

## "Mando gave us our lives back"

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**The successful treatment of an eating disorder can mean the difference between life and death. Something that patients and their relatives at the Mandometer Clinic in Flemingsberg know all too well.**

*Photo: Fredrik Sederholm*

Bergh and Södersten have conducted research into eating behaviours and satiation at Karolinska Institutet since 1993. The result are the treatments used at the Mandometer and Mandolean clinics, which have successfully treated some 1,400 patients to date.

Three patients, Klara, Lovisa and Sanna, attended the award ceremony to relate their experiences.

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"Life! Getting treatment here has meant that I've got my life back," says Lovisa, 20.

### How was your life before the treatment?

"I had no life before. But you convince yourself that life is good and you don't realize how bad things really are before you improve. So you trick yourself into continuing your eating disorder until someone opens your eyes," Lovisa says.

Treatment at the clinics is divided into several stages with the first being around-the-clock care when patients stay at the unit. Subsequently, only daytime care is provided, with patients leaving the unit for evenings, nights and weekends. Finally, patients receive outpatient care with regular contact with a responsible carer.

"I'm into the second stage of the treatment. Having received help to change my behaviour, I can now take responsibility for myself," says Sanne, 18.

"Now I'm looking forward to travelling, go to college, and then I actually want to work in the healthcare sector."

The length of time each step takes is strongly individual, but the first stage usually takes between six to eight weeks. The average treatment time is 12 to 14 months, but contact with the clinic continues for around five years.

Lovisa is planning an active future after her treatment.

"My goal is to reach other people – I want to get to know the whole World. Travel and explore places and people. I feel as though I need to make up for lost time, so I'm setting my sights high. I was totally shut away before, entirely isolate from the outside world, family and friends, so now I want to experience everything I missed," she says.

Relatives of previous patients at the Flemingsberg clinic were also present, explaining how important the clinic's work was to them.

"Mando has given my son his life back. All us relatives have similar shared experiences," says Jörgen Frändfors.

Today, Frändfors is active in the FAB (Föreningen mot Anorexi och Bulimi) patient support group together with Lena Konow-Hoffman.

"We've both got our children back, and with that life and hope. Our daughter was seriously ill and had undergone another treatment that didn't help at all. Then she got a place in round-the-clock care at

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Mando and from there she was able to begin her journey back," says Konow-Hoffman.

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