for the patient). Also upsetting is that they wrongly assign me backward opinions, such as "removing important parts of dermatology and placing them in other specialties". On the contrary, I believe that we should stand up for the

skills we have developed, but think twice before trying to transfer parts of other specialties into dermatology instead of developing many neglected areas in our own backyard. After all, resources are not unlimited and the principle of communicating vessels still applies (except possibly in Gothenburg). It seems to me that Larkö et al. overreact when discussing these matters. On the other hand, I do perhaps feel too strongly that a rapid expansion of training in plastic surgery-like methods for all dermatology residents will attenuate more unique skills in dermato-venereology; this at a time when a large number of specialists with many years of experience are going into retirement. As a consequence, patients with more complex skin or venereal diseases may be at a disadvantage in the future. Taking over tasks from other disciplines and overloading an already heavy curriculum is perhaps bold, but not always wise, realistic and timely.

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PSORIASIS ASSOCIATIONS

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